



# DEALING WITH RELATIONAL CONFLICT

LOSING STRATEGIES

The center core of the Church is not the stake [center]; it is not the chapel. ... The most sacred place on earth may not be the temple, necessarily. The chapel, the stake [center], and the temple are sacred as they contribute to the building of the most sacred institution in the Church—the **home**—and to the blessing of the most sacred relationships in the Church, **the family** (*“That All May Be Edified”* [1982], 234–35). Boyd K. Packer

**Learning how to love others is central to our purpose in life. Doing it in our families can be the most difficult, but is where we learn it best.**

**Dr. Jennifer Finlayson-Fife**



Is conflict a sign of a bad marriage?

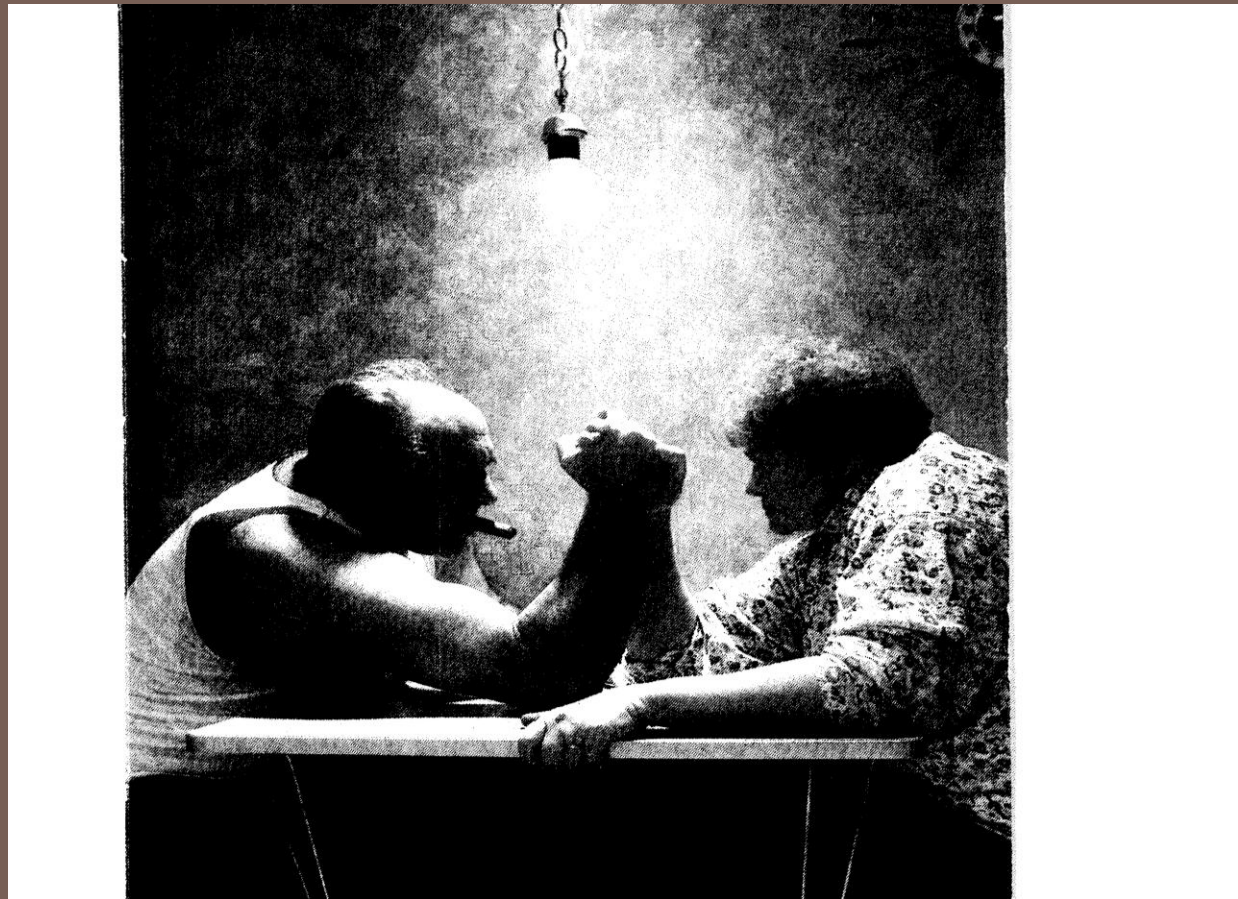


Is harmony a sign of a good marriage?

*Elder Joe J. Christensen:*

“Occasionally we hear something like, “Why, we have been married for fifty years, and we have never had a difference of opinion.” If that is literally the case, then one of the partners is overly dominated by the other or, as someone said, is a stranger to the truth. Any intelligent couple will have differences of opinion. Our challenge is to be sure that we know how to resolve them . That is part of the process of making a good marriage better .

Relational conflict is not always about right and wrong. More often it's about values, fears, and self preservation.



Still holding hands...

