Conflict is most successfully approached by those who know, in the words of Sister Thea Bowman, who and Whose they are. If we are centered and are living centered lives, then we stand a much better chance of being successful—at least by our own standards. The person of deep prayer can meet adversity with a calm that the busy and harried person cannot know. Each of us can cultivate a kind of calmness in our person through the practice of daily prayer, meditation, or yoga. In this way we prepare ourselves for conflict transformation, and we prepare the way for others to share in it. All the strategies in the world cannot replace the poise and sincerity of those who live out of their own center.

Still, it is important to learn the strategies for more successful encounters with others. Those who have studied human behavior can offer tips on how to interact with persons who are different from us or who are unfamiliar to us. The field of human behavior is vast. Cultural differences make it difficult to determine what ought to be normative in many circumstances. Success in conflict situations depends first on our knowing who we are and what we want out of life. What is our bottom line? What is our greatest good? How do we wish to treat others? What if others do not treat us in the same way? What do we owe to other persons and the rest of the created world? Time spent on pondering the verities of life will go a long way to helping us become successful in meeting conflicts in our lives.