

Conflict and Repair

Generates Conflict	Repairs Conflict
Change Agenda: trying to increase or decrease the frequency of your partner's behavior	Acceptance: changing your own emotional reaction to or perceptions of your partner's unwanted behavior
Seeing problems as a power struggle, change efforts and conflict	Seeing problems as opportunities for vulnerability, connection, and intimacy
Problem is YOU	Problem is IT; externalize the problem and be specific about what is upsetting. Remember that you care about this person.
Emotionally enmeshed with problem	Intellectual analysis of problem
Use of coercive behaviors and Four Horsemen (criticism, defensiveness, contempt, stonewalling)	Express problem as complaint, focusing specifically on your feelings and reactions to specific behaviors or events
Express hard emotions: anger, hostility, resentment, power and control around a conflict	Express soft emotions: vulnerability, sadness, fear, doubt, uncertainty, danger, and disappointment
React with a negative response	Use positive affect to de-escalate conflict: agreement, approval, humor, assent, laughter, positive physical contact, smiling
Gridlock over perpetual problems	Open dialogue about perpetual problems. Accept incomplete resolution. Avoid preoccupation with past disappointments.
Refusing compromise or partner influence	Be agreeable! Search for a common ground. (This doesn't mean just going along with what someone says to keep the peace.)
Polarization	Support and soothe one another; express your appreciation; gratitude for differences
Emotional reactivity; strong Fight or Flight response	Time outs, relaxation and mindfulness exercises; individual therapy and additional workshops. Choose a good time to talk when you are calmer