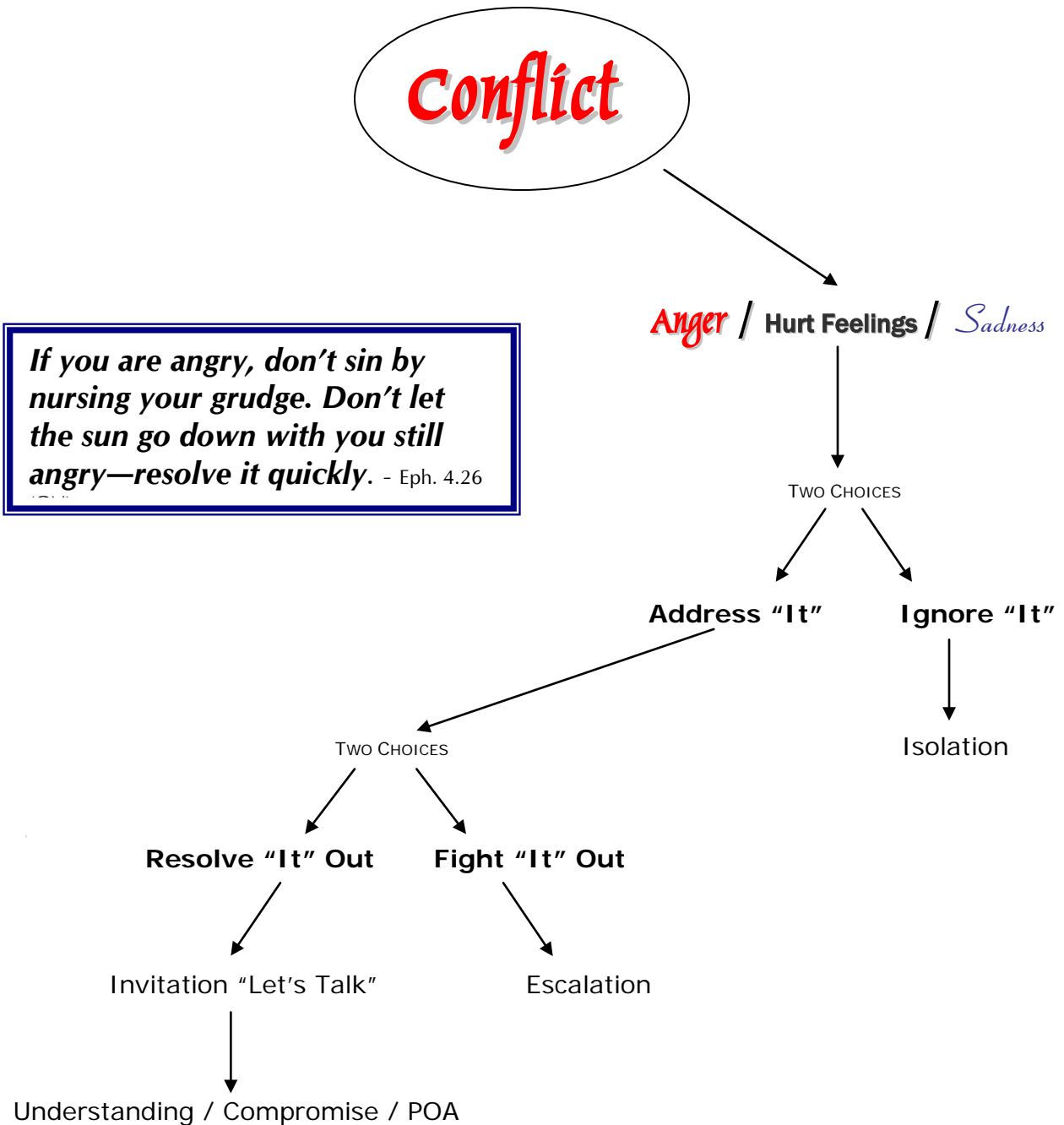




Understanding Conflict Management

This "PASTOR'S GUIDE SHEET" was developed by Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church, Reno, NV • jtaylor@southreno.com
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CONFLICT MANAGEMENT MODEL (SIMPLE)



I. Three Reasons for Conflict in Marriage:

1. Common (ie., Everyday) Misunderstandings

A. Reality: Every couple experiences “Simple” conflict--everyday

B. Quote: “Don’t try to be right, try to do what’s right!”

C. Know how to resolve “Simple Misunderstandings” (See below)

D. A simple apology may be all that’s needed.



10 Steps to resolving “Simple Misunderstandings”

1. Schedule a specific date, time and place for a family meeting within the next week.
2. Define the problem or issue of disagreement.
3. Begin by answering this question for yourself: **“How did I contribute to the problem?”** (POINT: You analyze you, let your mate analyze your mate)

“Steps to Reopening a Person’s Spirit” (by Gary Smalley)

- Become soft and tender with the person.
 - Understand, as much as possible, what the other person has gone through (remember, listen to what is said; do not react to the words used.)
 - Acknowledge that the person is hurting, and be sure to admit any wrong in provoking anger.
 - Touch the other person gently.
 - Seek Forgiveness—and wait for a response.
4. List “solutions” you have used in the past that were not successful.
 5. Brainstorm; list all possible solutions.
 6. Discuss and evaluate these possible solutions.
 7. Agree on one solution to try.
 8. Agree how each person will work toward this solution.
 9. Set-up another meeting; discuss your progress.
 10. Reward each other as you each contribute toward the solution.

Reasons Couples Fight (in order of frequency)

Source: John Gottmann Study

1. Finances, 2. In-Laws, 3. Kids, 4. Sex, 5. General Marital dissatisfaction, 6. Schedules, 7. Friends, 8. “House projects”, 9. Kid’s Homework, & 10. Alcohol.

“Remember, if you get into a fight, and one person wins—you both lose!”

-J. Taylor

2. Creeping Separateness

A. Point: “At the heart of ‘creeping separateness’ is an unmet need(s).”

B. Prioritize “need meeting” ↗

Affection, conversation, intimate communication, honesty & openness, financial support, security, admiration, sincere praise, family commitment, sexual fulfillment, recreational companionship, attractive spouse, domestic support, time, trust, religious commitment, etc.

- What are your mate’s most important needs?”
- What are you doing to meet them?
- What are your mate’s “love languages?”

Physical touch (eg. Non-sexual, romantic, affectionate touching offered many ways)

Words of Affirmation (eg. Verbally praising, encouraging, and loving each other)

Quality time (eg. Committing to and maintaining both quantity and quality time)

Gifts (eg. Sending flowers, love notes, presents, gift certificates, to express love)

Acts of Service (eg. Cleaning the house, taking your mates responsibilities, helping, serving)

C. The battleground is the calendar and the “to-do list”

• **The Calendar**

- *“Dialog daily, date weekly, depart monthly”*

Weekly escapes become your communication connectors

Monthly experiences become your companionship keepers

Yearly extravaganzas become your shared memory makers

• **The “to-do list”**

- *“If you don’t plan it well...it won’t happen at all!”*

- Make your plan **M**easurable, **A**ttainable, **P**ersonal, and **S**pecific.

- Develop your plans with “needs” and “Love Languages” in mind.

3. Creeping Resentment

A. Question: “What growing resentment am I carrying toward my mate?”

B. Prioritize this matter. (“You deal with it or it will deal with you!)

C. Communicate your resentment during a teachable moment in a safe place.

D. Seek a resolution/POA you both can live with. (See next page.)

E. Seek mutually agreed upon outside help, if needed.

