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CONFRONTATION

YES or NO?!

Somebody I've known for quite some time recently said to me on the phone: "Dany, sometimes you're too nice. You avoid confrontations. But sometimes confrontations are important..."

When he said that I didn't realize it immediately – instead I just changed the subject.

After we'd hung up, however, this sentence echoed in my head. And when somebody casually says something to me that's rather unusual I think about it to see if they possibly might be right.

I'm not speaking now about people trying to manipulate you, give you a bad conscience or talk you into feeling guilty, but of unconsidered, chance remarks that happen incidentally and come spontaneously. In them mostly there's concealed a little (or at least a little more) truth.

So I stood there and thought about the remark. ***Was I too nice? Was I somebody who shied away from confrontations?***

I tried to answer these questions for myself and to see how I perceived myself. Now, to be honest, whether I'm too nice isn't a question I can answer. That's something others can analyze for me. But it's not really something I care about.

Whether I'm somebody who shies away from confrontations???

The question is a challenging one. My response to it was crystal clear without any extra observation being necessary. YES, I shy away from confrontations (and I detest them)! Confrontations are something I avoid if possible. So in this respect my acquaintance was right. It was true that I was like that.

Why don't I like confrontations? I think it's important to distinguish a small point here.

Confrontations are something that, on the basis of many observations, I've always equated with arguments. Overlarge egos and self-centered personalities, people blowing their tops, insulting each other, each wanting to be in the right, hurling things at each other that take years to be forgotten. People who at the slightest excuse would prefer to tear each other to pieces when hate begins to dominate and influence life. Characters who a couple of hundred years ago would immediately have drawn swords and engaged in a duel to the death. Oh boy, yes indeed, this kind of confrontation is something I shy away from (and detest) absolutely and nobody can make them palatable for me either.

If you now say they don't draw swords anymore, that's true. The swords are no longer physically visible, but verbally and energetically they are tangible far too often. □ A glance at our world is sufficient. The swords are invisible, but aren't therefore any less real.

Otherwise there wouldn't be things like the Stuttgart 21 conflict at the moment or recurrent violence, assaults, war and also no disputes between top-class leaders in MLM or on the boards of other companies. If today nobody engaged in (invisible) duels anymore, there wouldn't be any conflicts between employers and employees, between fathers and sons and there wouldn't be any competition between companies, conflicts where some people are prepared to stop at nothing to acquire success, power and money.

Please don't tell me that all that doesn't exist. Even if I'm only too happy to see the positive, nevertheless, I've had to realize that it's the case that all of us still haven't got to the stage where we can manage without conflicts, swords, confrontations and wars.

How do you deal with confrontations? Are you somebody who expresses your opinions strongly and draws your sword in order to prove you're right, come what may, and doesn't retreat an inch?

Or does it depend on your opponents? If they're stronger, do you retreat, and if they're weaker, do you wipe the floor with them?! ;-)

I don't like that because often the bone of contention doesn't appear important enough to me to argue about.

If I have the impression that it can be solved in a normal discussion, then I prefer to wait a few days so that tempers can cool off. Then I try again.

unnecessary disputes whenever possible. But that can also degenerate into an opposite extreme. At that time I didn't speak at all for a long time.

So whenever there was potential conflict, Dany became very quiet. No matter what I was asked, I didn't say a word. Today I have to laugh about it. But at that time, in order not to provoke a dispute, I preferred to keep my mouth shut. You could have given me a really tough time and I wouldn't have responded.



Is that a way of dealing with these things??

Sure, everybody must decide for themselves. However, many years ago I lived in a situation that was dominated by lots of arguments, loud voices and bruised egos. I was able to experience the results of this kind of communication at first hand for a long time although it didn't involve me at all. I was an onlooker. At that time it was a nightmare for me although in retrospect I learned a great deal from it.

I took the decision never to lead a life like that and to avoid

As I said, everybody is different in this respect. Some people who've experienced a similar situation have, nevertheless, taken it as a model in order to communicate at all. Today they become loud on principle, they feel immediately under attack or are in a bad mood most of the time.

They phone you up and are already in a bad mood even though you haven't done anything to them (yet).;-) So they're people who simply draw the sword – and... chop your head off, without any reason. Reflection comes later. ;-)) (We need a bit of humor here again today.)

some people like to do. ;-) It's a pitfall in communication.

Nowadays I try to resolve most conflicts in normal discussions without going quiet but also without going ballistic and above all without making somebody else feel guilty. But that only works as long as both parties want the same thing.

However, there's also another way of looking at it. Sometimes, and here I come back to what I said earlier, there are distinctions.

When is a confrontation worth it? When is this justified?



Sometimes it's sensible to wait when something happens and not to advance immediately and go to war. It's good to wait a few hours first. If necessary even a day or two in order to look at the situation again calmly, even in order to consider when, for example, you'll back down here in this specific point. What would you lose as a result? And is what you think you'll lose really worth the whole thing?

Can you remain true to yourself if, for example, you back off or are you acting against you gut feeling for the benefit of the other person?

Careful – here I'm speaking quite clearly about gut feeling, not about bruised ego! Many people confuse the two. Confusing gut feeling with bruised ego is something that some people like to do. ;-)

It's a pitfall in communication.

If something is important to you, try to clarify it. If you have the impression that it'll only work if all the participants can have their say because several people are involved, then make it happen. Just don't expect to get a bunch of flowers for doing so – at most roses full of thorns. It's always dangerous when you try to clarify something openly. There's always somebody who'll feel under attack (unless they've been well-trained in inter-personal relationships and communication). Even if your intentions were ever so good, those whose ego feels most under attack will also attempt to hit back most. The fact that in human history this principle has never worked so far will also be of no interest then. In many fields we're still in the Stone Age.

Sometimes, and I stick to this, I shy away from a confrontation for this reason. I'm convinced that it's often better to retreat a step.

Sometimes it's more sensible to avoid a confrontation. Sometimes you lose by winning and **sometimes YOU WIN BY BEING PREPARED TO LOSE!!**

This last part of the sentence is something that makes an awful lot of sense to me – from personal experience – something it's worth spending hours to comprehend and consider in its whole depth. In this there lies a great deal of truth from time immemorial.

But it doesn't mean always conceding! Instead it means not always attempting with all your might to be in the right. Most people are more committed to "wanting to be in the right" than to a functioning life, even when they notice that they aren't in the right at all anymore. Then they deploy all their remaining energy so that they'll at least look good and they don't notice at all that it's precisely by doing so that everything gets lost that makes life worth living:

ENJOYMENT, EASE, SUCCESS, CLOSENESS, FUN AND LOVE

I know what I'd decide for again and again. I wish the same for you too.

Yours, Dany