

9 STEPS TO WALK THROUGH A CONFLICT

1. **PRAY.**
 - Individually. (Before you approach your spouse.)
 - Corporately. (I know you might not feel like it at the time, but it's hard to be angry at someone you're praying for or with.)
 - God's approach and solution. *"Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight."* — Romans 12:16 (ESV)
2. **ADDRESS.**
 - Don't put it off or hope it will go away.
 - Address it in the moment (if possible.) If not then, then as soon as possible.
 - Keep short accounts.
 - This will help you deal with the conflict before the emotions and hurt have had a chance to build and rise.
3. **ASSURE.**
 - Assure them of your love.
 - Assure them of your desire to meet their needs.
4. **SCHEDULE.**
 - As I said, address things in the moment...if you can. But if you can't...
 - Schedule a time when you both will be in a good place to deal with the conflict.
5. **UNDERSTAND.**
 - Understand their perspective.
 - Understand what's important to them.
 - Use the listening skills we talked about last week.
 - "Seek first to understand and then to be understood." —Stephen Covey.
6. **BRAINSTORM.**
 - Throw out the "his/her" solutions.
 - Come up with as many options as possible.
 - "The best way to have a good idea is to have a lot of ideas." - Linus Pauling.
 - Don't evaluate while you're brainstorming.
 - Look for a 3rd, 4th, or 5th solution that has enough of what you both need that each can live with it.
7. **CHOOSE.**
 - Choose the option that comes closest to what you both want.
 - Both must agree with and be ok with the choice...neither should feel pressured.
8. **IMPLEMENT.**
 - Decide what you're going to do.
 - Decide when you're going to do it.
 - Decide how long you're going to do it.
 - Then do it!
9. **EVALUATE.**
 - After implementing the agreed upon solution for the agreed upon time, come back to evaluate how it went.
 - At this time, tweak things that might need to be tweaked.
 - Then, re-implement for another trial period.