



7 Ways to Resolve Conflict Peacefully



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7 WAYS TO RESOLVE CONFLICT PEACEFULLY



According to John Gottman, who is world-renowned for his work on marital stability and divorce prediction, conflict in marriage is unavoidable.

He says, “Although we tend to equate a low level of conflict with happiness, a lasting relationship results from a couple’s ability to manage the conflicts that are inevitable in any relationship.”

Many people assume that if they have arguments with their significant other that means the relationship is flawed or doomed. This is far from true.

In fact, couples who do not communicate well enough to have a difference of opinion are much more likely to have low relationship satisfaction. It is better to know where your partner stands, even if you don’t agree, rather than be placated by insincere agreement.

So here are my 7 ways to resolve conflict peacefully and achieve a happily-ever-after relationship.

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1. Keep Your Conversation Focused

By keeping your conversation focused on the issue and not each other you will remain steadfast in resolving the issue at hand. Bringing up personal habits, coping skills, and past failures will distract from a clear and informative argument.

Define the issue, so you are both discussing the same idea and stay on task. You may have heard such statements as, “We are just not on the same page.” Don’t get side-tracked. Calling out each other’s past failures will only result in defensiveness.

2. Timing Is Crucial

The sooner you decide to discuss the issue, the better. Sleeping on things may be good for big decisions like buying a new car or where to spend your long-needed vacation. But a disagreement that is not promptly addressed can fester into resentment and push the two of you apart.

Time is not on your side. Time can do all sorts of mischief, including magnifying the issue. So be prudent and get to it. Letting time pass before bringing up your dissatisfaction will eventually result in resentment. Resentment is much more difficult to get through, so air your differences as soon as you can.

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3. Use “I” Statements

Don't generalize about how men or women are or tell your partner others would agree with you. Expressing feelings helps your partner see how the issue affects you.

Being able to take responsibility for your part also gives credibility to the position you take in the argument.

We all have some part in a conflict and being up front with it allows your partner to feel less attacked or just confused. You might say: “I feel sad (or confused, or attacked) by your comments. I would appreciate it if you could approach this differently.”

4. Seek To Understand The Other Point Of View

Ask questions to better understand why your partner is passionate about the issue. Listen without judgment.

Information plays a key role in all problem-solving discussions. Once you know what you and your partner need to get out of any solution, it will become much easier to craft a compromise that will really work for both of you.

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5. Remember The Importance Of Your Relationship

Why did you get married in the first place? How did you feel about each other when you crossed the threshold into love? What it was that you saw in him or her that made you want to live happily ever after together?

If you feel that your ability to feel love for your partner is getting a little thin, take a deep breath and a moment of silence to recall these important times. It is said that a picture is worth a 1000 words. Make it visual.

6. Personal Touch Brings Calmness

If your feelings are not too heated, perhaps you can hold hands when you talk. Personal touch brings a closeness and calmness to the scene. It is grounding. If holding hands is not your thing, maybe a small hug or touch or pat on the back will work.

I sometimes suggest that before outlining a conflict, you say to your partner, "I have something that is hard for me to bring up. So, before I do that I want you to know that I love you, and I am grateful to have you in my life."

Maintain eye contact as you explain your position. Be in the moment. A soft start-up will go a long way toward a peaceful discussion.

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7. Pick Your Setting

We all know that important conversations that take place in the car on the way to work or the airport tend to escalate. It also doesn't work to try to have a heart-to-heart talk when the two of you must be someplace, and you don't really have time to listen.

Maybe the two of you can sit on the porch or take comfortable seats in the living room with no distractions. Find out what is a good time to have a discussion.

Some of us are morning people and love to chat over our first cup of coffee. Others find the evening more peaceful after the work day is done. Sitting at a desk or standing in the kitchen while trying to peacefully argue will not get the desired results. Don't be doing something else while attempting to solve a conflict. Give each other the respect and importance of relating your needs.

Maybe you can add your own preferences to this list.

The main thing to keep in mind is that practice makes perfect. The adult point of view is that conflict is not a bad thing, and any couple needs to create space for airing points of view.

With some small effort and consistent applications of these tools, I feel certain that conflict management will become easier for both of you.

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If you enjoyed reading these 7 tips for resolving conflict peacefully you may be interested in reading my book ["He Said, She Said, I Said"](#) which offers simple ideas and approaches for reframing your interactions with your significant other.

You may see yourself in several of the statements that people in relationships have made about different experiences and circumstances in their lives. What helped create a happily ever after was the decision to change.

Norman Vincent Peale once said: "Change your thoughts and change your world."

Please also visit my website for helpful articles, to see other relationship books I have authored, or for relationship coaching information at <https://barbarajpeters.com>.

