

# Good how conflict is good in a relationship essay example

[Experience](#), [Anger](#)



Relationships are at the core of human experience. It is natural for humans to relate to other people in order to fulfil that need to belong. The feeling of belongingness is best described by Maslow in his hierarchy of needs, where he stated that the need for social relationship should be satisfied after physiological and security needs are seen to respectively. It is important for a person to relate to another in order to be well. However, relationships are not always smooth sailing and successful and conflicts are mostly the root of the problem. Despite the major role of conflicts in the demise of relationships, psychologists maintain that conflicts are essential and good in a relationship.

Conflict is a constant in every relationship that when not dealt with properly will ultimately result to the downfall of a relationship. This is the reason why people try to avoid it at all times or refuse to acknowledge it. After all, as Gottman and Declaire wrote in their book *The relationship cure: a five-step guide for building better connections with family, friends, and lovers*, people don't get married, make friends, or try to maintain ties with siblings to have those relationships fail (47). However, it is the avoidance of conflict that might collapse a relationship more than facing it (Michael Batshaw qtd. in Tartakovsky). Refusing to address the conflict is the same as choosing to avoid important issues in a relationship. This poses the danger of having these issues pile up until it becomes impossible to deal with. In order for a relationship to become healthy, conflicts should be approached in a constructive and effective manner (Tartakovsky).

Conflict elicits anger that at times pushes people to react in an explosive and hurtful manner. Some people resort to physical or verbal abuse in order to “

let off steam” and feel better. However, this feeling is only temporary and is later on replaced by guilt (Better Health Channel) which cripples the relationship. In some instances wherein the other party is terrified of the other’s anger, this could spell the end. It is important to remember that abuse in a relationship is never acceptable and should be given proper and immediate action. Better Health Channel points out to the importance of acknowledging ones anger without hurting the other as a constructive way of facing conflict. Being calm and non-defensive in the face of a conflict (Segal and Smith) provides an opportunity for a conversation where the concerned party can tell the other regarding the issues in the relationship that are bothering him/her. This way, both parties get to explore possible solutions to rid of the conflict and move forward with the relationship.

Both parties in a relationship come from different background and as such, disagreements over what each other needs usually arise. Segal and Smith (2013) point out the situation between a mother who only wants to assure that her child is always safe, and the child who wants to take risks. This conflict within the family, if not resolved, may result to a lifelong feeling of hatred from the child towards the mother. Both needs are valid, and learning to understand this is the first step into making the relationship work. Parent and child can agree to compromise and set limitations that will satisfy both needs. In the process, trust is built; trust that each other will honor the agreement forged between them. This way, instead of cultivating hatred, the relationship takes into a new turn.

Gottman and Declaire (152) identify reactions to emotional bids as a possible way of inciting or dissuading conflict. Emotional bids are described as the

subtle means of letting ones partner know of the other ones need to be close or connected. When a partner chooses to ignore the bids, which is to turn away from it, conflict is guaranteed to arise. Gottman and Declaire's research results indicate that husbands who ignored their wives' bids 82% of the time find themselves divorced. However, those who ignored the bids for only 19% stay in stable marriages (Gottman and Declaire 224). Responding positively to a partner's emotional bid is a very good way of avoiding conflict. Similarly, being attuned to a partner's emotions also helps solve and avoid conflict. People who are upset don't always convey their emotions verbally, instead they resort to the nonverbal (Segal and Smith). By paying close attention to what's being shown, especially when in a conflict, gives the partner an opportunity to have a glimpse of what the other is truly trying to convey. Having this understanding can lead to the resolution of the conflict and develop a deeper understanding of one another.

Nadig stresses that asserting power during a conflict is one method some people use in order to resolve it. Although the goal is resolution, being manipulative can only generate more conflict which will put the relationship in a more precarious situation. To take advantage of the conflict and use it to strengthen the relationship, Susan Heitler suggests brainstorming for solutions (Susan Heitler qtd. in Tartakovsky). Putting everything on the table and sorting the best solution provides a win-win solution that Nadig also recommends as both the concerns of the partners are being answered instead of arguing both their points (Susan Heitler qtd. in Tartakovsky). As Segal and Smith put it, " maintaining and strengthening the relationship, rather than " winning" the argument" must always be the priority of both

partners.

Although mismanagement of conflict cause relationship breakups (Segal and Smith), properly addressing it make the relationship stronger. The discussions stress out the importance of communication in resolving issues in order to help the relationship. Listening establishes deeper connection to one's personal needs as well as those of the others (Segal and Smith). However, not all ideas are communicated verbally so being receptive to the other person's nonverbal messages can be beneficial in avoiding or resolving conflict. Once the conflict is resolved, both parties should be willing to say sorry (Terri Orbuch qtd. in Tartakovsky). In the same way, the aggrieved partner should also be willing to forgive and move on. Both parties should reflect together on what they both learned from the conflict and avoid doing the same thing next time (Better Health Channel). Segal and Smith also points out the importance of using humor in communicating as it helps people say things which could be offensive to the other.

## **Works Cited**

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