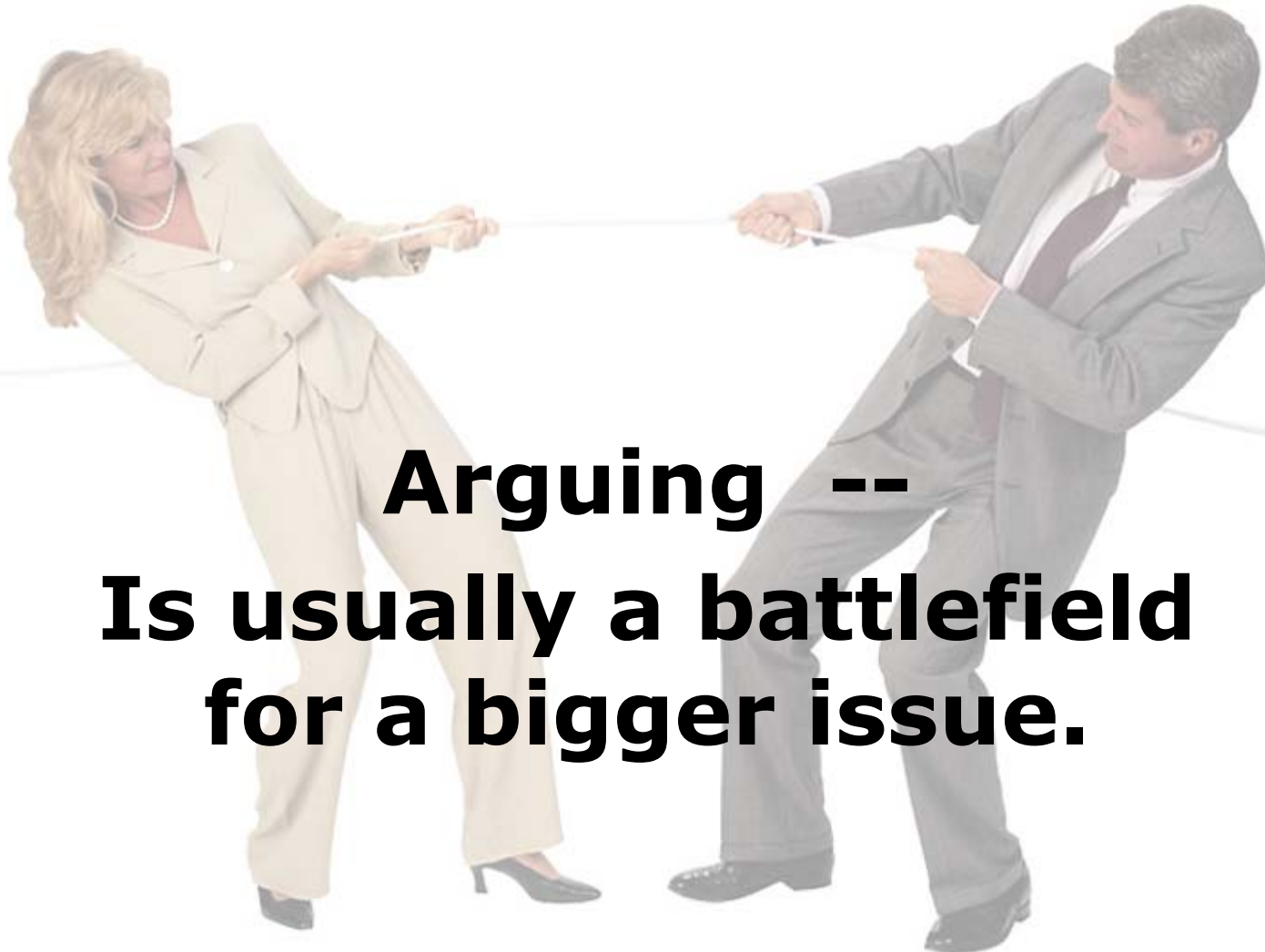


Conflict Management



**Arguing --
Is usually a battlefield
for a bigger issue.**

A man and a woman in business attire are shown from the waist up, pulling on a rope. The woman on the left is wearing a light-colored suit and has blonde hair. The man on the right is wearing a dark suit and has dark hair. They are both leaning back, suggesting a struggle or tension. The background is plain white.

