

Love Talk

Local experts share answers to common relationship questions

Keeping the Peace

What are some constructive ways to resolve conflict?

Conflict in significant relationships is inevitable. If we can frame our disagreements as opportunities for growth rather than “winner takes all,” there can be more collaboration and compromise. There are several templates or structured exercises I use to help couples disrupt negative patterns of interacting when conflict arises. As individuals become more self-aware of their non-verbal messages such as tone, inflection, and body language, they can be more intentional about the true message they want to send to their partner. Rather than initiating a discussion with a harsh and demanding tone, I coach couples to invite their partner to a discussion, such as, “I’d like to share some thoughts with you regarding... is this a good time?” Timing is important. Don’t expect the conversation to go well if the game is tied in the bottom of the ninth. Wait. Breathe. Allow him or her to complete the task or activity they are involved in before approaching sensitive subjects.



-Pam Cosart, counselor at Shield Bearer

“He said”



“She said”



If you have a question for our panel of experts for LOVE TALK, email editor@cyfairmagazine.com

Right and Wrong

If you ask your spouse to do something, and they do it wrong, do you let it go or explain what they did wrong?

Thank your spouse for helping you, and just let it go. If you point out errors, your spouse may feel you are being too critical and ungrateful for their assistance. He or she may be less likely to perform tasks in the future. If you are asking for help that requires specific instructions, let your spouse know, so he or she understands the expectations of the task. It’s important to let your significant other know what you’re feeling, what they may be doing to bring about this feeling, and why it is a problem for you.



-Jamie Manning, counselor at Cy-Fair Counseling Services

Date Night

When we were dating, my wife and I did things together all the time. Now she seems uninterested. How can I get her to be my recreational companion again?

Talk to your wife openly, focusing on communicating your feelings of missing her and wanting to spend more time with her. Listen genuinely to the barriers she may share with you about what’s changed for her, and why she’s not interested lately. Try to really understand her perspective and discuss this with her. This will bring you closer together, and show her how much you care about her, what she’s been going through, and how much you miss her company. The last step is to work together as a team to remove the barriers to find a suitable compromise you both can work with.



-Tanvi Patel, therapist at Patel Counseling and Mediation Services

Special thanks to our panel of Cy-Fair relationship experts: Pam Cosart, Jamie Manning, and Tanvi Patel