



## Evaluation: Conflict Resolution

**Note:** Each major section of the Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage series will have a brief evaluation tool to help you assess your marital strengths and weaknesses. Complete the evaluation before reading the material, then review the assessment again after completing each section to learn the accuracy of your initial self-assessment.

**Instructions:** Read the following descriptive statements. Consider how well they describe your experience or perspective on your marriage. If you are engaged, consider how well they describe your courtship experience or your beliefs about what you think your coming marriage should be. Mark the answer that best fits how you respond:

(CD) Completely Disagree, (SD) Somewhat Disagree, (NS) Not Sure, (SA) Somewhat Agree, or (CA) Completely Agree

1. We recognize that conflict done well is part of a healthy relationship.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
2. We do a good job of selecting wise times to have difficult or in-depth conversations.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
3. We agree on the type or level of offenses that need to be discussed.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
4. We are able to enter a difficult conversation with hope because of our pattern of conflict.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
5. We do not have the same disagreements over and over again.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
6. We are usually able to find solutions to issues that are mutually satisfying.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
7. We have a healthy and God-honoring pattern of resolving conflict.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
8. We do not allow an area of a disagreement to seem more important than our marriage.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
9. We listen to each other well and represent each other fairly even when we disagree.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
10. We resolve conflicts in a timely manner and do not let them linger for days.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
11. I accept my spouses' level/lack of desire for organization and order.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
12. My spouse accepts my level/lack of desire for organization and order.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
13. I accept my spouses' level/lack of desire for peace and harmony.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
14. My spouse accepts my level/lack of desire for peace and harmony.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
15. I accept my spouses' level/lack of desire for social interaction.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
16. My spouse accepts my level/lack of desire for social interaction.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
17. I accept my spouses' level/lack of desire to make decisions and be in charge.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
18. My spouse accepts my level/lack of desire to make decisions and be in charge.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
19. I do not allow my personal goals/preferences to take precedent over the marriage.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
20. My spouse does not allow personal goals/preferences to take precedent over the marriage.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
21. I do not allow hurts or concerns to accumulate before addressing them.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
22. My spouse does not allow hurts or concerns to accumulate before addressing them.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
23. I am able to lovingly overlook annoying things my spouse does.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
24. My spouse is able to lovingly overlook annoying things I do.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
25. I have good judgment about when something changes from annoying to offensive.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
26. My spouse has good judgment about when something moves from annoying to offensive.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
27. I maintain honor towards my spouse even when we disagree or argue.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
28. My spouse maintains honor towards me even when we disagree or argue.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
29. I resist the temptation to "clam up" or "shut down" when saying something difficult.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
30. My spouse resists the temptation to "clam up" or "shut down."	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
31. I do not use "being honest" as an excuse to be harsh or dogmatic.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
32. My spouse does not use "being honest" as an excuse for being harsh or dogmatic.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
33. I do not use the silent treatment as a way to punish my spouse.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
34. My spouse does not use the silent treatment as a way to punish me.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
35. I do not resort to insults or demeaning comments during an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
36. My spouse does not resort to insults or demeaning comments during an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
37. My spouse feels safe when I express my anger or hurt.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
38. I feel safe when my spouse expresses his/her anger or hurt.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
39. I am able to deal with change without it disrupting the marriage.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
40. My spouse is able to deal with change without it disrupting the marriage.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
41. I am willing to be interrupted to hear what my spouse has to say.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
42. My spouse is willing to be interrupted to hear what I have to say.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
43. During a disagreement I resist the temptation to be stubborn or inflexible.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
44. During a disagreement my spouse resists the temptation to be stubborn or inflexible.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
45. I resist the temptation to always have to win an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA



46. My spouse resists the temptation to always have to win an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
47. I am able to identify and willing to admit the desires that lead me to sinful conflict.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
48. My spouse is able to identify and willing to admit the desires that lead to sinful conflict.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
49. Going into a disagreement I am on guard for how my desires would tempt me to sin.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
50. Going into a disagreement my spouse is on guard for how his/her desires tempt to sin.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
51. Either of us will punish the others by restricting access to money.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
52. Either of us will pressure others to give up things important to them.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
53. Either of us will refuse to take a break or give space in an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
54. Either of us have broken or thrown things in an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
55. Either of us have used physical posturing to intimidate another person.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
56. Either of us will restrict others from leaving a room when I'm upset.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
57. Either of us have hit, slapped, or squeezed during an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
58. Either of us have mentioned or held a weapon during an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
59. Either of us have made verbal allusions to physical harm during an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
60. Either of us have threatened to harm myself during an argument.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
61. When repenting we address everyone involved in or exposed to the sin.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
62. When repenting we avoid words like if, but and maybe.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
63. When repenting we admit specifically what our faults were instead of generalizing.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
64. When repenting we give thought to and verbalize how our sin hurt the other person.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
65. When repenting we accept the consequences for our actions.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
66. When repenting we offer a tangible, realistic plan for how we plan to change.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
67. When repenting we make a clear request for forgiveness.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
68. When repenting we are patient and allow time for forgiveness to be granted.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
69. I regularly repent (as defined in items 61-68) and ask my spouse for forgiveness.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
70. My spouse regularly repents (as defined in items 61-68) and seeks my forgiveness.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
71. When forgiving we remember how much Christ has personally forgiven us.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
72. When forgiving we remember that the penalty for sin was absorbed by Christ.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
73. When forgiving we make a commitment not to dwell on this sin.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
74. When forgiving we make a commitment not use this sin against our spouse.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
75. When forgiving we make a commitment not to bring this sin up to other people.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
76. When forgiving we make a commitment to give our spouse the benefit of the doubt again.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
77. When forgiving we give evidence (word, emotion, posture) that the relationship is restored.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
78. I am able to effectively forgive and not keep a record of wrongs.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
79. My spouse is able to effectively forgive and not keep a record of wrongs.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA
80. Our times of forgiveness contribute to our marriage growing closer and more intimate.	CD	SD	NS	SA	CA

