



This issue builds resilience in...

Conflict Resolution

Avoiding Overwhelm

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Cleaning up the emotional mess...

Have you ever been in a situation where the 'camel's back breaks' by that 'last straw' and someone has grabbed the opportunity to 'let it all out'? The volcano blows and suddenly all those pent up grievances come tumbling out, "...and another thing...". This style of releasing anger and frustration is sometimes called 'kitchen sinking', where everything is thrown into the mix, 'including the kitchen sink', leaving no stone unturned.

Dirty dishes, dishevelled dynamics...

Dirty emotional dishes are those things that stack up and sound like, "One day I'm going to say something about this." It's that long list of things which make you feel upset. Keeping the lid on these can create an emotional pressure cooker and when pent up frustration and points of difference finally come out, the emotional storm can overwhelm the 'offending party'.

Just like leaving all the dishes in the sink for a week creates a painful wash up, so too leaving anger to fester really damages relationship dynamics and can be hard to clean up. Dishes done one meal at a time are simple, easy and don't take long. Consider doing the same with the little frustrations and points of difference.

Deal with them at the time, focus on just **one** incident and be clear about what outcome would be better and how this might be achieved. It's easier to resolve differences when it's not overwhelming. Resolving small points of difference actually creates the greatest long term impact on reducing conflict and anger in relationships.

Now the dishes are clean...

Part two of minimising volcanic eruptions is to start with a clean page. Once the mess is gone, throw away that list of grievances and give up the 'kitchen sinking'. It's not fair on anyone to rehash past mistakes. What matters more is, what can be learned from the experience and how can things be done differently and more effectively in the future. Everyone deserves the chance to start with a blank page once an agreement is reached. Draw the line in the sand on the past and move forward with positive expectations. Have courage to trust someone to live up to their best potential rather than their worst. People thrive when given the chance to make a positive change.

- ✓ Angry outbursts can easily escalate into major eruptions when rehashing old grievances.
- ✓ Don't let frustrations fester. Take action and sort things out one incident at a time.
- ✓ Give people the chance to start with a clean page and move forward.

"I have often regretted my speech, never my silence."

Xenocrates