

LESSON 11:

Conflict Resolution: How to Fight Fair

Avoidance

Resolution

Vicious Fights

“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, OKAY, HUMAN.

GROUND RULES:

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

THE PROCESS:

- Communicate using “I” messages and reflective listening.
- Define the problem.
- List possible solutions.
- Discuss pros and cons of each.
- Decide.

DECISION:

- Consensus “us”
- Policy
- Compromise
- Set another date
- Keep talking
- Agree to disagree
- Seek professional help.

TOOLS FOR YOUR TOOLBOX

Sample Policies p. 60

Scripture Notations:
Fair Fighting p. 48

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

A hot-tempered
person starts fights;
a cool-tempered person
stops them.

Proverbs 15:18, NLT

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 a 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?