love-skills and tools
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Ephesians 4:13-15 (NIV)
13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. 14 Then we

will no

Ephesians 4:13-15 (NIV)
longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Ephesians 4:13-15 (NIV)
15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.

Speaking the truth in love

1. Emulate 'gentle Jesus'
a) exercise extra wisdom, discernment, patience & longsuffering around the so-called 'difficult' people.

2 Timothy 2:23-25 (NASB)
"But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient

b) most people can be appeased

2 Timothy 2:23-25 (NASB)
when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth"

Proverbs 25:15 (NLT)
"Patience can persuade a prince, and soft speech can break bones".

2. Be deliberate and gratuitous
a) with your grace and patience - focus on the person and off the issues
Philippians 4:5 (NIV)
"Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near".

3. Vacate the judgment seat to GOD

a) only He possesses perfect knowledge. Therefore only He may pronounce judgement according to perfect ‘truth’.

1 Corinthians 13:9,10 (NLT)
"Now our knowledge is partial and incomplete, and even the gift of prophecy reveals only part of the whole picture! But when the time of perfection comes, these partial things will become useless".

b) humans are, at best, only capable of honesty – of perspectives on, perceptions of, and convictions around things.
Romans 3:4 (NIRV)
"... God is true, even though every human being is a liar. It is written, "You are right when you sentence me. You are fair when you judge me."

c) Clarify, in your own mind, your role: viz. sharing, confronting, ie gently and lovingly/ affirming versus condemning, accusing, 'convicting' (pressuring/ badgering)

John 16:7,8 (AMP)
"...the Comforter (Counselor, Helper, Advocate, Intercessor, Strengthener, Standby) will ... come to you... And... He will convict and convince (emphasis mine) ...

John 6:44a (AMP)
No one is able to come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me attracts and draws him and gives him the desire to come to Me...

4. Set clear boundaries (for mutual respect/ humility/meekness)

a) Eg. "in my view/ my modest opinion/ I respect your point of view" etc/ I may be wrong, or not entirely right etc [ie. show respect (through active listening) to command respect]
b) Christ-like confidence calls for humility & a resolute desire for engagement and ‘conversation’

c) learn when to "shake off the dust". Put it behind you through deliberate acts of closure. Whenever possible, do it with a witness present. [Luke 10:1; Mark 6:7]

Matthew 10:14 (HCSB)  
“If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, shake the dust off your feet when you leave that house or town.”

Learn to distinguish between a divine appointment and wasting time.

Matthew 7:6 (GNTD)  
"Do not give what is holy to dogs—they will only turn and attack you. Do not throw your pearls in front of pigs—they will only trample them underfoot."

Proverbs 11:20 (AMP)  
"They who are willfully contrary in heart are extremely disgusting and shamefully vile in the eyes of the Lord, but such as are blameless and wholehearted in their ways are His delight!"
Do not lose sight of the dignity and honour which GOD accords the messenger who appreciates the vital synergy with the watchman/ intercessor!

Isaiah 52:7,8 (AMP)
"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good tidings, who publishes peace, who brings good tidings of good, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, Your God reigns! Hark, your watchmen lift up their voices; together they sing for joy; for they shall see eye to eye the return of the Lord to Zion."