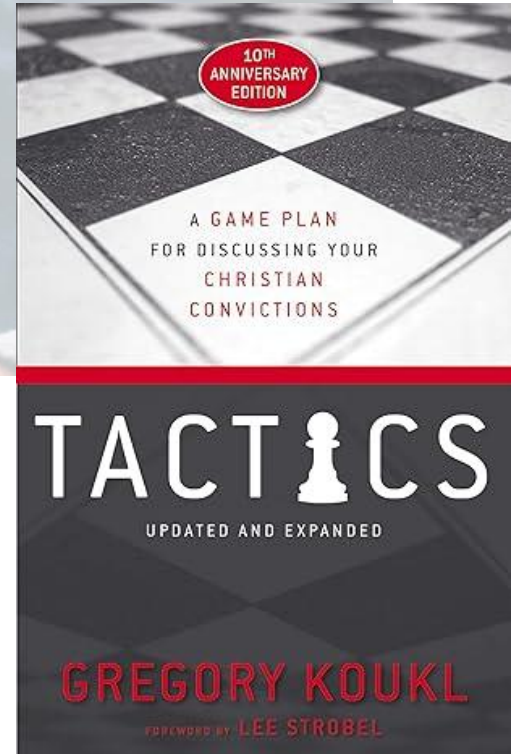




TACTICS

Skills for Spiritual Conversations

Session 2



Agenda

- Lunch – 11:40am – 12:00pm
- Prayer and Review of Week 1
- ‘Perfecting Columbo’ Tactic
- ‘Self-destruction’ Tactic
- Wrap-Up by 1:15pm



Week 1 Review

Columbo Tactic #1:

_____ do you mean by that?

Stay in the _____ in Spiritual
conversations

Columbo Tactic #2:

How did you come to that _____?

Reversing the Burden of _____



Columbo Tactic #3:

Use questions to make a point
and advance your own view



Columbo Tactic #3 - Outline

- After gathering intel with Columbo #1 and #2, target your questions using the other person's claims to make your point
- Determine the steps you need to make your point
- Ask questions to get your friend to put those steps on the table so you can use them
- Use the steps to make your point



Columbo Tactic #3 - Guidelines

- Listen carefully and think about what was said
- Do the conclusions follow from the evidence?
- Can you question any underlying assumptions?
- Search for a misstep, non sequitur, fallacy or failing in their evidence
- Always respond to the inconsistency with a question, not a statement

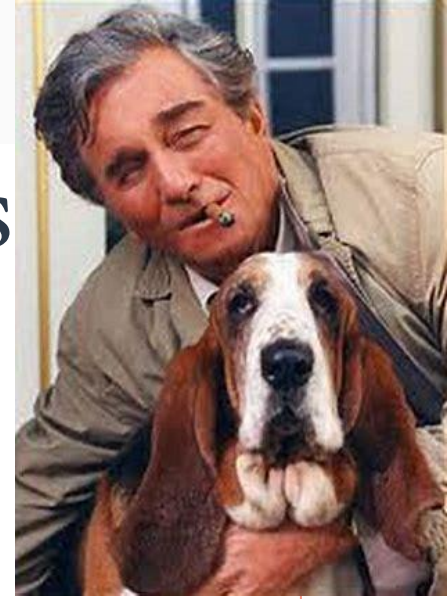


Columbo Tactic #3 – Morality Responses

- “You shouldn’t push your morality on me”
 - Simply ask “why not?”
 - Follow up that they are doing the same thing to you by commanding you to do something (Turning the Tables)



Columbo Tactic #3 – Intolerance Responses



- “You’re intolerant and arrogant”
 - Ask them to define what intolerant and arrogant means to them?
 - If they say you think they’re wrong, then ask if their views are right does that make you wrong and show the inconsistency in that argument?

Columbo Tactic #3 – Biblical Truth Responses

- “The Bible is just a bunch of myths and fables”
 - Ask if they disbelieve the Bible because miracles are impossible?
 - Ask if they think that science has disproved miracles?
 - Ask them to show how science can disprove supernatural things since science is limited to the natural world?



Columbo Tactic #3 – Truth Claim Responses

- “That’s just your interpretation of [statement]”
 - Ask if they believe that all interpretations are equally valid?
 - If that’s true, then ask if any interpretation based on your personal feelings is good as any other?
 - If you’re comfortable, make a drastic claim about their opinions (e.g. they’re racist or being unfair). Follow up that since that’s your personal interpretation of their opinion and all interpretations are valid, then there’s nothing wrong with your statement, correct?



