Ten Commandments for
RESOLVING CONFLICT
ROB FISHER

I. **DON'T OVER COMMUNICATE:** Know when you are spinning in a circle. Stop. Know when your partner is emotionally overwhelmed. Stop. Know when you are so triggered you are acting gracelessly. Stop. People often keep going in the hope of resolving conflict even when they are past the point of no return.

II. **BREATHE TOGETHER:** One theory of couple's conflict says that the conflict is the result of a disharmonization of your energies, not a problem with the content of your discussion. Lie together in spoon fashion and breathe in and out of your heart area together. Breathe first simultaneously and then in a complementary fashion.

III. **A KINDNESS A DAY KEEP THE THERAPIST AWAY:** Appreciate, acknowledge, and touch your partner frequently if you want to avoid conflict. It is like putting money in your emotional bank account.

IV. **KNOW YOUR SOFT SPOT:** Most conflict arises from areas of sensitivity that get re-stimulated by your partner. Be aware of your sensitive areas. Abandonment, intrusion, neglect, feeling misunderstood, having too little attention, and taking too much responsibility, are some common ones.

V. **KNOW YOUR PARTNER'S SOFT SPOT:** Know where the sand traps in your partner's psyche lie, so that you do not unconsciously step in them.

VI. **DO A 180 DEGREE TURN:** Most attempted solutions to conflict, while they appear to make sense, actually make conflict worse. Look at what you are doing in response to conflict and try something different.

VII. **KNOW THE NON-NEGOTIABLES:** There are some areas that are just not negotiable between partners. Know what these are and give up trying to change your partner in these areas. If living with the issue is too painful, then consider ending the relationship.

VIII. **USE TOUCH:** Touch is the antidote to many conflicts. Much of what upsets people is a break in the connection between them. Touch often can repair a break in attachment.

IX. **GET MINDFUL:** Mindfulness decreases activity in the amygdala (The part of the brain that stimulates flight or fight) and increases activity in the prefrontal cortex (The part of the brain that can modulate impulses). Take a step backwards to reflect on what is happening in your experience. Get curious about it and be inviting and non-judgmental towards whatever you feel. Act in, not out!

X. **BE KIND:** Down deep everyone is emotionally wounded. Your partner appears to be crazy, stubborn, or mean, but in fact s/he is hurting. Look for the hurt part and let it inspire you to be compassionate towards him or her. Exercise the discipline of kindness.

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REFERENCE
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