

### Let's Talk About Conflict

Almost equal numbers of participants felt that the longevity of their relationships was neither threatened by conflict nor supported by the avoidance of arguments or other open disagreements. Specifically, 81 participants (66.4% of the sample) strongly or nearly strongly agreed with the statement, “I do not think that conflict with my partner threatens the longevity of the relationship,” while 78 participants (63.9% of the sample) strongly or nearly disagreed with the statement, “I believe that the avoidance of arguments or other open disagreements supports the longevity of a relationship.” The three statements with which the greatest number of participants least agreed were: “I believe that when you argue with your partner, you should ‘go for the jugular’” (114 participants, 93.4% of the sample); “Fighting with my partner energizes me” (108 participants, 88.5%); and “I feel empowered after my partner and I fight” (97 participants, 79.5%).

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The responses of participants were weighted more heavily towards having less conflict (i.e., conflict occurring less than once a year to never) rather than more conflict (i.e., conflict occurring at least once a week to once or twice a month). The five aspects of their relationships with which the greatest number of participants indicated the least amount of conflict (meaning conflict occurring less than once a year or never) were as follows: the relationship they had with their partner’s friends (105 participants, 86.1% of the sample); their religious beliefs and practices (103 participants, 84.4%); relations with their partner’s families (98 participants, 80.3%); relations with their own families (96 participants, 78.7% of the sample); and sex outside of the relationship (88 participants, 72.1%) (see Table 1).

*Participants had low levels of conflict in their relationships*

**Table 1. Areas of Least Conflict Frequency: Frequency of lowest Likert scale participant ratings for areas of least conflict.**

Frequency of Participant Ratings for Lowest Likert Scale Category, Least Amount of Conflict (conflict occurring < once per year or never)			
Areas of Least Conflict	Frequency	Percentage	Ranking (of 15)
Question: “How often do you and [your partner] have open disagreements or fights in the following areas?” (N=122)			
The relationship I have with my partner’s friends	105	86.1	1
Our religious beliefs and practices	103	84.4	2

Relations with my partner's family	98	80.3	3
Relations with my family	96	78.7	4
Sex outside of the relationship	88	72.1	5

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The three aspects of their relationships in which participants had the most conflict (i.e., at least once a week to once or twice a month) were communication, management of finances and home. However, respectively, only 22 (18.0% of the sample), 19 (15.6%) and 17 (13.9%) participants indicated this level of conflict with those three aspects of their relationships. Overall, these figures indicate that participants had low levels of conflict in their relationships.