Conflict is the energy that holds all relationship together. However, positive conflict pulls people closer and makes everyone want to perform and contribute their best toward a greater good than self.

What are the characteristics of positive relationship? What makes for a high-performing team? Alexander Graham Bell said “great discoveries and achievements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds.” This presentation will illuminate ten time-tested behaviors that create positive conflict in relationship, whether at work with your own office, working with other offices in the courthouse, or in athletics, a family or a couple.

“None of us is as smart as all of us”

“We-opia”, not “me-opia”: Cultivate a team-first, cooperative environment in this competitive “me-opic” world.

☐ Home runs or hits with RISP? _________
☐ A flawed diamond or a perfect brick? _________
☐ Which are higher values to you?
  ☐ Your answer _______. Why?
Trust
How do you build trust?
☐ What’s one thing that you always do when building trust with another?
   ■ Write it down here: ________________________.
   ■ IPC/relationship skill or a technical skill? Answer ________.

Commitment
Commitment is **responsibility** - something that takes up time or energy, especially an obligation.
☐ Commitment is **loyalty** - devotion or dedication, e.g. to a cause, person, or relationship.
   Commitment is “**all in**” like a breakfast of eggs and bacon:
   The chicken makes a ______. The pig makes a ________.

☐ Question: Why are some afraid of commitment?
   ■ Answer: the ____ of _______ by others.

**Commitment phobia** is the fear and avoidance of having to commit to anything, relationships in particular.
Usually the sufferer will be overly critical of the other partner in the relationship. They will set out to annoy or hurt the other person, thus sabotaging the relationship even if it’s thought to be going well.
The causes of commitment phobia are sometimes associated with a loss or trauma of some kind such as parental separation or bereavement. Maybe as a child they had poor role models or witnessed/were victims of abuse.
This can have an effect on their approach to adult relationships. Often, at the heart of the fear, is the fear of rejection by others. To pre-empt this they will reject first, impose distance between themselves and others and thus feel safe.
(www.phobias-help.com/commitment_phobia.html) BTW, the answer to the last line in the slide is “the **fear** of **rejection** by others”.

Participation
Withholding and withdrawal pull relationship apart. Participation pulls it closer, but **what is your contribution?** Consider:
☐ What part of the load do you carry?
☐ What special gifts, talents and competencies (strengths) do you offer?
☐ Can you lead and follow effectively?
☐ Do you always work to leave it better _______?
Co-creation
Co-creativity – Best example?
  - Only through positive relationship can we transform that bounty into something that’s bigger than both of us...
  - It’s not addition; it’s multiplication –
    - Two plus two becomes two times two...
  - Offspring, genius babies and “mutualism” which is a relationship between two organisms of different species that benefits both and harms neither. For example, lichens are a fungus and an alga living in mutualism: The fungus provides a protective structure, and the alga produces a carbohydrate as food for the fungus. A healthy, successful team is another great example. Each unique member has something that others need, but can’t produce on their own. Recognizing this harnesses the power of mutualism.
    - The power of mutuality is built on _______.

Effective Communication
“Seek first to understand, then to be understood.”(Covey)
- Respond, don’t react. What’s the difference?
- Craft messages with:
  - Face
  - Body
  - Words
    - Examples – listening, empathizing, asking
- Practice active, not passive _______.

Understanding
Asking someone a question about them pulls them closer. Telling someone something about you keeps them at arm’s length or pushes them back: “Hello – I’m lactose intolerant.”
- Ask questions. Seek feedback. Build trust by taking intelligent risks.
- Couples therapy by yourself – sometimes, people don’t want it to get better. However,
  - When one person shifts, it often makes it possible for others to shift as well...

Honesty and Congruence
Accept personal responsibility in relationship –
- Admit when I’m wrong, admit when I’ve made a mistake;
- Create an environment where others will feel free to admit the same,
  - Then mistakes will grow fewer.
- Each person is fully responsible for his or her own growth and development.
  - This is possible only through creative interaction with others.
- Congruence is harmony, not unison. Harmony is a pleasing effect produced by an arrangement of things, parts, or colors.
Synergy
“The combined action of two or more substances or agencies to achieve an effect greater than that of which each is individually capable”.

- Examples: How does epoxy glue work?
- We are stronger as individuals as we develop a linkage with other people.

Consider perhaps the greatest example of synergy in the history of American team sports – the UCLA men’s basketball program. The UCLA Bruins men’s basketball program, established in 1920, owns a record 11 Division I NCAA championships. UCLA teams coached by John Wooden won 10 national titles in 12 seasons from 1964 to 1975, including 7 straight from 1967 to 1973. UCLA went undefeated a record 4 times, in 1964, 1967, 1972, and 1973. From all those great Coach Wooden teams, only 2 players are in the NBA Hall of Fame: Gail Goodrich and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar. What are some of your synergy examples?

Being present
There is no life without relating. An individual is never truly isolated because life is a continuous relationship with the whole.

- Consider the lessons from geese:
  - A ‘V’ formation, adds _____% greater flying range than if any bird were to fly alone.
  - Whenever a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of trying to fly alone, and quickly gets back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front.

Excerpt from
*Pulling Together*
by John Murphy

If we share a common direction and a sense of community, we can get where we are going more quickly and easily because we are traveling on the thrust of one another!

If we have as much sense as geese, we will stay in formation with those who are headed where we want to go, and we will be willing to accept their help as well as give ours to others.

If we take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership as with the geese, we become interdependent with one another.

The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed. If we "honk," we need to make sure it is positive and encouraging.

If we have as much sense as geese, we too will stand by each other in difficult times, as well as when we are strong. Let us all try to fly in formation and remember to drop back to help those who might need it.
References and resources that influenced this presentation include:


3. **“Wealth, Innovation and Diversity”**, a video based training program by Joel Barker (2000) ([www.starthrower.com](http://www.starthrower.com))

Mark Warren is the Training Coordinator and Consultant with the Texas Association of Counties in his hometown of Austin, Texas. He assists the Association with the vision, development and delivery of training for both the internal and external customers of Texas county government. Just since 2007, Mark has traveled more than 89,000 miles across Texas and trained more than 22,750 participants delivering a training message of inspiration, motivation and new direction. His presentations revolve around leadership, interpersonal communication and relationship skills, workplace diversity and professionalism, bridging the generations and customer service excellence.

In addition to his teaching, training and traveling duties, Mark worked with the TAC Leadership Program and served as the coordinator of its Leadership class from 2002 and County Best Practices from 2009 to 2015.

After graduating from St. Edward’s University in 1977, Mark spent 23 years with the Texas Department of Public Safety, retiring in 2000 as the Assistant Commander of the Training Academy in Austin.