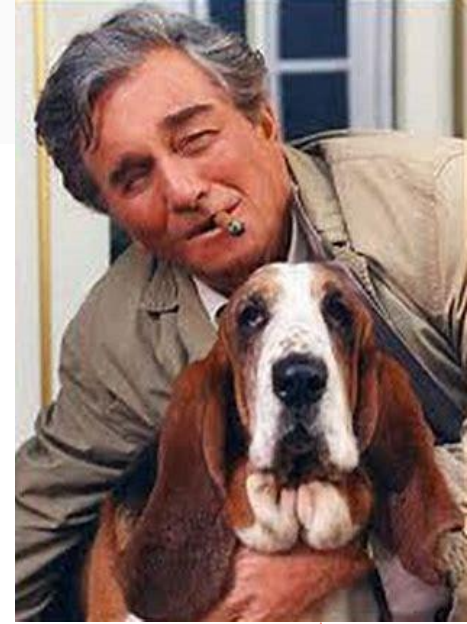
Columbo Tactic #3 – Jesus is God Responses

- “Jesus was a good man and a prophet, but he wasn’t God or the only savior”
 - Ask how Jesus could be a good man and prophet, but mistaken about His own identity and purpose?
 - Ask if Jesus made frequent claims about being the unique means to salvation and was wrong, how can we call him a wise teacher?
 - Ask if Jesus was a good man and godly prophet but not correct about it, then he must be a liar or deeply deceived, correct?
(Liar, Lunatic or Lord!)



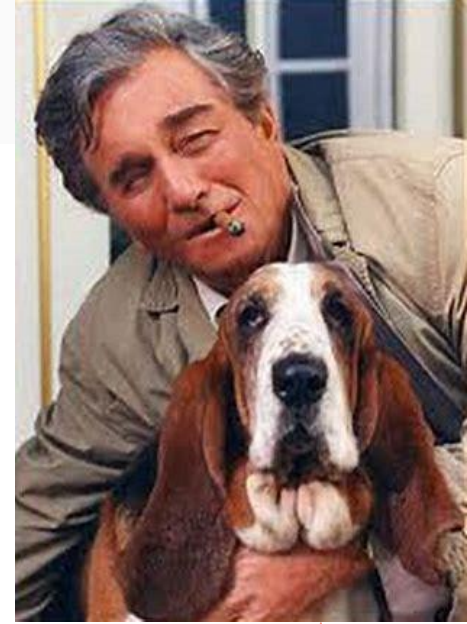
Columbo Tactic #3 – Abortion Responses

- “The fetus may be human, but it’s not a person”
 - Ask if there’s a morally relevant difference between and unborn child and a newborn that justifies killing one and not the other?
 - Ask if there are qualities of “personhood” to make this distinction?
 - Ask who gets to make this list of personhood and remind them of slavery (historically and current) which denied full personhood or protection to certain types of people but not others



Columbo Tactic #3 – Existence of God Responses

- “How can God exist when there’s so much evil in the world”
 - Ask if there’s no God and things are all subjective, how do we know what’s evil?
 - Ask if defining evil requires an objective standard (a scoring system) to know what’s evil and what’s good?
 - Ask how we can have a standard of objective good (moral rules) without the existence of a moral rule-maker, which is God?



Columbo Tactic #3 – Homosexuality Responses

- **“Homosexuality is natural”**
 - Ask if they believe that the individual was “designed” that way naturally?
 - Ask why would nature give homosexuals bodies capable of reproduction?
 - Ask why would nature give homosexuals desire for the same sex but a body built for desire of the opposite sex?



Columbo Tactic #3 – Evolution Responses

- “Evolution explains life from the beginning”
 - Ask why there’s absolutely no evidence that life can arise from lifeless matter?
 - Ask how evolution can make choices starting from only one cell and then decide to become more complex with no “competition” to help make the selection?



