

**ALL IN THE FAMILY:
CREATING A PLACE FOR PEACE
MATTHEW 5:21-24**

Matthew 5:23-24:

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”

The Foundation – The 3 T’s:

1. Timing – wait until both of you are rested and calm, set a date/appointment if necessary
2. Trust – Deb’s mantra “If you both know that you are in this thing [marriage] for the long haul, then it gives you security to address the conflict and a peace that you will both see the other side of it – TOGETHER!”
3. Transparent – be willing to share genuine feelings and honest thoughts

Practical Steps to Resolving Conflict:

1. Identify & define the conflict
2. Agree to work through the conflict until resolution is reached
3. Explore your feelings about the issue – see “Rules of Engagement” below
4. Identify what you want
5. Generate options and possible solutions
6. Choose actions that you both will take
7. Evaluate the outcome & make changes if necessary
8. Forgiveness

Promoting Peace (or pre-empting conflict):

Proverbs 24:3-4

“By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.”

1. Trust – which creates security & peacefulness (see T #2)
2. Create a sense of “we”/tradition
3. Make space for silence & rest
4. Majoring in Grace/Forgiveness (see Steps #8)
5. Sacrifice
6. Have a realistic view of each other

Rules of Engagement:

Romans 12:18

“If possible, *so far as it depends on you*,
be at peace with all men and women.”

1. Don't let little things that bother you build up until one of you explodes the issue into a large fight.
2. If you are angry about something and don't try to talk about it with your spouse within 48 hours, let it go.
3. If your spouse doesn't want to discuss a matter, set an appointment within the next 24 hours to have your discussion.
4. Know what the issue is, then both of you stick to the subject.
5. Focus on the facts and the issue, not on the person or personality characteristics.
6. Keep it between the two of you. Don't bring in third parties like in-laws, best friends, or your children.
7. Don't bring up past history.
8. No name calling. Even endearing terms and pet names can be hurtful when you are using a sarcastic tone.
9. Be careful how you use humor. Laughter is good, but teasing can be misinterpreted and hurtful.
10. Listen to one another fully. This includes watching body language. Look at one another while you speak.
11. Don't interrupt.
12. Don't blame one another or make accusations.
13. Try to use 'I' sentences instead of 'you' sentences.
14. If the two of you are not extremely angry, try to hold hands while talking.
15. Accept responsibility for your part in the conflict.
16. Be open to asking for forgiveness and be willing to forgive.