



Deeper into Conflict Coaching

Day 2 Role Play - Family Feud

Basic Facts

Lee (62 years old) and **Taylor** (58 years old) are siblings. They have joint power of attorney (ie. full legal control) over their mother Merle's property and are the only beneficiaries of her will. **Merle** is 92, has dementia and is presently living in a high care facility. Their father passed away ten years ago. The family home was sold to enable Merle to move into care, but she still owns a run down holiday home by the beach where the family used to holiday together.

Lee married first, followed ten years later by Taylor.

Taylor visits Merle weekly, and Lee visits when able. However, since Lee took a job about a year ago as a "fly in fly out" (FIFO) worker, this is difficult, and often long periods pass between visits. Taylor wants to sell and distribute the value from the holiday home that Merle still owns now, so that **Taylor and Charlie** (Taylor's spouse), can upgrade their home with some significant renovations. Taylor and Charlie often talk about their dream to be able to renovate – it's well known by anyone who knows them.

Lee and Jordan (Lee's spouse), however are unhappy because they think it's wrong to do anything with their mother's assets before Merle passes away.

Things came to a head when they all got together for Merle's last birthday two months ago...

Jordan told Charlie "You have to wait... you can't have Mum and Dad's money until Mum's gone!" This was followed by stony silence and the couples parted without resolving it.

Even though the couples attend the same church, it's been four months now since they spoke to each other. Though they have spoken negatively about each other to others in the church, including Pastor Chan, in subtle ways.

Taylor has always felt "not good enough" - and was jealous of the relationship Lee had as the first born child, with their Dad, **Max**. Max often seemed to give preference to what Lee wanted rather than what Taylor wanted.

Lee has often quietly wondered why Taylor was distant, and suspects it might be to do with Lee's close relationship with Max, but isn't sure.

Taylor thinks doing what Taylor wants with Mum's assets is one way to show that what he/she wants and thinks matters in the family too! And also means Taylor can give Charlie what Charlie desperately wants – the renovation.

Whilst the two couples have always had their differences, they have typically been able to get on cordially at family events and can talk about most things – apart from the usual taboos - politics, religion, money - or Max's treatment of Lee and Taylor!! Their spouses, until this point, seem to have also gotten on reasonably well with each other. Jordan, however, has always been a little suspicious of Charlie, who Jordan has always felt was very materialistic.

Lee's Position – *It's not right to do anything with Mum's assets until she has passed on.*

Taylor's Position – *Let's sell Mum's holiday home. She doesn't need it and we can use the money now.*