A landscape photograph featuring a vibrant rainbow arching across a cloudy sky. The foreground is a lush green field, and the background shows a line of trees and a forested hillside under a bright, overcast sky. The text 'What is a Peace Chest?' is overlaid in the upper left corner, and 'Keith Grossman' is overlaid in the lower left corner.

What is  
a Peace  
Chest ?

Keith Grossman

# INTRODUCTION

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Early in our school life, we are taught to share with others. In fact, I remember when my children were in preschool, they sang a little song, “It’s mine, but you can have some.”

Somewhere along the way, as we get older, we start to move away from the idea of sharing. We become more competitive in our outlook on life and more focused on our own needs. As a result, we move more rapidly into escalating conflict when things happen that we don’t like or we don’t agree with. However, there are ways to effectively prevent conflict and de-escalate existing conflict.

This *Building Your Peace Chest* series will help you understand and develop skills to do just that. It may be hard to vision healthy ways to prevent and manage conflict, and there are always challenges to changing behavior. Stick to it and persevere.

***I am dedicated to helping you, and this workbook is a tool to help you on your path.***

This *Building Your Peace Chest* series is also about relationships: the relationships in your life. It not only includes the way you view your relationships; it includes how others view you as a contributor to their relationships.

Before I go further, I want to clearly define the word “relationship”. It is being interrelated to another living being. This definition is much more than just your closest friends or a family member. This definition encompasses all individuals that enter into your life in some capacity. It can be your closest friend, and it can also be the stranger who is trying to sell you a pair of shoes.

The reality of life is that typically the only time we are not interacting with other people is when we are sleeping. If we average seven hours of sleep, we have 17 hours during the rest of the day to interact with others (with the exception of occasional “alone” time). Some of those are people we like, some we offer no judgment, and some we simply can’t stand.

Of the 17 hours we are interacting with others, according to a US Department of Labor survey, employed persons spent an average of 8.6 hours working or in work-related activities. **This is another reality of life: the average person spends as much time with their co-workers as with their family and friends, maybe more.**

I believe that you will find this workbook invaluable as you work to improve your conflict management skills. You are going to read through some of my suggestions and examples and say to yourself, “I don’t want to do that. I don’t like my (former) spouse/co-parent.” If you desire a happy and satisfactory future, you have to work through those feelings. If you can’t change your perspective, you are allowing others to control your perspective and dictate your future.



Each workbook in the *Building Your Peace Chest* series will walk you through the pieces that will make you more skillful and comfortable in resolving conflict in your life.

The first workbook, *What Is A Peace Chest?*, describes the underlying reasons for conflict and explains the value of resolving conflict collaboratively even if you feel justified to handle it more combatively.

The second workbook, *How Do You Build A Peace Chest?*, describes the necessary conflict management skills, analyzes your existing skills, and helps you develop an action plan for improving your skills.

The third workbook, *Digging Into Your Peace Chest*, provides a method for using your conflict management skills when you find yourself in the middle of an actual conflict.

The additional workbooks in the series take a deeper look at the 8 conflict management skills that make up your Peace Chest. The workbooks look closely at the need for each skill and provides exercises for practicing and developing the skill.

Throughout the workbooks, I provide you with hints on how to apply the information (identified with a ) , and I provide you opportunities to practice your skills (identified with a ) .

*Keith Grossman*

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# A CONFLICT STORY

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“Keith can I speak to you?”

The voice boomed from outside the courtroom. I had just stepped out of that courtroom with my client.

Hearing my name called, I turned and saw my opposing counsel approaching me. I stopped, and my client continued on her way.

Just a few minutes earlier, this other attorney had claimed to the judge that he and I made some agreements. Without interrupting him, I listened with surprise.

Weeks earlier, opposing counsel and I crossed paths at the courthouse elevator. I was entering and he was exiting. As the elevator doors started to close, he told me some vague settlement terms that his client wanted him to convey to me. I told him I would speak about the terms with my client if he would call me or send me a letter with greater detail. I also told him that I didn't believe my client would be in favor of the terms he was describing. The doors closed.

