

# 5 Reasons to Be Thankful for Conflict

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**S**ometimes when I'm in the studio, I forget how many people are watching. Several months ago, I was on ESPN analyzing the SEC when one of the other analysts made a comment about my wife, Kirsten. You can Google it if you want specifics, but it created a conflict on live television. When we had an opportunity, we talked about what happened. He apologized, and we were ready to move on. I had no idea it would go viral. Kirsten wasn't watching but immediately started to get notifications.

The whole incident was a reminder that conflict is inevitable. Whether in public, at work, or at home, someone will do or say something that will cause conflict — which is why we need to sharpen our conflict resolution skills. While most of us dislike it, conflict can actually help us in a number of ways. Rather than avoiding it, we should embrace it. Here are 5 reasons to be thankful for conflict.

## 1. It reminds us there are consequences for our words and actions.

Conflict is a great reminder that our words and actions have an impact. They easily can cause pain and disconnection. If nobody confronts us when we wrong someone, we continue to be reckless with people's hearts and feelings. Conflict propels us to think more deeply before we act.

**2. It teaches us how to live in peace with others.**

The key to a great life is having healthy relationships, which is why conflict resolution skills are so important. Conflict shows us when we overstep, when we are selfish, and when we lack empathy. Conflict confronts our mistakes and attitudes that need to change. As we work on them and grow in maturity, it gives us a greater ability to live in peace with one another.

**3. It teaches us how to resolve relational problems.**

Relationships not only make life full, but they also help us grow. This is especially true of deeper and long-lasting friendships. When we learn to handle conflict well, it helps us grow closer to people. Conflict teaches us how to work through relational problems, making those long-standing friendships possible.

**4. It teaches us how to admit our wrongs and apologize.**

We can't ignore a wrong. We have to deal with it, especially when we are the ones who have done it. Taking responsibility for our errors sharpens us. It molds us into people who have integrity and character.

**5. It's an opportunity to be an example to our kids.**

Since conflict is all around us, when we have it, it's a great opportunity to show our kids how to navigate it. Much of the world handles conflict with aggression, defensiveness, and vindictiveness. In our house, two things we focus on quite a bit are forgiveness and reconciliation. Forgiveness doesn't absolve guilt or free us from consequences, but it does give us freedom and ability to heal. We can talk about it with our kids as much as possible, but nothing drives the point home better than showing it to them.