

When A talks to B about C

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Key Point: *We must consider what to do when A talks negatively to B about C. It is an expression of love to openly and lovingly address the fault of another with whom one has a relationship. It is unloving to first uncover another's fault to someone else. The result will be prejudicing others' minds against the offending party and causing strife.*
(Proverbs 27:6a, Luke 17:3-4, Matthew 18:15-21, 5:23-24, Ephesians 4:29, Proverbs 17:9; 18:8,17; 25:9-10, 1 Corinthians 13:6)

For the sake of our discussion, A, B, and C, will become Al, Betty, and Carl. Therefore, when A talks to B about C, we are now saying, when Al talks to Betty about Carl.

If You are Al You Should:

1. Al should confess his unloving attitude and action to God as sin. He should approach Carl about Carl's fault at the appropriate time.
(1 John 1:9, Proverbs 27:6a)

2. At the appropriate time Al should acknowledge his wrong to Betty for having spoken of Carl's fault (and even share that he has spoken to Carl about it without giving the details of the conversation)
(Proverbs 17:9, James 5:16)

If You are Betty You Should:

3. At the appropriate time Betty should encourage Al to speak to Carl and give Carl the benefit of the doubt.
(Proverbs 27:6a, 1 Corinthians 13:7)

4. Betty should not mention the conversation to Carl because in so doing she is talking about Al behind Al's back and exposing Al's sin at the same time.
(Proverbs 17:9, Proverbs 18:8)

5. Betty should be loving with Al and explain that unless Al speaks with Carl by a certain time, she will need to direct Carl to Al so that the issue can be addressed. Betty would do it without exposing the conversation she had with Al. She would just inform Carl that Al needs to talk with him about an important matter.
(Proverbs 27:6a, Galatians 6:1-2, Proverbs 25:8-10)

If You are Carl You Should:

6. If Carl should become aware that Al has talked to Betty about Him, Then Carl should ask Betty to go talk to Al to encourage Him to come talk to Him (C). He would do this since Al felt comfortable going to Betty about the issue. If Betty agrees, she must talk to Al without mentioning Carl's conversation with Her. (Proverbs 27:6a, Proverbs 25:8-10)
7. If Betty will not speak with Al, Then Carl should inform Betty that he will speak with Al and apologize, if needed without ever bringing up the conversation that Betty and Carl had. This is so Al won't get the idea that Betty betrayed his trust (Proverbs 27:6a, Proverbs 25:8-10, Matthew 5:23-24, Proverbs 17:9)

How does this Apply to a Counseling Situation?

1. Remember to counsel the person who is there not the person who is not there. That is, your counsel should be directed at helping the person who is in your presence not the person who hurt him. You do not have all the details because the other person is not there (Proverbs 18:15,17, 17:9, Ephesians 4:29)
2. Stop the counselee from talking about or exposing the character flaws of the person that hurt them because that person is not there to defend their point of view. (Luke 17:3-4, Proverbs 18:17, Proverbs 25:8-10)
3. Ask the counselee if they have discussed this issue with the person that has hurt them. (Matthew 18:15-17, Proverbs 27:6, Luke 17:3-4)
4. Help the counselee determine if the hurt was based on a personal preference issue, expectation issue or clear sin that has taken place against them by the other person (Proverbs 20:5)
5. If it is determined that the counselee is dealing with a personal preference issue or expectation issue help them to take responsibility for their own feelings, desires, expectations, disappointments in the matter. Help them to identify how they are reacting in thoughts, words, actions, or relationship patterns to the one that has hurt them. Help the counselee to identify, confess and repent of all unloving, thoughts, words, and actions in response to the hurt.(Proverbs 20:5, Proverbs 28:13, Galatians 6:1-2)
6. If it is determined that the counselee is dealing with a clear sin issue help them to take responsibility for their own feelings, desires, expectations, disappointments in the matter. Help the counselee to identify how he is reacting in thoughts, words, actions, or relationship patterns to the one that has sinned against him. Help the counselee to identify, confess and repent of all unloving, thoughts, words, and actions in response to the hurt. (Proverbs 20:5, Proverbs 28:13, Galatians 6:1-2)

7. In either case help the counselee focus on thanking God for the grief, pain, and disappointment he has endured knowing God will use it to build him up. (James 1:1-8, 1Thessalonians 5:18, Romans 5:1-5)
8. Discuss the four kinds of relationships and ask the person how he consistently relates to those with whom he is having the most difficulty, what percent of the time he is closed unloving, closed loving, open unloving, and open loving.(Proverbs 27:5-6)
9. If it is determined that the counselee is dealing with a personal preference issue or expectation issue instruct the counselee to go to that person and share their grief as a result of the hurt ,if sharing will be helpful and not an avenue for manipulation (Proverbs 27:6a,Ephesians 4:29)
10. If it is determined that the counselee is dealing with a clear sin:
 - A. The counselee must be instructed to confront the person about clear sin with the intent to restore them not with the intent to destroy them(Luke 17:3-4, Galatians 6:1-2, Proverbs 27:6a,1Thess 5:15)
 - B. The counselor must explain to the counselee that:
 1. If the person confesses and repents of the sin forgive them (Luke 17:3-4)
 2. If the person confesses and repents of the sin dismiss it and never bring it up again (Luke 17:3, 1Peter 4:8)
 3. If the person refuses to confess and repent of the sin bring witnesses to address it (Matthew 18:15-17)
 4. If the person refuses to confess and repent of the sin with witnesses take it to the leadership of the Church so that they can address it (Matthew 18:15-17)
 5. No matter what the reaction of the other person or the outcome of the situation one should be an open channel of love to the person; one should pray and do good to the person.(Luke 6:27-36, Romans 12:14,20-21, 1Peter 3:9)