Now, in the courthouse hallway, he was getting very close to my face, and said, “I can't believe you lied in there!”

When he finished speaking to the judge, I explained that opposing counsel was incorrect in his statements and there was obviously a misunderstanding. I acknowledged that he initiated a discussion about the settlement terms he was describing; however, that discussion was never finalized. I couldn't bring myself to call him a liar in front of the judge.

I now looked at opposing counsel yelling at me, and I was dumbfounded. He was calling me a liar!

“We had a deal!” opposing counsel proclaimed.

I regained my composure. I said I spoke to my client about his vague terms, and he never followed up with a phone call or letter as I requested.

I said, "My client is not in favor of your proposal. I never told you she was. Besides, you told the judge we agreed to things that you didn't even bring up."

Opposing counsel did not back down, insisting we had a deal.

When we are all faced with a conflict, we have three choices how to handle the conflict:

- Avoid them
- Handle them poorly
- Handle them well

I think I handled this conflict well with my next action. I could have stood in the courthouse hallway yelling back at opposing counsel. Maybe another attorney in my position would have pushed him; however, those would be examples of handling the conflict poorly.

I said to opposing counsel, "We did not have a deal, and you know it. And you're completely out of line. I am not going to stand here and continue to be yelled at by you."

And I left.

We did eventually settle that case, but that's not even the end of the story. Well after that case ended, I saw opposing counsel at a social event. He approached me and brought up this incident. He apologized and acknowledged he was out of line.

# WHAT IS CONFLICT?

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Conflict is inevitable in all relationships. It stems from the energy of the relationship, and that energy may even be for a short period of time. Take a moment to envision a pot of water. The pot represents the circle of your community, and the water represents the people within the community.

So far, you should have a picture in your mind of a pot of water sitting somewhere without anything happening. There's no action; it's just a pot of water.



Now I want you to envision putting the pot on top of the stove and turning on the flame. The flame is now adding energy to the water, and it represents your relationships. The flame is adding energy to your community. The molecules in the water are starting to move; they are bouncing into each other. As time goes on and the flame continues, the molecules move faster and the water begins to boil.

The boiling water represents the levels of conflict within your relationships. If the flame is too high, the boiling water can jump over the top of the pot. It makes a mess and can scald you, just like high conflict relationships.

However, you can keep the flame manageable and use the energy in a positive way. You can make pasta, or boil eggs, or steam vegetables.

When the energy is manageable, it is effective and efficient. When there's



no energy, you're not doing anything; you're not making something happen. When there's too much energy, you better be cautious because you can get burned.

Ken Sande, author of *The Peacemaker*, defines conflict as “a difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates your goals or desires – or someone else's.” This is a good definition for the everyday conflicts we find ourselves in – some are small conflicts and have minor consequences; some are much larger and problematic.

Conflict is not something to be scared about; however, most of us are fearful or uncomfortable with conflict because we don't know how to respond; we don't know how to manage the conflict. It is typical that when in conflict our emotions increase, and when our emotions increase, rational thinking and communication decreases. Almost without fail, our reactions to a situation impact the ultimate outcome.

## **WHY DOES CONFLICT START?**

There are a number of reasons conflict can start and relationships can fall apart. The reasons include lack of communication, money, control, and lack of compatibility.

Lack of communication is a big issue in many relationships. Things that are said are received differently than intended because of different communication styles, assumptions, and emotional attachments to words.

Many relationships suffer because the parties have different ideas about the purpose of money: how to get it, how to save it, and how to spend it. Control issues can be related to money. Many people struggle with how much control to take and how much to let go in their relationships.

Lack of compatibility can stem from unrealistic expectations of each other or it can be a result of people changing and growing apart over time.

Conflict can also be a result of abuse, violence, and addictions. Frankly, these are specialized issues that may never be successfully addressed, even with the best intentions.