Fear

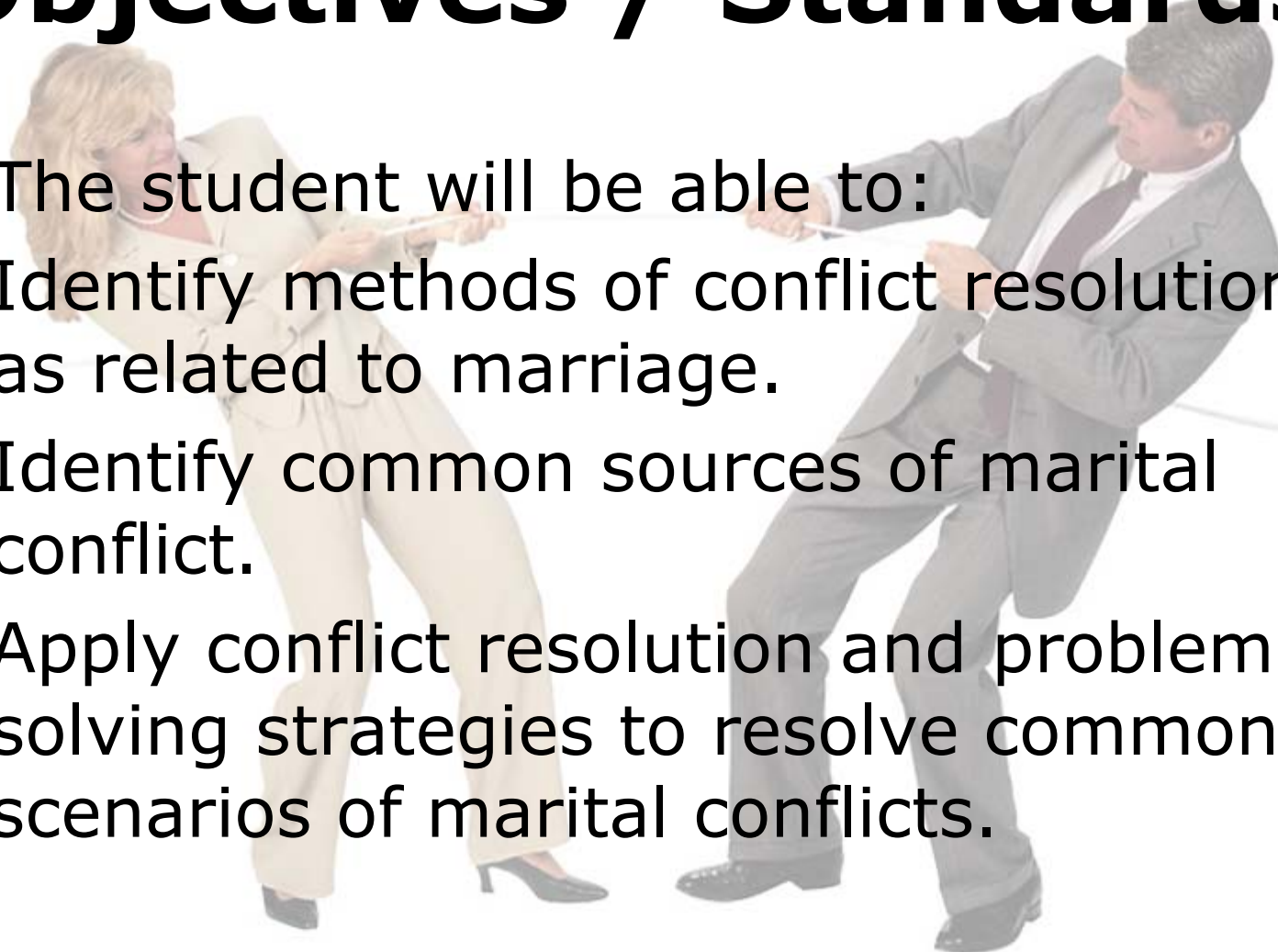
-- losing his/her spouse.

-- losing their home.

-- losing self-respect.

Objectives / Standards:

- The student will be able to:
- Identify methods of conflict resolution as related to marriage.
- Identify common sources of marital conflict.
- Apply conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies to resolve common scenarios of marital conflicts.



