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# **Chapter 11 Assignment**

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Obstacles in life are unavoidable. They present themselves constantly throughout our lives in drastically differing ways, with wildly different rewards and consequences. Interpersonal conflicts are no different, and like most of the obstacles that we are faced with in life, the result of them tends to correlate with the level of effort that we exert toward overcoming them.

In my personal relationships, I would say that I utilize all the styles of managing conflict depending on the situation. However, I tend to avoid conflicts for longer than I should. I think there are several reasons that I do this, including my cultural upbringing, emotional fatigue, and minimal interdependence on others.

My cultural upbringing plays a distinct role in my choice of conflict style, especially when I choose to avoid conflict. In my family, conflict rarely results in resolution. Rather, it is delayed using competing style conflict, with the louder, more aggressive person winning. While this does usually make holidays interesting to say the least, it often results in long-term resentment, family event hiatuses, and sometimes years of conflict avoidance between family members. It is because of this, presumably, that I have developed an instinctual, knee-jerk reaction to resolve conflict by either accommodating to keep the peace, or more frequently avoid conflict all together to minimize the loss of face that can result from aggressive, counterproductive, competitive conflicts style conflicts.

Another contributing factor to the way I handle conflicts is emotional fatigue. I attribute this fatigue to my role at work as a sales/customer service representative for the company I work for. Being that most of my day is spent either negotiating with customers or managing conflict on my company’s behalf, I often find myself being completely emotionally drained at the end of the day, and so I avoid personal conflicts so that I can take a much-needed break from conflict.

Lastly, and likely the most impactful factor in my avoidance, is that I have minimal interdependence on others. I cannot say that it is for better or worse, but in the face of conflict I usually think to myself one of two things: “live and let live”, or “what would Buddha do?”. It is through this conflict management strategy, and personality and communication competence that I have developed what I consider to be a high tolerance for disagreement, and so my cognitive assessment often leads me to determine that the consequences of conflict are likely greater than the rewards, and so I avoid the conflict entirely.

Although there are many times that my avoidance is productive, especially when I can cognitively assess that the reason that I feel conflicted is not a big deal. In these instances, it is productive to me to just move forward without letting the conflict bother me. At other times, however there are times where my choice to avoid conflict has resulted in me feeling resentful toward the person responsible, and that resentment like could have been avoided had I used a different style of conflict. For example, about a month ago when I avoided asking receptionist at my chiropractor’s office how much it would cost to be seen by the doctor. As I was leaving the receptionist told me that she did not have a bill for me because my insurance had not responded to her yet. I told her that was fine and continued to schedule a follow up appointment. I continued to avoid the conflict for seven appointments, and because of not engaging in conflict, I was billed for all the appointments, each of which were not covered by my insurance plan. Had I engaged in conflict and told her that I would not schedule a follow-up appointment before knowing how much it would cost, I would have saved hundreds of dollars by finding an in-network chiropractor to go to, which is what I will do next time I find myself in that situation.

**670 Words**