

The Three Dimensions of Listening

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“Listening to You”: Identity Issues

Should the thought of addressing psychological issues involving identity seem daunting, consider the following wonderful story told by Ken Cloke:

[A] supervisor and an employee were constantly in conflict. Before our session, while waiting for a meeting room to be unlocked, I casually asked them both to tell me something about their backgrounds. It turned out they both came from families with 13 children! Amazingly, the supervisor was first born and highly experienced in bossing others around, while the employee was last born and not about to be bossed around by anyone else. Stunned, I asked them: ‘How did you *find* each other?’ They laughed and their conflict disappeared before the mediation even began. Once they realized their contrasting overcompensations were fueling their conflict, it simply evaporated and they were able to improve their friendship. They not only joked about it publicly, but turned it into a source of pride and unity, which totally transformed their relationship.

— Kenneth Cloke, *THE CROSSROADS OF CONFLICT* (2006)