

The Do's and Don'ts of Conflict Resolution

Commit to Resolution and Reconciliation The process of reconciliation can occur when both parties are willing to listen without interrupting. You both need to be respectful and understand that there are two sides to every story, two sets of feelings that need to be understood, and two hearts that need to be healed. The following lists of "dos" and "don'ts" will guide you in resolution and reconciliation:

In the "do" column:

- See the situation from the other's point of view.
- Say to your spouse: "I hear you saying _____. Is that correct?"
- Use words that encourage.
- Be respectful, even if you are not treated respectfully
- Realize that you have the power to change only yourself.
- Ask for changed behavior and be specific about what you want—not demanding.
- Be at peace, knowing that you have the Prince of Peace in your heart.

In the "Don't" column:

- Don't forget that your opposer is also God's creation and your children's parent.
- Don't harbor resentment, bitterness, or hatred—confess your sins instead.
- Don't use "you" statements, such as, "You make me mad . . . You should . . . You always . . ."
- Don't get drawn into useless arguments
- Don't expect an immediate change—wanting too much too fast will only defeat you both and lead to further frustration and resentment.
- Don't assume that perfection in resolution and reconciliation is possible—celebrate any gains you make together and keep at it.