Peacekeepers find ways to communicate and empathize with each other despite conflict and challenges.



## *PRACTICE*

Identify the sources of conflict in your life<sup>1</sup>:

1. Reflect upon and list ten conflicts from your life. These could be recent conflicts or your most memorable. They could be work conflicts, home conflicts, conflicts that happen while shopping or eating out, legal conflicts, conflicts during sporting events, or transportation conflicts.
2. Rate each conflict for intensity from 1 (least intense) to 5 (most intense).

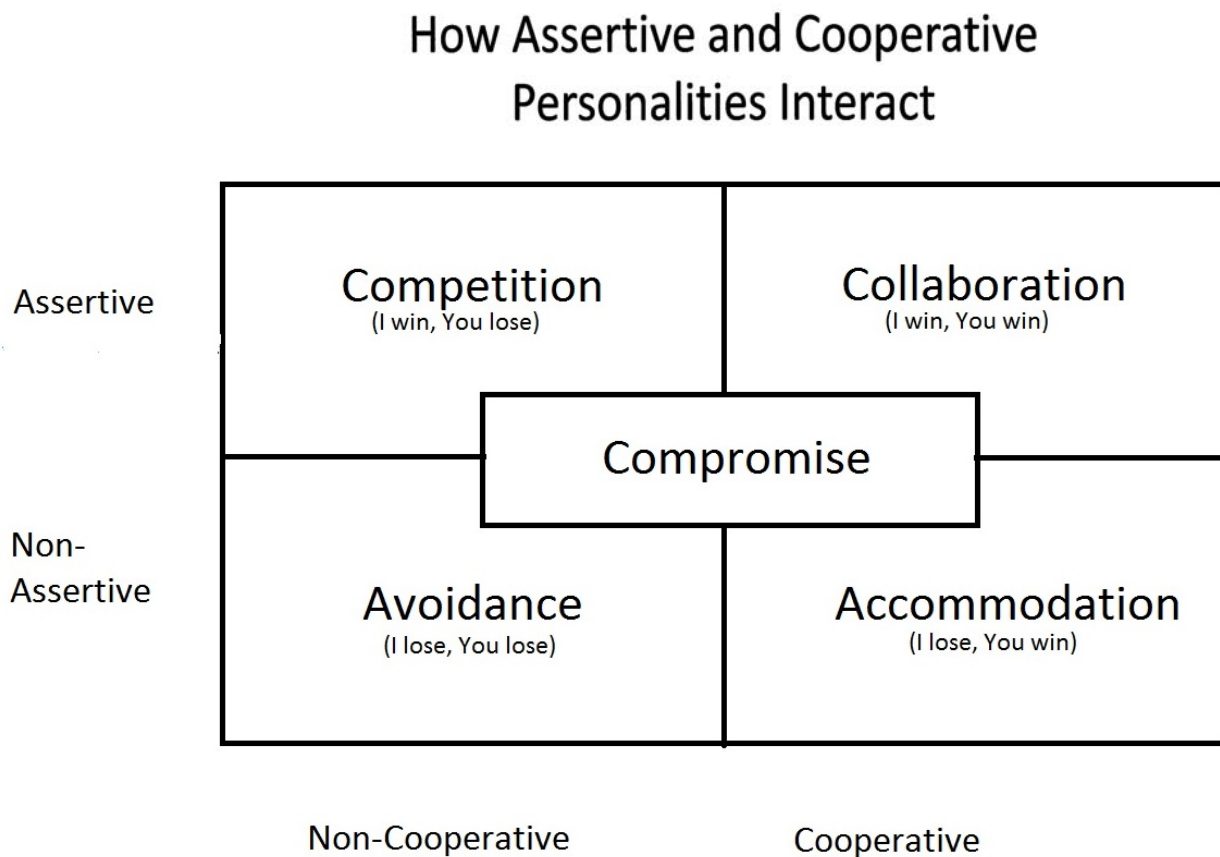
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<sup>1</sup> Thank you to Glenn Hughes for providing this Practice idea.