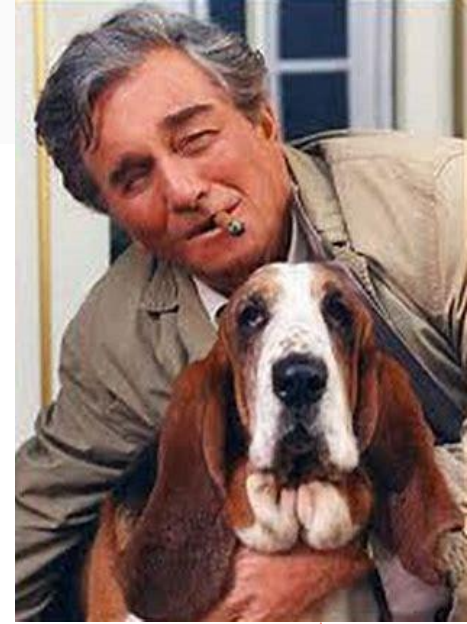
Columbo Tactic #3 – Skills to Improve

- 3 Steps to improve tactical skills on your own
 - Anticipate
 - Reflect
 - Practice



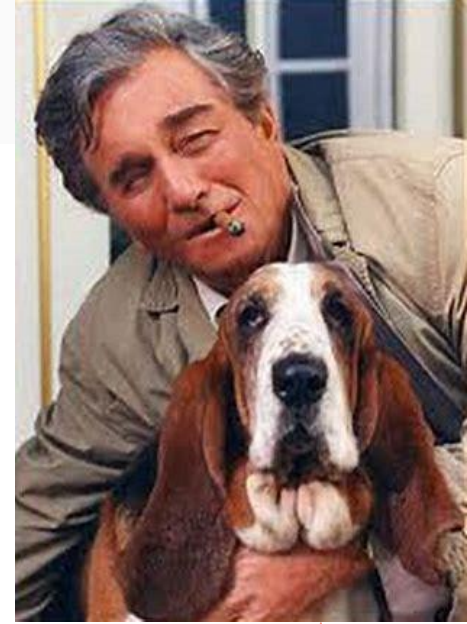
Columbo Tactic #3 – Anticipate Skill

- On your own, think about issues/ questions that have stumped you in the past
- Brainstorm straightforward responses to put you in the driver's seat
- Questions are shaped like a hook, so dig in with them!



Columbo Tactic #3 – Reflect Skill

- Following an encounter, consider questions you might have asked
- Consider how you could've been more effective with your questions/responses
- Take notes on these thoughts for future study and reference



Columbo Tactic #3 – Practice Skill

- Actually verbalize your revised questions/ answers in a safe environment
- Role-play it with a friend if possible
- Rehearsal leads to more confidence and quicker responses in the future



Tactic #4:

Self-destructing points
of view or the 'Suicide'
tactic



Self-destructing Tactic – Overview

- When a statement fails to satisfy its own criteria of validity, it self-destructs (or self-refutes)
- Reflects a fundamental rule of logic: the law of non-contradiction



Law of Non-Contradiction



- Two contradictory statements cannot be true at the same time
- “A” cannot be “non-A” at the same time, in the same way
- Also known as “mutual exclusivity”
- Examples
 - “I cannot speak a word in English” (spoken in English)
 - “You can’t know anything for sure” (refutes itself)

Contradiction Types

- Explicit
- Implicit
- Subtle
- Combined with Columbo



Explicit Contradictions

- “There are no absolutes”
- “This page intentionally left blank”



Implicit Contradictions

- “I never tell the truth”
- “My brother is an only child”
- “Ask me about my vow of silence”



Subtle Contradictions

- “You shouldn’t force your morality on me”
- Radio caller: “You shouldn’t be correcting Christian teachers publicly on the radio”



Combine Non-Contradiction with Columbo

- Ask questions to clarify the basic premise or claim being made
- Ask yourself if the statement satisfies its own requirements
- Ask yourself if there's an internal contradiction in the statement
- If you can say “[statement] is the case” and “[statement] is not the case” at the same time, then the statement is self-destructive



Sibling Rivalry

- Statements/ objections are logically inconsistent with each other
- Exposes the potential irrationality of the person making the statement/ objection



Example from Hinduism – Could Gandhi be in heaven?



- Hindu: Heaven would be a poor place without Gandhi
- Christian: What kind of people go to heaven?
- Hindu: Good people
- Christian: But what is good?
- Hindu: Good and bad is relative and is unclear
- Christian: Then how can we assume that Gandhi is good and should be in heaven?

Find the Contradiction!

- “You shouldn’t be a missionary because it’s wrong to try to change other people’s religious beliefs”
- “All religions are equally valid”
- “You can only know what has been proven by science”
- “There is no truth”
- Postmodernism: Community-based relativism that claims all “truth” – all perception of reality – is “constructed” by one’s linguistic community, and that each account of “reality” is equally and actually true for those who believe it.

