Discuss the role of EI in conflict management and resolution. How would the lack of emotional intelligence in a leader impact conflict resolution? Give an example to support your answer.

Conflict Resolution is the tricky art of identifying disconnects between people or organizations and implementing at least a compromise if not a new way of thinking and/or un-explored alternative that can be applied so everyone wins. High Emotional Intelligence (EI) (DuBrin, 2013) is required to be able to consistently assess situations from empathetic positions for all parties, and to weigh the impact of leveraging toward resolution. (Rahim, et. al., 2002) The converse is also true, that low EI can lead to complications of already frustrating situations. (Poskey)

I could relate dozens of personal stories, and not all of them focused on my having caused or exacerbated the problem at hand. I have a son whose traumatic brain injury (Fetal Alcohol Effect) results in his being diagnosed oppositional and defiant. Long before the diagnosis or the analysis took place, I noticed how my son responds to my behavior. If I see him doing something dangerous or atrocious and get loud and confrontational, he gets internally scared and/or full of self-loathing over having displeased me; and this comes out of him as a firmly set jaw and clenched fists.

When I first observed this in the five-year-old boy, I became enraged, and saw that he responded in kind – ready to take punishment before he’d admit having done anything wrong. In short order, I learned to de-escalate this boy by exemplifying slow breathing, lowered shoulders and hands, relaxed jaw and facial muscles, and a low moderate tone of voice. The response is magical, and begets a boy who is sad and ready to explore what social cue he is missing or how he can do a thing better. He is eleven now, and may survive to adulthood yet…

Rahim, M. Afzalur, Psenicka, Clement, Polychroniou, Panagiotis and Zhao, Jing-Hua. (2002). *A Model of Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management Strategies: A Study in Seven Countries.* International Journal of Organizational Analysis, Vol. 10, No. 4.

Poskey, M. (n.d.). Retrieved from http://www.zeroriskhr.com/articles/emotionalintelligence.aspx