3. What patterns do you notice?
4. Where are you most likely to experience conflict?
5. Least likely?

### ASSERTIVE AND COOPERATIVE PERSONALITIES

The most basic reason for conflict has to do with the way people interact with each other. Everybody interacts with a combination of assertiveness and cooperation as shown in the chart below.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> This is based on the work of Kenneth W. Thomas and Ralph H. Kilmann and Social Psychologist Morton Deutsch.

People who exhibit an assertive approach with minimal cooperation are in “**Competition**” mode. Others would typically classify this behavior as “aggressive”. People in “Competition” mode are making sure that their own needs are met, no matter the cost. As a result, they alienate people and damage their relationships.

Sometimes these people are just “big idea” people. They have ideas they absolutely want to see get done, and they don’t know how it will happen. Regardless, they expect everyone else to just make it happen.

“Competition” is a win-lose approach that may be effective short-term if there’s a deadline to meet or the preservation of relationships is unimportant; however, it is not a useful long-term conflict management strategy.

On the other end of the spectrum are people who exhibit a cooperative approach with minimal assertiveness. These people are in “**Accommodation**” mode. “Accommodation” is allowing another person's needs to be met, usually at the expense of the Accommodator’s needs. This happens if the Accommodator doesn’t care about the issue, or if there’s an imbalance of power in the relationship or situation.

“Accommodation” can be useful under particular circumstances. The Accommodator may let the other person have their way to preserve or build a relationship. This is not a useful long-term conflict management strategy because it can weaken the Accommodator’s ability to be heard.

People who are in “**Avoidance**” mode are both minimally assertive and minimally cooperative. Avoiders are classified as uncooperative because

their behavior prevents anybody from benefitting. Avoiding taking action means that no decisions are made, no action is taken, and no progress is achieved. The result is everybody suffers. “Avoidance” can be useful if there is not a pressing need to resolve differences now or in the future. This is not a useful long-term conflict management strategy.

Most people look at “**Compromise**”, which is a balance of assertiveness and cooperation, as the ideal strategy for managing relationships and conflict. Compromise is on the path toward collaboration. “Compromise” can be a good mode to be in because everybody is giving up something in order to gain something else. There’s an attempt to balance everybody’s interests, wants, and needs.

The problem with “Compromise”, however, is that most people make assumptions about their limitations, about their challenges, and about the other person’s interests, wants, and needs. Because of the assumptions, they are quick to give up things they may not need to give up, and they prepare to fight for things they might not need to fight about.

“Compromise” can be a useful conflict management strategy if time is limited, or if it’s not worth exploring the basis of the assumptions more fully. “Compromise” may be necessary when neither person wants to explore the assumptions more fully, nor are in a position to force their solution on the other.

The real gold standard for managing relationships and conflict is “**Collaboration**”. “Collaboration” is both assertive and cooperative. It is better than “Compromise” because everybody is working together to fully

explore all the assumptions and discuss solutions that would exceed the solutions a “Compromise” would provide.

“Collaboration” is an intent to succeed together, seeing all sides, acknowledging and accepting differences, and exploring alternative solutions that meet everyone’s needs and concerns.

“Collaboration” can be a long process, and it requires skill and effort. It is worth it because it is the most useful long-term conflict management strategy. I recognize that convincing other people who are head strong to be collaborative is a difficult task. As individuals, the best thing you can do is build ongoing collaborative relationships for mutual advantage from the beginning of the relationship. You also have to nurture that relationship constantly with the Peace Chest skills. The fruits of your efforts will be relationships that are always focused on solutions that everybody would recognize as a win-win.

Sometimes you have a relationship with a person who is head strong, maybe even a bully, and that person has no motivation or desire to change. Those high conflict relationships call for special strategies that I will outline more fully in a separate book.

