

# CONFLICT RESOLUTION: HOW TO FIGHT FAIR

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## WORKSHEET #11

"Unhappy spouses may hope that time heals all wounds and the relationship will get better. But the happy couples try to resolve problems rather than outlast them." – LAUER

Disagreement? Conflict is NORMAL, OK, human.

### Ground Rules:

1. Stick to the issue: one issue at a time.
2. DO NOT dredge up past grievances.
3. DO NOT blame.
4. DO NOT engage in the Power Struggle.
5. Attack the problem, NOT the person.

### The Process:

1. COMMUNICATE:  
"I – messages" and reflective listening.
2. Define the problem.
3. List possible solutions.
4. Discuss pros and cons of each.
5. Decide.

### Decision:

1. Consensus "us"
2. Policy
3. Compromise
4. Set another date; keep talking
5. Agree to disagree
6. Seek professional help

## QUESTIONS TO PONDER

### Self:

- Do I take responsibility for letting my spouse know that I feel there is a problem between us?
- Do I turn disagreements into power struggle to get my way?
- Do I play the Blame Game – attacking my spouse instead of the problem?
- Do I cloud the issue by dredging up past grievances and mixing a lot of issues together?
- Am I willing to compromise?

### In Relation to My Spouse:

- Do I refuse to discuss/deal with issues/problems for which my spouse has expressed concern or disagreement?
- Do I allow myself to get "hooked" into the Power Struggle or Blame Game?
- Do I do everything I can to encourage calm discussions and mutual decisions?