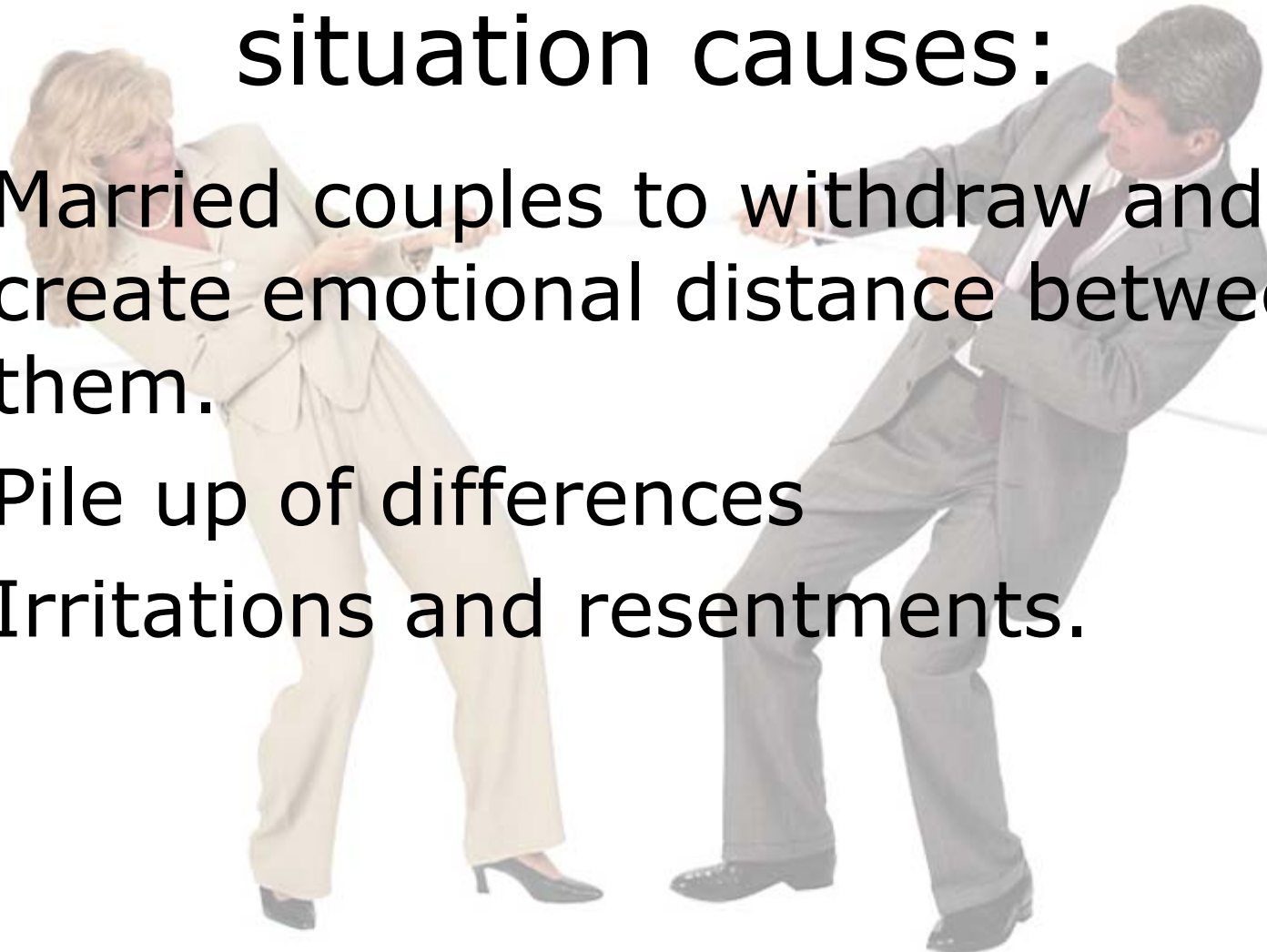
Do you ever use...

- Extreme or irrational tactic to gain your point (slamming doors, stomping around)?
- Hurting remarks to have the last word (sarcasm, name calling)?
- The silent treatment
- Withdraw to a safe distance because you do not like to argue?
- Store up grudges and use later (revenge)?
- My way or no way attitude?
- Get angry, criticize, or some other aggressive behavior?
- Give in; "I guess you are right", submissive behavior to avoid conflict.
- Deny or pretend that everything is okay.

If you answered Yes to any of the above, you are not fighting fair; you are creating an interaction pattern of I win, you lose.

Failing to resolve a conflict situation causes:

- Married couples to withdraw and create emotional distance between them.
- Pile up of differences
- Irritations and resentments.



Play Garth Brooks Song


“We bury the hatchet, but not the handle”.




Myths or Misconceptions About Conflict:

1. Harmony is normal and conflict is abnormal.
2. Conflict is the result of personality differences.
3. Conflict and disagreements are the same.