**Key to Survey Scoring:** For each set of questions tabulate your score using the following numerical values. The scoring is weighted with the “neutral” NS answer being a negative score, because if you have not defined or pursued important aspects of your marriage relationship it will negatively impact the marriage.

CD	–	Negative 3 points	SA	–	Positive 1 points
SD	–	Negative 2 points	CA	–	Positive 2 points
NS	–	Negative 1 point			

If your total score...

- ...**matches or exceeds the total number of questions**, then this area of marriage is an area of strength.
- ...**is less than the total number of questions**, then this area of marriage could use attention or refinement.
- ...**is a negative number**, then this area of marriage should be given immediate and concentrated attention.

➤ Questions 1-10: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 10 questions)

This set of questions examines the “**foundations of healthy conflict**” aspect of gospel-centered conflict resolution. What we believe about conflict matters. If we believe it is inherently bad, we will avoid it. If we believe there will always be a loser, we will chose between the roles of victor or martyr. Conflict also has momentum. How we handle past conflicts shapes our expectations and practices for future conflict. Only gospel-centered humility and wisdom can turn this momentum into healthy momentum instead.

Recommended Resources: *Peacemaking for Families* by Ken Sande and Tom Raabe (particularly Chapter One and Appendix A) and *War of Words* by Paul David Tripp



➤ Questions 11-20: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 10 questions)

This set of questions examines the “**honoring differences in conflict**” aspect of gospel-centered conflict resolution. Conflict cannot be reduced to mere subjects and options. It also includes people with personalities, preferences, and values. These people talk about subjects and decide between options. Often we inadvertently dehumanize the other person by focusing exclusively upon the policy.

Recommended Resources: Review the “Celebrating Our Non-Moral Differences” exercise in chapter two of *Creating a Gospel-Centered Marriage: Foundations*.

➤ Questions 21-50: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 30 questions)

This set of questions examines the “**healthy practices of conflict**” aspect of gospel-centered conflict resolution. Conflict is something we do. We either do it well (meaning, in a way that builds unity) or poorly (in a way that detracts from marital unity). Because of our sin nature our “natural” approaches to conflict (both instinctual and learned behaviors) do not contribute to unity. The humility, patience, and other-mindedness necessary for constructive conflict come through living out the core truths of the gospel.

Recommended Resources: *Peacemaking for Families* by Ken Sande and Tom Raabe (particularly Chapters Two, Three, and Appendix F) and *Pursuing Peace* by Robert Jones.

➤ Questions 51-60: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 10 questions)

This set of questions examines the “**red flags in conflict**” aspect of gospel-centered conflict resolution. Not all conflict is dangerous, but the actions and attitudes described in these items are reasons for significant concern. If these behaviors (even just a few) are occurring in your marriage, they need to be taken seriously. It is recommended that you pursue marriage counseling and not try to rectify these concerns privately.

Recommended Resources: *Marriage Counseling. The Emotionally Destructive Relationship* by Leslie Vernick and *Mending the Soul* by Steven Tracy.

➤ Questions 61-70: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 10 questions)

This set of questions examines the “**robust repentance**” aspect of gospel-centered conflict resolution. Repentance is much more than saying “I’m sorry,” yet too few couples even formally apologize for their wrongs against one another. Neglecting repentance in marriage is like neglecting oil changes in your car. It may not be noticeable at first, but when the damage does come to light it will be costly.

Recommended Resources: *Peacemaking for Families* by Ken Sande and Tom Raabe (particularly Chapter Four).

➤ Questions 71-80: ( Total: \_\_\_\_\_ in 10 questions)

This set of questions examines the “**full forgiveness**” aspect of gospel-centered conflict resolution. In a marriage between two sinners (which is every marriage) there is not a more important skill to learn than forgiveness (although repentance is equally important). The mark of a lifelong healthy marriage is not the absence of offenses, but the willingness to view offenses in light of our forgiveness from God and, therefore, being willing to forgive.

Recommended Resources: *Peacemaking for Families* by Ken Sande and Tom Raabe (particularly Chapter Five); *Unpacking Forgiveness* by Chris Brauns; and *Choosing Forgiveness* by Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Sometimes within a marriage the problem is not one specific area or issue but an overall imbalance in the effort, skill, thoughtfulness, and awareness being put into the marriage. Below is a list of questions that reveal your perspective on your effort and your spouse’s effort in the marriage. Use the same numerical scoring system as you used above. In this case, the closer your scores are to another, the more mutual (and typically healthy) the marriage.

\_\_\_\_\_ **My Score** – Using the same scoring system as above add together the score for odd numbered questions in 11-50, and questions 69 and 78.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Spouse’s Score** – Using the same scoring system add together the score for even numbered questions in 11-50, and questions 70 and 79.