Conflict Management in Marriage

Purpose
The purpose of this study was two-folded. First, it aimed to explore common causes, values of positive and results of negative conflict in marriage. And second, identify the role of communication and conflict management strategies for married couples.

Overview
Conflict is considered as a normal, and even healthy, part of relationships. After all, two people can’t be expected to agree on everything at all times. Since relationship conflicts are inevitable, learning to deal with them in a healthy way is crucial. When conflict is mismanaged, it can harm the relationship. But, when handled in a respectful and positive way, conflict provides an opportunity for growth, ultimately strengthening the bond between two people. Healthy marriages tend to seek peace inside their households. This is possible when conflict management skills are acquired and/or mastered. Furthermore, conflict management calls for confrontation between married couples. Even having fights may bring a couple closer together if they work to overcome the assumption that conflict and anger don’t belong in a healthy relationship. However, spouses differ in the ability to work together to resolve conflict. Happy couples are not conflict free. Instead, they change behaviors, and present reasonable alternatives. Having clear rules for handling conflict is important. These rules might include: no shouting at one another, no swearing, allowing our spouse and ourselves to cool off before discussing the problem, not going to bed mad at each other, forgive and ask for forgiveness, and no putting one another down, among others.

Laura Cajiao-Wingenbach – lauravcm@tamu.edu
Graduate Assistant Research and HRD Doctoral Student
College of Education and Human Development