

Module 4 Lesson 1

Conflict Styles

KEY IDEA

Every couple has patterns in how they respond to conflict. Understanding your conflict style—and your spouse's—helps you move from reacting out of hurt to responding with humility, grace, and redemption.

KEY SCRIPTURES

- James 4:1 - “What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?”
- Eph 4:26-27 - “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold.”
- Proverbs 15:1 - “A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”

LESSON & NOTES

“Pursuer” vs “Distancer”

CONFLICT STYLES

A_____ -

A_____ -

A_____ -

A_____ -

A_____ -

KEY POINTS

- Conflict reveals what is happening inside the heart
- We tend to default to one of several predictable patterns in conflict
- Understanding your style helps you respond rather than react
- The gospel reshapes conflict by calling us toward humility, repentance, and reconciliation

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HeartWork

How do you handle conflict differently at work compared to home? With your spouse compared to with your children? With a friend compared to with your spouse? Why do you think there is a difference, if any?

Would you consider yourself as a pursuer or a distancer? What would you consider your spouse? How might this effect the way you handle conflict in your home?

What is the reason you either pursue or distance? What are you fearful of if you don't pursue or distance yourself?

Ephesians 4:26-27 (NIV) states, *"In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."* How are you in resolving your anger before going to sleep? If you've held onto your anger overnight and for days, what is different in your actions? Why is holding onto your anger giving the devil a foothold?

Review the chart below. Discuss any insights on your Conflict Style and how the intimacy level, self-struggle, and winning desire may be accurate (or inaccurate) for you.

	INTIMACY LEVEL	SELF-STRUGGLE	WINNING DESIRE
AVOIDANCE	No Intimacy (<i>I don't care</i>)	Self-Protection	I win by not trying
ACCOMODATING	Less Intimacy	Self-Preservation	I win by losing
ASSERTIVE	Greatest Intimacy	Self-Aware	I seek a win-win
ARGUMENTATIVE	Less Intimacy	Self-Righteous	I will try to win
AGGRESSIVE	No Intimacy (<i>I only care about me</i>)	Self-Rule	I win. You lose