

DDS—Communication—5 and 5 (2)

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“Now everyone must be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger; for a man’s anger does not bring about the righteousness of God.” James 1:19b-20

5 and 5 is a communication tool.

It is not unusual in any relationship— a marriage, in business, in fellowship, in a friendship—for one or both or more to feel they have not been heard or listened to.

5 and 5 gives all involved the uninterrupted time and space to say all he or she needs or wants to say, and provides a means by which the listeners may better hear and receive what is said.

Here’s how it works:

1. To begin, all involved review these guidelines to fully understand how the 5 and 5 works.
2. All involved agree to abide by the guidelines.
3. Each person will have an opportunity to speak, if he or she needs or wants to.
4. Each person is encouraged to have a way to make note of thoughts as others speak.

The guidelines:

1. To begin, we pray:
 - a. Father, in the Name of Jesus, by You, Holy Spirit, please Protect Anoint Inspire and Direct (PAID) us in this time.
2. The first speaker:
 - a. The one who speaks first can be decided:
 - i. By the consensus of those involved, or by
 - ii. The toss of a coin, or by
 - iii. A volunteer.
 - iv. If there are more than two involved, the speakers can then share by going in a circle.
3. Notations:
 - a. While each person speaks all others listen.
 - b. While listening, the listeners may have thoughts they want to share; all are encouraged to make note of their thoughts to retain them, and to share these thoughts when it is their turn to speak.
4. Protected Speaking:
 - a. In Protected Speaking, we do not interrupt the speaker with any comments or questions.
 - b. This includes quick comments like, “I agree,” or “That’s not true,” “What do you mean by that?” or “That’s a good idea.”
 - c. If you have an idea or question, make a note.
 - d. Even brief comments can derail the speaker from their “train” of thinking.
 - e. Not interrupting allows the person to say all that he or she needs or wants to say.
 - f. At times, there may be humor; polite laughter is allowed...and encouraged.
5. Timed Speaking:
 - a. To be sure that everyone has an equal opportunity to speak, the speaking is timed.
 - b. Please note, it need not always be limited to 5 minutes; the shares may be 10, 15, or 20 minutes, whatever time limit is decided on by the participants.
 - c. At first, Timed Speaking can be difficult for some who feel or think they cannot say all they want or need to say in the limited time; those who have used 5 and 5 have come to

- find they can hone their speaking to effectively cover their points within the time; if needed, the group can also decide to add more timed shares.
- d. Depending on the situation, there may be one or multiple timed opportunities to speak.
 - e. A person need not use all of the allotted time, but we do ask that each person stay within the time limit, ending their share when their time has ended.
 - f. We invite each person to time him or herself as this increases our sense of the lengths of time.
6. My Story:
- a. We also strongly recommend the use of “My Story.”
 - b. My Story invites each person to reveal themselves—what they think and feel about a topic.
 - c. My Story helps to prevent our telling “Your Story,” that is, critiquing another or telling another what they should do or think.
 - d. In My Story we are attentive to pronouns, which helps us to stay focused on revealing ourselves, using “I” statements rather than “You,” or “We” statements.
 - e. The “I” pronoun helps us to keep the sharing personal, which can best prepare us for how they Lord may want to transform us regarding the topic.
7. Just One Topic (JOT):
- a. A tendency in conversation is to “Topic Slide,” which means we can slide over multiple topics during our share.
 - b. If a decision is needed about the topic, it is best if we focus our speaking on the one topic.
 - c. This does not mean that other topics will not be covered; these are placed on a list for the appropriate time.
 - d. It can be helpful, in one of the first times of speaking, to determine the topics and prioritize which topics are most important and most need attention.
 - e. If participants are just beginning to use the 5 and 5, it may be best to begin with “non-hot” topics, that is, topics that are not inflammatory, topics that do not carry a great deal of emotion.
8. Thanking the Person:
- a. After each person has shared, we invite all listeners to say, “Thank you.”
 - b. This simple phrase indicates that all of us who have been listening have heard and received what has been said.
 - c. This simple phrase is very encouraging to the speaker as well, appreciating their openness, vulnerability and honesty.
9. By Hands:
- a. If the group decides on having an open discussion on the topic, after individual shares, we find “By Hands” increases order, and ensures that everyone who wants to speak has the opportunity to do so.
 - b. “By Hands” asks that each person raise his or her hand if he or she would like to speak.
 - c. If there is an open discussion, it is best if there is a facilitator who can, in order, call on those who have raised their hands to speak.

May the Lord Jesus bless your use of the 5 and 5.

May He truly Protect Anoint Inspire and Direct (PAID) all of your conversations so that all involved come to know each other in ways that allow God’s harmony and God’s peace at all times.