## **WHAT HAVE YOU BUDGETED FOR PEACE?**

You have heard about saving your money to prepare for war. The idea is called a “war chest”. The term originates with the medieval practice of having a chest, literally, filled with money to open in time of war. In today’s

environment, “war chests” are referred to as surplus cash or cash reserves to have on hand for emergencies, unexpected events, or conflict (i.e. lawsuits).

What money have *you* budgeted for conflict in *your* life? Do you have a “war chest”, and if so, does it contain limited funds? Furthermore, how have you emotionally prepared for a conflict? Can you even “budget” your emotions in an understandable way?

Budget is defined as deciding beforehand how much you are willing to spend on particular items. If you know you are going to be facing a conflict, you could financially prepare by deciding how much money you will need and how you will put aside the money.

An “emotional budget”, however, is a much more vague concept. Emotions play an important role in our lives, and many times, emotions dictate our decisions. Our decisions then have an impact on our emotions. The decision makes us happy or sad or angry. If you decide to engage in conflict, that decision has an emotional cost. Will it overwhelm you? Will it affect your productivity, your daily outlook, and your relationships with other people? How will it affect your time?

In the book, *The Five Love Languages: The Secret to Love that Lasts*, author Gary Chapman discusses the concept of the “emotional tank”. Chapman points out that many relationships fall apart because the “love tanks” are now on empty.

Chapman writes, “Could it be that deep inside hurting couples exists an invisible ‘emotional love tank’ with its gauge on empty? Could the

misbehavior, withdrawal, harsh words, or critical spirit occur because of that empty tank? If we could find a way to fill it, could the marriage be reborn? With a full tank would couples be able to create an emotional climate where it is possible to discuss differences and resolve conflicts? Could that tank be the key that makes marriage work?”

Chapman goes on to discuss throughout his book the importance of keeping the “love tank” full. I also think the “love tank” serves dual purposes – we have to have our “love tank” full of love for ourselves as well as full for the people with whom we have relationships. Can a person be full of love for others when they are not full of love for themselves? If they are lacking love for themselves, are they relying too much on other people to fill their “love tank”?

In addition to having an empty love tank, I think we also face people who have a full “hate tank”. These people look for the negative and the bad in everything. They *expect* the negative and the bad. As a result, they are emotionally blocked and depressed. The good news is that we all have the choice of filling our tanks with love or hate. It’s a decision how we want to “budget” or spend our emotions.

Many people deal with conflict from a totally emotional level. The conflict may require us to make a change. It may require us to deal with the unknown and move out of our comfort zone. The conflict puts us in a scary place, so we react by going into “survivor mode”. Someone is trying to change our world, so we react aggressively.



I remember as a kid that one of my favorite books was called *The Monster at the End of This Book*. Throughout the pages, Sesame Street character Grover begged me not to turn the pages because there was a scary monster at the end of the book. On each page, Grover would try to build an obstacle that would prevent me from turning the page. Of course, he was unsuccessful, and I would continue to turn pages. At the end of the book, it turned out the “monster” was lovable Grover himself.

Many times I feel this is how people handle conflict. They are convinced there’s a monster at the end of the path, and they put up every obstacle they can think of to prevent getting to a solution. It usually turns out, however, they are their worst enemy and the solution is nothing to be scared about.

I would assume that you have not budgeted anything for a conflict, and you would have to come up with money by borrowing it, by taking it from somewhere else, or by selling something. I would further assume you haven’t figured out how to emotionally prepare for conflict so that the conflict doesn’t affect you.

