

## **A New Kind of Diversity** **by Dr. Tim Elmore**

### **EXERCISE - WHAT IF YOU REACH AN IMPASSE?**

Maggie, a general manager of a restaurant, experienced the turmoil that can come when two generations see an issue fundamentally different. Maggie was fifty-nine years old and had been working in the franchise for over 30 years so the job was second nature. She knew every product, price, and policy the brand was known for, and she embodied that brand as well as any leader could. Her life aligned with her high standards for team members.

One of those policies for all team members was no tattoos.

You can imagine the conflict of surfaced when she noticed a large, bold tattoo on the arm of one of her best team members. Antonio was twenty-five. At the end of his shift, Maggie called Antonio to her office behind the stockroom to talk about it. She tiptoed into the conversation by reminding Antonio how valuable he was to the team and how much she liked him as an employee. She could tell Antonio was becoming suspicious of her reason for the meeting.

What's wrong? he inquired, knowing something was up.

“Antonio,” she replied. “You know our restaurant policy on tattoos. Why did you get one anyway?”

“I had this when you hired me a year ago,” he retorted, beginning to get defensive.

Well, I obviously didn't see it in the interview, nor have I been on the same shift with you enough to notice it until now. I don't understand why you weren't honest with me about it.”

“Hey, you just said I'm a good worker. The tattoo is my personal business. What difference does it make if I can do my job?” Antonio was now braced for battle. His whole countenance changed.

“It makes all the difference in the world. If I let you stay here and people see the tattoo, they'll know I made an exception for you and expect one too. Not only that, but I'm sure this will get back to corporate headquarters, and my leadership will be questioned,” she explained. “Minimally, it will look like I'm playing favorites because I've had other team members ask if I'd let them stay on staff if they get one -- and I said no.”

“This is bull\*\*\*!” Antonio's voice cracked and was shaky. His lips were quivering. It was as though Maggie was invalidating part of his identity.

No matter what Maggie said to explain her predicament, It did no good. Antonio had never served in a leadership position nor been accountable for anything but his own life. The two saw the issue differently and were stuck. Antonio quickly stormed out of her office. In the days that followed, the debate got messy. Maggie's value system was colliding with Antonio's.

**If the two of them could list their core beliefs, what might they like?**

**What are Maggie's Core Beliefs:**

**What are Antonio's Core Beliefs:**