

Attachment-Based Couples Conflict Guide

By: Dr. Jessica, Clinical Therapist and Community Psychologist



INTRODUCTION

Hi, I'm Dr. Jessica.

I'm honored to guide you on this journey towards resolving conflict in your relationships. With over a decade of experience as a clinical therapist and community psychologist, I have had the privilege of working extensively in the realms of couples therapy and sex therapy. Through my work, I've witnessed firsthand the power of using communication techniques to nurture and strengthen the bonds that hold partnerships together.

Relationships are intricate tapestries woven with threads of love, understanding, and mutual support. As a therapist, I've helped countless couples navigate conflict, empowering them to repair, reconnect, and reignite the flames of their love.

This worksheet is designed specifically for those who wish to enhance their ability to communicate with their partners both non-verbally and verbally. It's a tool for improving communication, strengthen emotional bonds, and for fostering more secure attachment between partners.

These resources are meant to encourage open communication, vulnerability, with the focus of fostering an environment where your relationship can thrive. Remember, the journey towards building a stronger, more fulfilling partnership begins with understanding, empathy, and communicating through disagreements.



OBJECTIVE

Navigating Conflict in Your Relationship

The following worksheets are designed to help you effectively navigate the couple's conflicts or arguments using the principles of Emotional Focused Couples Therapy (EFCT) and Attachment-Based Theory.

It aims to improve communication, strengthen emotional bonds, and foster a more secure attachment between partners.

Whether you're seeking to improve your communication skills, or just looking for tools to help you better communicate with your partner, this guide is here to support you.

Let's embark on this journey together, as we explore the transformative potential of successfully navigating conflicts in your relationship. [So, let's get started!](#)



Instructions – Review each step before proceeding to the next worksheet or discussion.



Step 1: Set a Calm Tone

Take a few moments to calm yourselves before discussing the issue. Agree to approach the conversation with empathy, openness, and a willingness to understand each other's perspectives.

Step 2: Identify and Share Feelings

Each partner takes turns expressing their feelings about the conflict or issue. Use "I" statements to avoid sounding accusatory (e.g., "I feel hurt when..." instead of "You always..."). Be honest and vulnerable.

Step 3: Reflect on Attachment Needs

Consider how the current conflict might be connected to unmet attachment needs. Ask yourselves if you're seeking closeness, validation, reassurance, or comfort in this situation.

Step 4: Validate Each Other's Emotions

Acknowledge and validate your partner's feelings, even if you don't necessarily agree with their perspective. Let them know that their emotions are understood and accepted.

Step 5: Identify Negative Interaction Patterns

Together, identify any recurring negative patterns in your conflicts (e.g., blame-shame cycles, stonewalling, criticism). Discuss how these patterns impact your emotional connection.

Step 6: Practice Active Listening

Practice active listening when your partner shares their perspective. Avoid interrupting and focus on understanding their emotions and needs. Paraphrase and validate their feelings to show empathy.

Step 7: Express Your Needs Clearly without Being Defensive

Clearly express your needs to your partner, using "I" statements. Share what would make you feel more secure and emotionally connected.

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Step 8: Explore Underlying Insecurities

Discuss any underlying insecurities or fears that may be contributing to the conflict. Be patient and compassionate while addressing sensitive topics.

Step 9: Brainstorm Solutions

Collaboratively generate potential solutions to the conflict. Consider compromises and alternative approaches that meet both partners' needs.

Step 10: Choose a Resolution

Select a resolution that feels mutually acceptable and supportive of your emotional bond. Be open to revisiting the solution if needed.

Step 11: Implement the Resolution

Put the chosen resolution into action, and commit to making the necessary changes to improve your relationship. Remember that progress may take time, so be patient with each other.

Step 12: Reconnect and Reaffirm

Together, identify any recurring negative patterns in your conflicts (e.g., blame-shame cycles, stonewalling, criticism). Discuss how these patterns impact your emotional connection.

Remember, conflict is a normal part of relationships, and resolving it in a healthy way can lead to increased trust and intimacy. Continuously practicing these steps will strengthen your emotional connection and overall relationship satisfaction. If you find yourselves stuck or needing additional support, don't hesitate to seek guidance from a qualified couples therapist trained in EFT.

