

JUNE

ISSUE: 33



## 5 INSIGHTS FOR TRANSFORMING CONFLICTS

**Ask Roxi  
JUNE  
Question**

**QUESTION:**

**"When is the  
right time to  
change jobs  
within my**



## Amy Cuddy TEDTalk Your Body Language Shapes Who You Are

Dear Roxi,

Welcome to summer - a time for reflection, rest perhaps, a vacation maybe. This month, I'd like to reflect on the way we think about conflict in our lives. I'm sure you will agree, there is no shortage of conflict opportunities in our private lives, work places, and all around us in our world. Every day the headlines remind us about that. From the beginning of time, we humans have lived, loved, worked, and died with conflict. And, believe it or not, that isn't necessarily a bad thing.

While many people would be thrilled to never have another conflict with anyone every again, it is an illusion to believe it is even a remote possibility.

Conflict is a symptom, not a disease. In fact, conflict is a like a red flag or a signal that something and someone needs our attention. When it happens, it is telling us that we have some choices to make about one or more relationships. In fact, highly functional teams must have conflicts arise and address them well in order to remain highly functional. The question is not will you have them; the question is: HOW will you, your work team, your family - address your inevitable conflicts?

In my leadership classes and coaching practice, I use this working definition:  
**Conflict is a normal part of human interaction that arises when two or more people have opposing needs, wants, and/or expectations - real or perceived.**

We may choose different methods and pathways in responding to and dealing with our conflicts. For instance, we may choose...*the dark road of denial, or the path of least resistance, perhaps a detour to avoidance, or hopping on the bullet train to confrontation, maybe taking a shortcut to a quick solution, or if we really want a new perspective, an Airbus to transformation.* You see the Airbus flies above the fray, allowing us to see the bigger picture and gain new perspective from a higher plane (no pun intended!).

organization or maybe to leave my employer all together?"

### ANSWER:

Here are a few questions that may help you diagnose what's happening for you and what you may want to do about it.

If you say "yes" to any of the following questions, it's probably time to change something - either within yourself, or with your job, or both:

**Does leaving your job feel less of a sacrifice than staying?**

**Does your job make you sick, literally - do you use a lot of sick time just to stay away?**

**Do you complain regularly about one or more aspects of your job?**

**Do you feel out of control of your career?**

**Is being "safe" less appealing than being "free" from this job?**

All of these options may seem advantageous to us at any given moment, depending on our motivation/goals/personal style. Only ONE, the 'Airbus' metaphor, has few, if any, disadvantages. Let me explain why I say this...

I recently spent 40 jam packed hours in a course led by Louise Phipps Senft, a master of Transformational Conflict and Mediation - CEO, attorney, teacher, coach, and the amazing energy force behind her company, Baltimore Mediation. Last week, Louise was my guest on my AskRoxi radio program and she shared how very different her approach to conflict is from what most of us have been taught and what we have practiced.

Many people study this topic deeply, teach it daily, and work at it for a living. Well, I'm here to confirm that successful Conflict Transformation IS a paradigm shift of major proportions, particularly for those of us who are achievement oriented problem solvers, fixers, and even well meaning win-win addicts.

With full credit to Louise and her team, I offer you 5 of my "take-aways" about CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION that I believe can help you board your own 'Airbus' next time you encounter a conflict yourself - or one you are trying to help shift for other people.

## 5 INSIGHTS FOR CONFLICT TRANSFORMATION

1. **REFLECTION:** identify the emotional, cognitive and visceral cues. It is critical to mirror and reflect the exact **words with the same emotion** attached to the words a person says - not what you interpret, not what you wish they said, not a paraphrase...EXACTLY what he/she says. The power of learning this skill cannot be overestimated.

2. **PROBLEM - PEOPLE - PROCESS:** all parties must be honored, heard and understood; we must "open up" the dialogue to make room for the "how" can we work together question - to be answered. The people involved are having a conversation because of a problem between or among them and a transformational process can dramatically shift the way they respond and interact.

3. **CONFLICT is a FRACTURE** in the way people are interacting. It helps to remember that what is difficult for you is difficult for others. There is a mindset and a skill set needed to transform our conflicts and heal the fractures.

4. **EMPOWERMENT AND RECOGNITION** transform conflicts to allow for each person to move from weakness to ---> strength and from self-absorption to --> responsiveness to others. Mastering these essential relational skills often will create dramatic shifts in attitude and behavior that result in lasting change.

5. **ENERGY follows ATTENTION** - what we focus on the most is where most of our energy will go.

As Louise so wisely says, "The choice is yours. You can tap the potential to be RELATIONAL, or you can overlook it, or not even be aware of it...A Relational Leader is discerning in how you use your power and influence, and deliberate in your choices to create lasting change."

I hope each of you will choose to learn more so that your life and those you lead can be improved through transforming troubling conflicts into something far more positive.

**Does the job feel like you are wearing shoes that don't fit, a suit that is too tight or too loose, or you just don't feel like you belong for some reason?**

**Before you decide to jump ship, make sure you identify the root cause(s) of your unease, take the time to identify your preferred future, and be dead honest with yourself about what part you are playing in your current situation - because you have a big part, since it is your job.**

**And please don't do anything hasty without giving yourself and perhaps your boss, a chance to course correct and make it work well for you.**

**In the final analysis - you are the BEST judge of what works or doesn't work for you. The question is - why and what can be done to either make it work or go somewhere**

## WHAT'S NEW?



**PRI - Project Managers International - Rochester NY Chapter - Workshop and Book Signing at Ithaca College on June 12th.**



**Louise's Phipps Senft's GREAT interview Saturday, June 27th on our AskRoxi Radio Program from Baltimore. All shows are archived on the website and available on iTunes as Podcasts.**

**Looking forward to the July 16-18 NCCI Annual Conference in Nashville TN - and learning what terrific new thinking is happening with leadership and continuous innovation coming from this great group of folks.**

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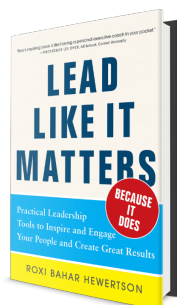
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## QUOTES

### QUOTES OF THE MONTH AND BOOK RECOMMENDATION

"Peace is not the absence of conflict; it is the ability to handle conflict by peaceful means." Ronald Reagan

"Conflict is drama, and how people deal with conflict shows you the kind of people they are." Stephen Moyer

"I am a woman in process. I'm just trying like everyone else. I try to take every conflict, every experience, and learn from it. Life is never dull." Oprah Winfrey



**BOOK OF THE MONTH**  
(available for pre-order)

## **BEING** **RELATIONAL**

**The Seven Ways to Quality Interaction & Lasting Change**

Louise Phipps Senft and William Senft

**SPREAD THE WORD!**

I encourage you to share this newsletter with anyone you feel would enjoy it. Remember, past newsletters on a wide variety of leadership topics are located in the archive in the link above right. Just click and read. Enjoy!

See you in July!

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