How would you financially budget for a conflict if you are planning to litigate the conflict fully and prepare to “win” in court? A Financial Budget for a full-scale conflict that you intend to “win” could look like this:

<b>MONTHLY INCOME</b>
Savings \$100.00
Loan \$1,000.00
<b>MONTHLY EXPENSES</b>
Copies \$100.00
Postage \$25.00
Legal Fees \$2,000.00
Court Fees \$50.00
Transportation \$100.00
Medical bills/prescriptions \$200.00
Gym \$15.00
Child care \$50.00
Hair salon/nails \$150.00
Clothes \$100.00
Vacation \$100.00
Socializing \$500.00

An Emotional Budget could be viewed as the time you spend relaxing, reducing stress, unplugging from the world, and reflecting. An Emotional Budget would then also include the time you spend dealing with conflict, being stressed, and worrying about outcomes. Your Emotional Budget could look something like this:

<p><b>MONTHLY POSITIVE EMOTION CREATED</b></p> <p>Gym/Meditation/Yoga 15 hours</p> <p>Reading 15 hours</p> <p>Television/Movies 80 hours</p> <p>Socializing 30 hours</p> <p>Vacation 1 hour</p> <p><b>MONTHLY NEGATIVE EMOTION SPENT</b></p> <p>Concern about stress, health, and well being 150 hours</p> <p>Maintaining normalcy with family members/children 100 hours</p> <p>Discussions with others involved in conflict 30 hours</p> <p>Time with lawyers 15 hours</p> <p>Time in court 5 hours</p>
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Instead of spending your money and emotions on a conflict, how about saving your money and emotions, and improving your skills and resources to prepare for peace? How about learning to be a Peacekeeper? I suggest you would be better served to resolve the conflict early and in a way that all

involved can accept the result. This would be a more rewarding investment. It leaves you to spend your time, energy, emotions, and money on things that are higher priorities and more satisfying.

## **WHAT IS A PEACEKEEPER?**

Peacekeepers focus on keeping peace: peace with others, peace between others, and peace within. You may have heard the term “peacemaker” before. I distinguish Peacekeepers from “peacemakers” because you can’t always “make” peace. You can’t control what others do and how others act. You can only control how you respond to others. You can decide to respond in a way that keeps peace even if the other person has done things to initiate or escalate the conflict.<sup>3</sup>

Peacekeepers solve conflicts, or potential conflicts, every day.

Peacekeepers communicate honestly and nonviolently, listen and respect others, focus on solutions, express gratitude, and perform good deeds for others. These acts help everyone to clearly understand each other’s wants and needs. Nobody has to guess.

Peacekeepers have a strong ability to empathize with others, meaning they can understand and be in tune with the other persons feelings.

Peacekeepers find ways to continue to communicate and empathize with each other despite the conflict and challenges. Peacekeepers develop collaborative relationships and approach conflict in “Collaboration” mode.

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<sup>3</sup> In my world, we call people who initiate or escalate conflict “Sharks”.

Peacekeeping is hard work. I can't deny that. Many times, it is actually easier *in the moment* to avoid or escalate the conflict. You can blame the conflict on the other person, hold them accountable, and say good riddance. That behavior usually doesn't work, however, in the long run. You typically can't deny the truth lingering inside you that you could have handled the conflict better. Most times, you can't completely run away from the relationship. If you fail to address the underlying reasons for the conflict, the conflict typically worsens.

In 4th grade, I got furious at one of my female classmates for something she said or did.<sup>4</sup> Our desks were the type that we stored our school supplies and books inside the desk underneath the desktop. We had to lift the desktop up so we could get inside the desk. My classmate had her desktop up, and she was reaching inside the desk for her supplies. I slammed her desktop down landing hard on her fingers. Although I don't remember the reason for my behavior, I do remember how my classmate felt (crying her head off). I can think of a handful of better responses in retrospect, and I certainly didn't accomplish anything with my choice.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

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<sup>4</sup> It is not unusual to forget over time what started a conflict.

Recently at a cocktail party, I introduced myself to a male and female who were chatting with each other. I could tell they worked together because they were both wearing the company logo on their shirts.

During my introduction, I explained that I wrote a book titled, “Does Every Divorce Need a Shark?” Upon telling them that, they looked at each other and smiled. In unison, they both answered, “Yes!”

