

MANAGING CONFLICT

Conflict Management - the process by which disputes are resolved or where negative results are minimized and positive results are prioritized.

When one or both of you are flooded, trying to have an effective conversation is not only impossible, but can also be harmful.

When flooded, you need to engage in physiological self-soothing to decrease your heart rate and bring your body to a state of calm.

On average, this can take about 20 minutes.

ANTIDOTE TO FLOODING

Physiological Self-Soothing - techniques that help you calm down and relax when you are feeling overwhelmed both physically and emotionally.

Try this out:

- Go for a walk, a run, or take a drive
- Color, paint, do some kind of craft
- Go to the gym
- Practice mindfulness skills such as meditation
- Engage in muscle relaxation or breathing techniques
- Connect with a friend – grab coffee

To Note: It is easy while taking a break, to engage in thoughts about what your partner has done or said, to replay the argument, or to think about past frustrations with your partner. Doing this will only keep you in a negative space and potentially keep you flooded.

SET YOURSELF UP FOR SUCCESS

To best manage conflict, it is helpful to have “**Rules for Fighting.**”

- Know what you and your partner need when confronted with conflict.
- Decide how and when to take a break.
- Decide how long the break needs to be.
- Discuss where or how you will meet up to approach the discussion.
- Remember the compromise.

Compromise can be difficult. However, it is much easier when you recognize the benefits of giving to get. Relationship stability and happiness are impacted by allowing your partner to have influence.

Influence is key to both conflict management and compromise.

THE IMPORTANCE OF REPAIR

A **repair attempt** is “any statement or action– silly or otherwise – that prevents negativity from escalating out of control.”

We all repair in different ways. Just like love languages, how we repair may look different from our partners repair attempts.

Try this out:

- Say you are sorry.
- Do something nice for your partner.
- Find a way to connect “Do you want to go for a walk.”
- Give your partner a hug.
- Make your partner laugh

RITUALS OF CONNECTION CREATE SHARED MEANING

Rituals of connection are “structured events or routines, that you each enjoy and depend on, and that reflect and reinforce your sense of togetherness.”

Life dreams can provide a foundation for shared activities and these often become meaningful rituals of connection.

Try this out:

- Try a new activity with your partner.
- Schedule a yearly weekend getaway – just the two of you!
- Look through your wedding album each anniversary.
- Read a book together.
- Find an exercise routine you both enjoy – biking, hiking, pickle ball.
- Rituals foster deeper meaning in your relationship and a deeper connection with your partner.