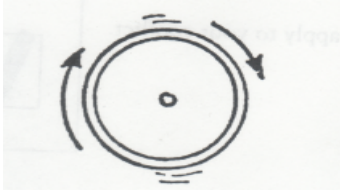


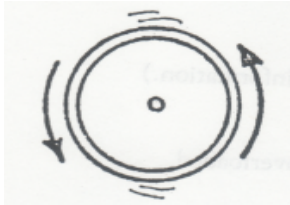
The Conflict Cycle

Conflict between two people can be viewed as a spinning wheel. In the physical world, by the law of inertia, *things tend to continue as they are*. A wheel spinning in this direction



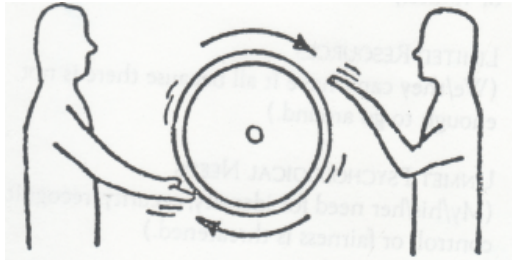
.....tends to keep going that way.

And a wheel spinning in the opposite direction



.....tends to continue that way.

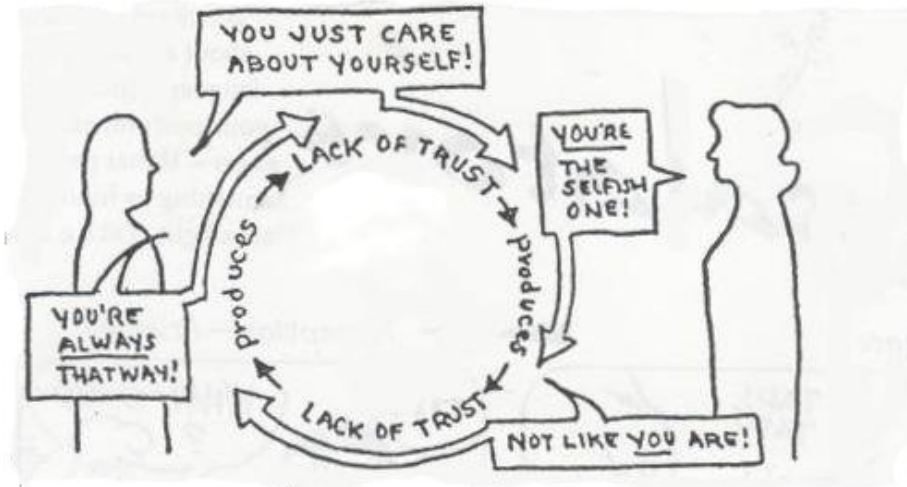
Once moving, a slight push in the same direction from either person, **keeps it moving**. If each continues to push in this way, stopping soon becomes very difficult.



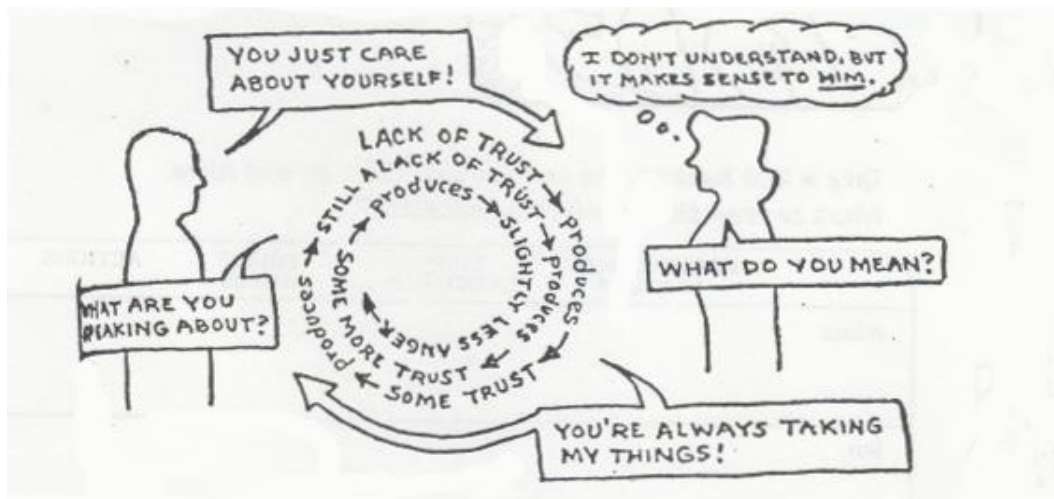
In the world of relationships, there seems to be a law of “emotional inertia” in which things tend to continue as they are...



Once moving in a particular direction a “slight push” from either person will keep things moving in the same direction.



It can take a conscious act of will to slow down or stop the “spinning wheel,” to “not push” by withholding judgment, trusting and listening.



Once this has happened, a new atmosphere is present which prepares the way for creative solutions.

And of course, this is true of larger groups of people, too: two families in a neighborhood who keep having disagreements, two groups of students at school who get on each other’s nerves, two countries....

These pages on the Conflict Cycle borrow heavily from William Pietsch’s excellent book Human be-ing: how to have a creative relationships instead of a power struggle, pages 85-87.