Unfortunately, this is a common thought in our society. When faced with conflict, we either need to be a shark or hire a shark to work for us. It’s time to change this thinking. Every time we participate in an unresolved conflict, we leave a piece of ourselves behind.

There’s a fight scene from the movie, “Monty Python and the Holy Grail”. The Black Knight enters into a sword fight with King Arthur declaring he’s invincible. Immediately, King Arthur begins lopping off the Black Knight’s arms and legs. The Black Knight declares he can continue fighting because his injury is “just a flesh wound”.

Although our daily conflicts don’t typically result in the loss of body parts, there’s a symbolic parallel here. The stress, frustration, and anger from conflict affect both our mental health and our physical health. The ongoing challenges and sniping prevent us from having a healthy, meaningful, and productive relationship leading to more conflict.

The Black Knight’s stubbornness led to a loss of his limbs. What are the conflicts in your life taking away from you?

(If you want to watch the Monty Python movie clip, [click here](#))

# MANAGING CONFLICT BY BUILDING YOUR PEACE CHEST

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I've already discussed the variety of relationships in our lives, and I've pointed out how easily a relationship can develop into a conflict. As an attorney, mediator, arbitrator, and trained collaborative professional, I have been in a unique position to see people in crisis and how they handle conflicts. It should not surprise you that I have seen many people handle conflict poorly.

Many people assume that conflict is an all or nothing scenario. That you either get everything you want, or the conflict will be resolved by a third party, like a judge. That thinking is wrong because I can assure you that you will never get everything you want, even from the judge, and you are setting yourself up for failure. Having an "all or nothing" attitude means you are handling the conflict poorly. Poorly handled conflict will sap your energy, your time, and your money.

On the other hand, I have seen people successfully engage (NOT AVOID) and work through conflicts. They have saved their money and time. They have saved their energy for more meaningful tasks. They have avoided litigation, and they have improved their relationships.

Our relationships improve when we learn to manage conflict. By managing conflict more effectively, your relationships will benefit in the following ways:

- Clear communications of wants, needs, and concerns so that others don't have to guess;
- Reduced feelings of guilt and anger, emotions that result from avoiding conflict; and
- Working together for mutual advantages.

### **WHAT IS A PEACE CHEST?**

So the real question is, “Why aren't you proactive in managing conflict?” There are ways to handle conflict well. By using effective tools and methods, you can limit animosity. You can protect yourself and those around you from all of the emotional and financial costs of conflict that could last months or even years.

Unfortunately, most of us have never been taught to handle conflict well. We also do not have people in our lives who have modeled the type of behavior and actions for effectively managing conflict. You need to consider building your skill set to effectively manage and reduce conflict. This way, you have *less* anger and guilt and you have *more* time and energy to devote to the activities you enjoy.



A study in 2008 from CPP, Inc., and organizational development company found:

- 95% of people who received conflict management training said it helped them in some way.
- 58% said they now look for ***win-win outcomes*** from conflict.
- 27% said the training made them *more comfortable and confident* in managing disputes.

So, I turn around the concept of a “war chest”, and I ask: Do you have a “peace chest” to handle conflict? Every interaction invites some type of reaction and discourages other types. Developing a Peace Chest is a decision to focus on teamwork, problem solving, and interest-based negotiation rather than threats or power. A strong Peace Chest promotes harmony, encourages self-empowerment, and provides for healing.

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*Keith's Hint:*

*Here are a couple of tips to keep in mind:*

- *You can't get to being a Peacekeeper overnight.*
  - *Practice peacemaking a little at a time.*
  - *Small successes breed familiarity.*
-

## BUILDING YOUR PEACE CHEST

***The purpose of this series is to help you “build your Peace Chest” –*** to develop your skills as a Peacekeeper rather than fall back on the action you have always taken that has proven to be ineffective in managing conflict.

It doesn't matter if you are building a house, diving in the deepest sea, or climbing Mount Everest. All of these activities require preparation and patience. Diving deep and climbing Mount Everest require your body to adapt to the environmental changes. Building your Peace Chest is the same as preparing for these activities. You have to plan, you have to prepare, and you have to adapt.

