

## Disagreement

### *Is Greed Meant?*

In many situations people disagree with others without truly understanding why. Sometimes people disagree for conceited reasons, perhaps secretly to get their own point across. Some people disagree to be adversarial. Sometimes disagreement grows from minor details or word choices, instead of from ideas. Many people greedily hold on to an opinion simply because they are the proud owners of that possession. Dislodging them from an entrenched view can be difficult, especially since many people take personal offense to disagreement. After all, if you disagree with me, maybe I'm *wrong*.

Many disagreements come from not fully understanding the other person's point of view, so the first goal of a seminar participant is to listen carefully and to ask questions until understanding comes. In seminar, when students disagree, they should be able present their disagreement in a constructive way. This first requires that they fully comprehend the position enough to actually disagree with it. Then, in order to remain objective, they should agree or disagree with the ideas, not the people who presented them. According to Mortimer Adler, if after listening and understanding, you still disagree with someone, there are four basic responses / responsibilities.

<b>You believe the other person:</b>	<b>Adler's Disagreement Phrase</b>	<b>Adler's Suggested Action</b>
<b>Is Uninformed</b>	"I think you hold that position because you are uninformed about certain facts or reasons that have a critical bearing on it."	Indicate the necessary information that the other person is lacking, which, if possessed, would result in a change of mind.
<b>Is Misinformed or Mistaken</b>	"I think you hold that position because you are misinformed about matters that are critically relevant."	Indicate the mistakes that the other has made, which, if corrected, would lead the other to abandon the position taken.
<b>Has Drawn the Wrong Conclusion</b>	"I think you are sufficiently well informed and have a firm grasp of the evidence and reasons that support your position, but you have drawn the wrong conclusions from your premises because you have made mistakes in reasoning. You have made fallacious inferences."	Be ready to point out those logical errors, which, if corrected, would bring the other person to a different conclusion.
<b>Has Not Reasoned Far Enough</b>	"I think you have proceeded from sound reasoning from adequate grounds for the conclusion you have reached, but I also think that your thinking about the subject is incomplete. You should have gone farther than you did and reached conclusions that somewhat alter or qualify the one you did reach."	Be able to point out these conclusions and how they alter or qualify the positions taken by the person with whom you disagree.