

The Four Cs of Negotiation for Resolving Differences

1. **Capitulation** – this resolution is “one-way”. One partner gives in to what the other wants. It can be done willingly (as a result of caring) or unwillingly “surrendering” as a result of force.
2. **Compromise** – this resolution is “part way”. Neither partner gets everything they want but they each get something.
3. **Coexistence** (agree to disagree) – this resolution is “no way”. Agreeing to disagree means that the disagreement has been thoroughly explored, without anger, and is open to further exploration at any time.
4. **Collaboration** – “both ways”. Partners work together to understand the real issues behind the disagreement and search for a resolution that meets the needs of both. In this resolution, each of you wins. The relationship also wins.



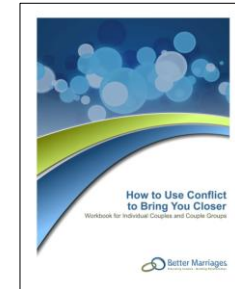
How to Handle Conflict and Anger: Process It!

“The first step in dealing with conflict is to make decisions when you are *not* angry about how you are going to act when you *are* angry.” Sarah Catron

Guidelines for processing anger:

- Acknowledge it. When anger occurs, let your partner know by using good communication skills. Be open about your feelings.
- Look behind the anger. Anger is a secondary emotion – it will remain until the primary cause has been identified, understood, and removed.
- Do not attack. Agree together not to blame, yell, criticize, use sarcasm, belittle, name call, bring up the past. Physical violence is *never* acceptable.
- Share responsibility. Regardless of where the anger originates, both individuals have equal responsibility for clearing it up.
- If needed, “cool down” first. An agreed upon “time out” can help calm the escalation of anger.

How to Use Conflict to Bring You Closer



Available in our online bookstore for immediate download. \$10.95. Find it at <http://tinyurl.com/mujg7xg>.

This workbook can be used by individual couples or in a Marriage Enrichment Group.

Includes twelve lessons reinforced by twelve couple exercises. Utilizes a pre- and post-skills inventory to show a couple just how far they've come. Also leads couples in creating a growth plan that will help them look forward and make conscious choices about what they want their relationship to look like.

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Truths about Conflict

- Conflict in marriage is inevitable and normal. All couples have conflict. But it's how you handle that conflict that is important.
- The decision to use conflict creatively to enhance your relationship is a *conscious choice*.
- Creative use of conflict views conflict as a "growth area". It is an opportunity to grow as a couple.
- When a couple uses conflict creatively, they move closer to one another rather than pushing each other further apart.

Learning to resolve conflict can help build a sound and satisfying marriage.

Couples are attracted by both their similarities and their differences. Many of the differences are seen as "assets" early in the relationship. Over time, some of these "assets", when experienced on a regular basis, can become "liabilities" and cause irritation or conflict.

Anger is a normal response to conflict. Anger isn't bad – but it can be bad if used in hurtful ways.

Anger is powerful. It's a source of energy, like gasoline, that is explosive and destructive if mishandled. However, this same energy, properly managed, has enormous potential for constructive uses. That energy can bring a couple closer together.

Exercise: How Anger Affects YOUR relationship

Find a time and place where you can talk privately as a couple. Individually, answer the following questions. When you are finished, share your answers with your partner.

1. Recall a situation in which you have been irritated or angry with your partner. (Choose a small conflict for this exercise – not the big, scary, chronic ones).
2. In addition to anger, list other feelings you had.
3. What things make you vulnerable to irritations and conflicts? Fatigue? Traffic snarls? Stress?
4. How do you typically behave when you're angry?

After you have each shared, is there some change you are personally willing to make in the way you handle anger? If so, can you each agree to help each other make that change?

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CREATIVE USE OF CONFLICT



"I feel like our marriage is coming apart when we get mad at each other!"

"Does conflict mean our marriage is on the rocks?"

"We fight all the time. What is wrong with us?"

Conflict in Marriage! The pages that follow are designed to help you look at conflict in your relationship, to understand it, and to learn how you can use it to make your marriage better!

Creatively use conflict to bring you closer? Yes, you can!

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