**After all these years!**

1<sup>st</sup> step to conflict resolution:  
know yourself

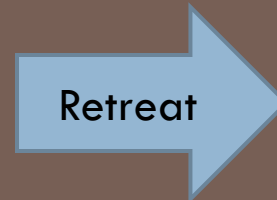
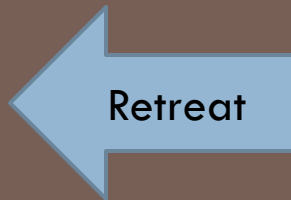
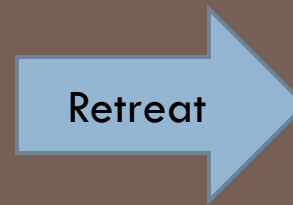
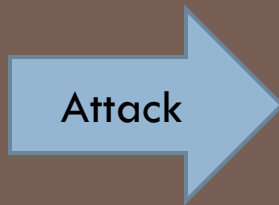
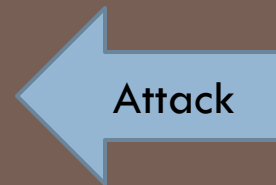
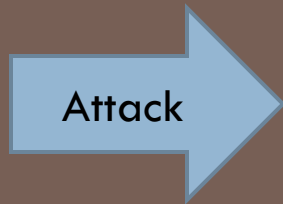


To become acquainted  
with oneself is a terrible  
shock.

Carl Jung



# 3 CONFLICT PATTERNS



# LOSING STRATEGIES

1. Controlling our partner
2. Proving we are right
3. Unbridled self-expression
4. Revenge
5. Withdrawal
6. Costly accommodation



# COSTLY ACCOMMODATION

- Sometimes comes from the best of you
- More often comes from a place of fear
- When the cost is too high it pushes individuals into such discomfort they agitate for change

What pushes  
change?

1. You feel like your integrity is on the line
2. Gridlock becomes intolerable
3. What and who you love is at stake
4. Your fear that things will stay the same exceeds your fear they will change

# GROWN-UP

## MARRIAGE/RELATIONSHIP

- “In a grown up marriage, we understand that we aren’t and shouldn’t be, each other’s teacher, parent, editor, supervisor, or home-improvement project”.
- “ In a grown-up marriage, we gradually acquire a rueful tolerance of each other’s limitations and imperfections.”
- “In a grown-up marriage we recognize that we don’t always have to be in love with each other. In fact we are well aware that we couldn’t possibly always be in love with each other. But a grown up marriage enables us, when we fall out of love with each other, to stick around until we fall back in.”

# ESTEEM

How it affects  
relationships  
and conflict



**For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.** Romans 8:38,39

# 3 TYPES OF CONDITIONAL ESTEEM

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- Achievement Based esteem
- Attribute Based esteem
- Affiliative Based esteem

# HEALTHY SHAME/TOXIC SHAME

- Healthy Shame is synonymous with Healthy Self-Esteem
- Able to hold ourselves in warm-regard while at the same time being accountable for our mistakes
- Healthy Shame is the ability to feel remorse, repent, to make amends.
- Toxic self-blame: I'm lousy, worthless human being (Self-preoccupation)
- Minimize, or distract from the truth about what we are doing that is hurtful or destructive.
- Cope by going one-up or one-down



## One Up (Pride)

Problematic Pursuer  
Boundary-less / Control

*"Get over here and love me!"*

Outside-in selfesteem  
Entitlement - You owe me happiness  
Manage relationship with:  
Anger, rage, criticism, fear, aggression  
Can become physically or emotionally abusive

## One Up (Pride)

Problematic Distancer  
Walled-Off/ Control

*"You're not worthy of me!"*

Protected but not connected -defensive "I don't care"  
Take safety through:  
Indifference, passive aggression, snobbery, elitism, intimidation, manipulation,  
presumptuousness, self promoting, criticism, autonomy  
Affairs, addictions, pornography as less vulnerable forms of pseudo-intimacy

## Healthy Boundary and Esteem

Healthy Guilt-leading to improvement  
Relational Esteem

Have right to want something and ask for it.

Forgiving without strings  
Place of being-not of doing  
Listening with generosity  
Esteem comes from honesty,  
spirituality, unalterable self worth,  
God's love

## One Down (Shame)

Problematic Pursuer  
Boundary-less / Shame

*"I'll do anything, just love me!"*

Outside-in selfesteem  
Love dependent-fear of abandonment  
Toxic shame-sense of worthlessness  
guilt, devalue, need others' esteem, respect and love,  
looking for affirmation, submission

## One Down (Shame)

Problematic Distancer  
Walled-Off/ Shame

*"My needs don't matter."*

Sacrifice connection-love avoidant - fear of engulfment  
Hold on to self through:  
Taking needs out of the equation-have to be there for everyone else  
disengagement, unwillingness to listen, unavailability, withdrawal,  
depression, resignation, martyr

# DIFFERENTIATION

1. Maintaining a clear sense of who you are within the relationship
2. Maintaining a sense of perspective
3. Committing to a willingness to engage in self confrontation
4. Acknowledging our distortions of reality that protect us from ourselves
5. Learning to tolerate the pain involved in self exploration

Dr. David Schnarch PhD

# Proclamation on the Family



All human beings-male and female-are created in the image of God. Each is a beloved spirit son or daughter of heavenly parents, and, as such, each has a divine nature and destiny.

# WINNING STRATEGIES

- Gratitude
- Making Requests
- Self Soothing
- Repair Attempts