It takes hard work to create a Peace Chest, especially when the only behaviors you know are to avoid conflict, to accommodate what the other person wants, or to react in a way that escalates the conflict. You have to decide that you want to be a Peacekeeper; however, being a Peacekeeper is not just a matter of deciding that you want to be a Peacekeeper.

Albert Bandura is a psychologist who has shown that changed behavior requires a few steps. You have to attentively learn and retain the information that is the basis of the changed behavior. You then have to reproduce the behavior by performing it. Practice of the learned behavior leads to improvement and skill advancement. You also have to be motivated to reproduce the behavior. If your behavior is reinforced in a positive way, you will be more motivated to continue the behavior.

In the book *Outliers: The Story of Success*, Malcolm Gladwell shows that it takes 10,000 hours of hard practice to become an elite performer at anything. That could be the equivalent of 10 years.

Don't get disillusioned by Gladwell's findings. You absolutely do not have to become an "elite performer" to be a Peacekeeper. In fact, in the book *The First 20 Hours: How To Learn Anything Fast*, Josh Kaufman explains that it is possible to become reasonably skillful at anything in 20 hours.

Do not focus on being an "elite performer" as a Peacekeeper. Managing conflicts effectively and comfortably doesn't happen overnight. With the correct focus and approach as detailed by Albert Bandura, you can become skillful enough to reduce conflict in your life.

"Have no fear of perfection - you'll never reach it." - Salvador Dalí

By reading this *Building Your Peace Chest* series, I am assuming you are motivated to improve your conflict management skills and become a Peacekeeper. As noted by Bandura, first, you have to learn and retain new information to change behavior. Second, you have to practice the learned behavior to apply it when necessary. Those are the two underlying goals of the *Building Your Peace Chest* series.

## MOVING ON

In this book you have been introduced to the concept of the Peace Chest. In the next book, *Building Your Peace Chest*, you will learn the new information you need to change behavior – the nuts and bolts of what skills make up the Peace Chest.



### PRACTICE

Before you start reading *Building Your Peace Chest*, I want you to think about what skills you believe make up a full and effective Peace Chest.<sup>5</sup>

Follow these steps:

1. Gather 3 - 5 magazines that you don't normally read.
2. Look at only the pictures, ignoring all text.
3. Choose three pictures that represent tools, resources, or assets in your Peace Chest.
4. On a separate sheet of paper, describe your Peace Chest. Consider:
  - a. What are your assets?
  - b. How can you best use them?
  - c. What's missing?
5. How do you build a better Peace Chest?
6. What would be in your war chest?
7. What's the difference between your war chest and Peace Chest?

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<sup>5</sup> Thank you to Glenn Hughes for inspiring this Practice idea.

# ABOUT KEITH GROSSMAN

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**Keith Grossman** helps individuals and businesses manage conflict more comfortably. Keith is an attorney, a Family and Circuit Civil mediator certified by the Supreme Court of Florida, an Arbitrator qualified by the Florida Supreme Court, a trainer, a facilitator, and a conflict management coach working with individuals one-on-one. Keith's goal is to offer solutions to conflict at an early stage so that his clients stay out of court, don't go broke, and preserve relationships.



Keith's services center on communication skills, conflict management skills, and consensus building. Keith has frequently lectured and facilitated training programs. He has written articles on conflict management topics. He also is the writer of the conflict management blog ***ResolvingConflictsNow.com***.

Keith graduated from the University of Florida with a law degree as well as a Bachelor of Science in Journalism. He is a Past President of the Lee County Bar Association and of the Southwest Florida Chapter of the American Society for Training and Development. Keith is also a member of the Collier County Bar Association, Collaborative Professionals of Southwest Florida, Florida Academy of Professional Mediators, International Association of Facilitators, and Society for Human Resource Management.

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