**Happily Ever After** (graphic)

**How to Fight Fair**

Conflict is **going** to happen.

Healthy relationships **will** have conflict.

If there is **never conflict,** it’s **likely** that someone is **lying**.

**There’s two possible goals in a conflict**: *\*build a list here\**

1. Agreement
2. Understanding

Communicate to **understand**, not to always **agree**.

(Colossians 4:6)

“Let your conversation be always **full of grace**, seasoned with salt, so that **you may know** how to answer everyone.”

(Luke 6:45)

“…the mouth speaks what the **heart is full of**.”

**Communication Styles**: *\*\*Build a list\*\**

* Passive—“You matter more than me.”
* Aggressive—“I matter, you don’t!”
* Passive Aggressive—“You matter…NOT!”
* Assertive—“You matter and so do I.”

**Effective Communication:** “I” messages

* ‘I feel **[a feeling, not a thought]**’
* ‘I need to feel **[not ‘I need you to do’]**’

**Examples:** *\*Build a list*

“I **feel** rejected when I’m the only one that initiates conversation. **I need to feel** valued in our relationships.

“I **feel** disrespected when you speak to me like I’m dumb. **I need to feel** loved in the way you talk to me.”

“I feel loved when we do things like this…I need to feel this way more often.”

**Rules of Engagement**:

1. Keep the **main thing** the **main thing**
2. Don’t bring up the **past**.
3. Never attack ones **character** or **personality**.
4. Don’t let the **sun go down** on your anger.
5. Avoid **generalizations**.
6. If your spouse says you do, then it’s **true**.
7. Do not involve **others** in the conflict.
8. The **children** shouldn’t be involved.
9. Be **honest**.
10. **Forgive** fast and frequently.

**Two questions to fight fair**:

1. Does it **honor** God?
2. Does it show **respect** to others?