FROM HERE, CONTINUE TO THE CONFLICT RESOLUTION COUPLES WORKSHEET. EACH PERSON SHOULD FILL OUT STEPS ONE THROUGH FOUR. THEN, JOIN WITH YOUR PARTNER TO NAVIGATE THROUGH STEPS 5-9.

Conflict Resolution Couples Worksheet

By: Dr. Jessica Swenson, LCPC



UNDERSTANDING ATTACHMENT NEEDS & EMOTIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Instructions: This worksheet is designed to help couples identify and articulate their attachment needs, emotions, and desired resolutions during conflicts or arguments.

By completing this worksheet individually and then discussing the responses together, you can gain a deeper understanding of each other's perspectives and work towards a mutually satisfying resolution.

Step 1: Self-Reflection

Take some quiet time to reflect on the recent conflict or argument. Write down the following:

- A. Briefly describe the conflict or issue that triggered the argument.
- B. Identify your primary emotions during the conflict (e.g., anger, sadness, fear, frustration).
- C. Reflect on any underlying attachment needs that may have been activated during the conflict (e.g., the need for comfort, reassurance, validation, closeness).

YOUR RESPONSES:

A. Conflict/Issue: _____

B. Primary Emotions: _____

C. Attachment Needs: _____

Step 2: Identifying Your Partner's Perspective

Try to put yourself in your partner's shoes. Guess what emotions and attachment needs they might have experienced during the conflict. Write down your assumptions.

YOUR RESPONSES:

Your Partner's Emotions: _____

Your Partner's Attachment Needs: _____

Step 3: Desired Resolution

Consider what type of resolution would help meet your attachment needs and bring a sense of emotional closeness with your partner. Write down your preferred resolution to the conflict.

YOUR RESPONSES:

Your Desired Resolution: _____

Step 4: Understanding Your Partner's Desired Resolution

Now, imagine what kind of resolution your partner might desire to meet their attachment needs and emotional well-being. Write down your assumptions.

YOUR RESPONSES:

Your Partner's Desired Resolution: _____

Step 5: Compare and Discuss

Come together and share your responses from Steps 1 to 4. Take turns expressing your emotions and attachment needs during the conflict. Discuss any discrepancies between your assumptions about each other's emotions and needs. Validate each other's feelings.

Step 6: Mutual Resolution

Considering both of your desired resolutions, look for common ground and potential compromises. Aim to find a resolution that addresses both partners' attachment needs and fosters emotional connection. Be open to negotiation and flexibility.

Step 7: Agreeing on the Resolution

Agree on the resolution that feels most supportive and satisfying for both of you. Make sure both partners feel heard, understood, and valued.

List the agreed upon resolution: _____

Step 8: Implementation Plan

Outline the steps required to implement the chosen resolution. Discuss any potential challenges and how you can support each other throughout the process.

Step 9: Reconnect and Reaffirm

After resolving the conflict, take time to reconnect and reaffirm your commitment to each other. Engage in activities that promote emotional intimacy and bonding.

CONCLUSION

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THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION

Open and honest communication is the cornerstone of any strong relationship. By using the tools and resources in this ebook with your partner, you're both learning how to communicate your needs and resolve conflict now and in the future.

SO WHAT NOW?

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, challenges arise that can strain even the strongest relationships. If you find yourself facing difficulties in maintaining intimacy or resolving conflicts, it's important to reach out for support.



Taking the Next Steps

At Transformative Growth Counseling, we're here to provide guidance and assistance tailored to your unique situation. Whether you're considering coaching to further enhance your connection or seeking couples therapy to address deeper concerns, know that seeking help is a sign of strength, commitment, and a desire for growth.

CONTACT US:

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Remember that your journey and relationships are an ongoing process, and with the right tools and resources, you're well-equipped to navigate the complexities of relationships. Embrace the beauty of understanding and expressing non-sexual love, and may your journey be filled with growth, connection, and unwavering support.

Wishing you love and transformative growth,

- DR. JESSICA