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Conflict Transformation Skills For the Family

Conflict in the family is normal and inevitable; too often such conflict becomes destructive because people lack the skills to manage it. However, family conflict can be an opportunity for family members to grow closer together, to foster greater intimacy through using effective communication and problem solving skills. Moreover, such skills can be taught to children, to equip them to be effective conflict managers as well.

The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center offers a unique workshop to churches, schools, and community groups interested in training adults to manage family conflict more effectively. Active and practical in focus, the workshop also equips adults to know how to teach these skills to children. Such a workshop would be appropriate for church retreat days, Saturday workshops, or as part of a weekly adult education series.

One possible outline for an all-day workshop would be:

9:00-10:30 – **Introduction: The Nature and Role of Conflict**

Self Assessment Exercise: Understanding and Improving Your Own Style of Response to Conflict

10:30-10:45 – Break

10:45-12:00 – **Interpersonal Peacemaking Skills: How to be Effective When People Are Angry**

12:00-1:00 – Lunch

1:00-2:30 – **Conflict Transformation Skills for the Family: Case Studies**

2:30-2:45 – Break

2:45-4:00 – **Conflict Transformation Skills for the Family: The Family Meeting**

The facilitator for such a program would be either Richard Blackburn, LMPC Executive Director, or Victoria Wilcox, LMPC Assistant Director. LMPC staff have broad experience in mediating a wide variety of interpersonal and organizational disputes, in addition to training people in conflict transformation skills. In addition to their long involvement in issues related to Christian peacemaking, their training in family systems theory makes them uniquely qualified to lead conflict transformation workshops. Finally, in order to continue the educational process after the workshop, LMPC books on conflict transformation and other Christian peacemaking concerns can be made available to participants.

Groups interested in exploring the possibility of hosting a workshop can contact the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center at the above address or phone number.