

RESPECTFUL CONFLICT AGREEMENT

The purpose of this agreement is to create a safe and intimate environment for conversations when we are in conflict by establishing respectful conflict guidelines and boundaries that allow the healthy expression of feelings to ensure they are heard.

1. We agree that we are allies and on the same team.
2. We agree to review this agreement weekly and before attempting to resolve any conflict. We each agree to do our utmost to uphold this agreement.
3. We will begin the conversation by reviewing our Communications Agreement, and if felt necessary by either party, RCA Safety Guidelines.
4. If either of us need a "time out" to cool off we agree *in advance* that the first time out will be for 15 minutes. The person requesting the time out agrees to state something like: "I need a time out for 15 minutes, I am not leaving the relationship."
5. We agree to limit discussions of loaded topics to 20 minutes. A timer can be used if either partner wishes. When the time is up we will either agree to continue or reschedule a time to complete the conversation. We agree not to attempt to discuss loaded topics before 9:00 AM or after 9:00 PM.
6. We agree we will not name-call, shame, use offensive language or blame our partner.
7. We agree we will not be physically or emotionally abusive. This includes, and is not limited to, shoving, hitting, door slamming or throwing objects. We also agree not to engage in threatening behavior that we know our partner fears, such as threatening abandonment or exile. If either one of us is in fear of the other due to the conflict we agree to be honest about our feelings.
8. We agree to identify the issue that needs discussion and to keep the conversation about the issue at hand. Understanding the issue at hand may have triggered a "core" issue from the past or family of origin, we agree to attempt to differentiate between the present and the past.
9. We agree not to attempt to resolve a conflict or engage in "fighting" behavior at the following times; while driving; while in bed; during the workday or at a place of employment; when hostile behavior may escalate; and/or when either partner is feeling low, vulnerable, tired, hungry or "not up to the task".
10. We also agree not to attempt to resolve conflict while in public or around family members. If conflict erupts during these times we agree to acknowledge the upset feelings and agree not to abandon or walk away from the upset person, rather to treat the upset person with kindness.
11. We agree to close a conflict resolution conversation with a couple affirming prayer.
12. We agree to reach out to our sponsor couple, or another couple, if either of us feel we are unable to remain respectful in our attempt to resolve the conflict.

We enter into this agreement willingly and lovingly:

_____ Partner "A" _____ Partner "B" _____ Date

Lovingly witnessed by our sponsor couple:

_____ Sponsor "A" _____ Sponsor "B" _____ Date