A man and a woman in business attire are shown pulling on a rope, symbolizing conflict or tension. The woman is on the left, wearing a light-colored suit and a pearl necklace, leaning back as she pulls. The man is on the right, wearing a dark suit and tie, also leaning back and pulling. The background is plain white.

Get into pairs and make a list
of things that may cause
conflicts (arguments).

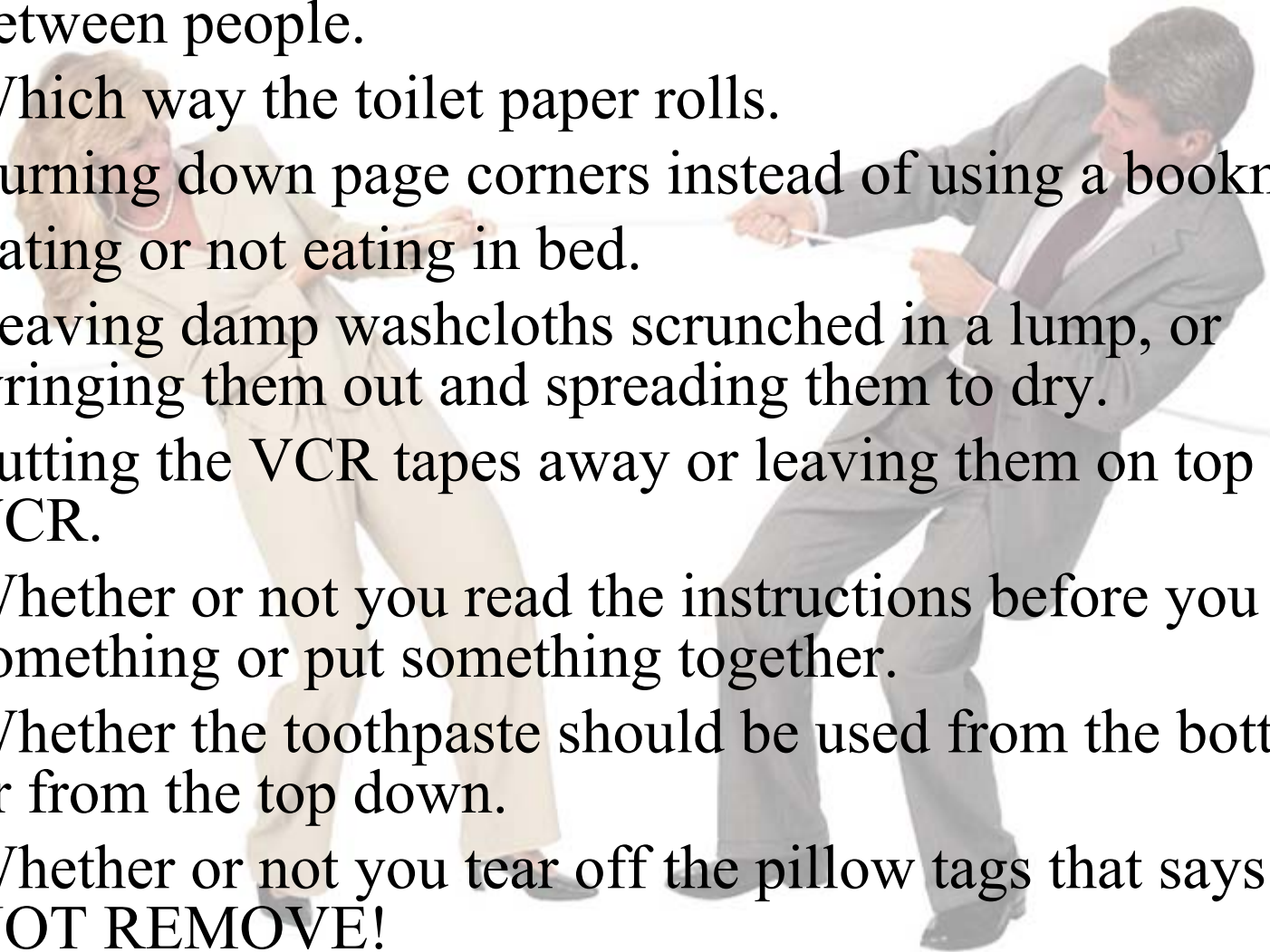
A man and a woman in business attire are shown in a tug-of-war pose, pulling on a rope. The woman on the left is wearing a light-colored suit and has blonde hair. The man on the right is wearing a dark suit and has dark hair. They are both leaning back, straining to pull the rope. The background is plain white.

Next look at your interviews.
Were there any other causes
of conflict?

Do Not Trifle Over Trivia

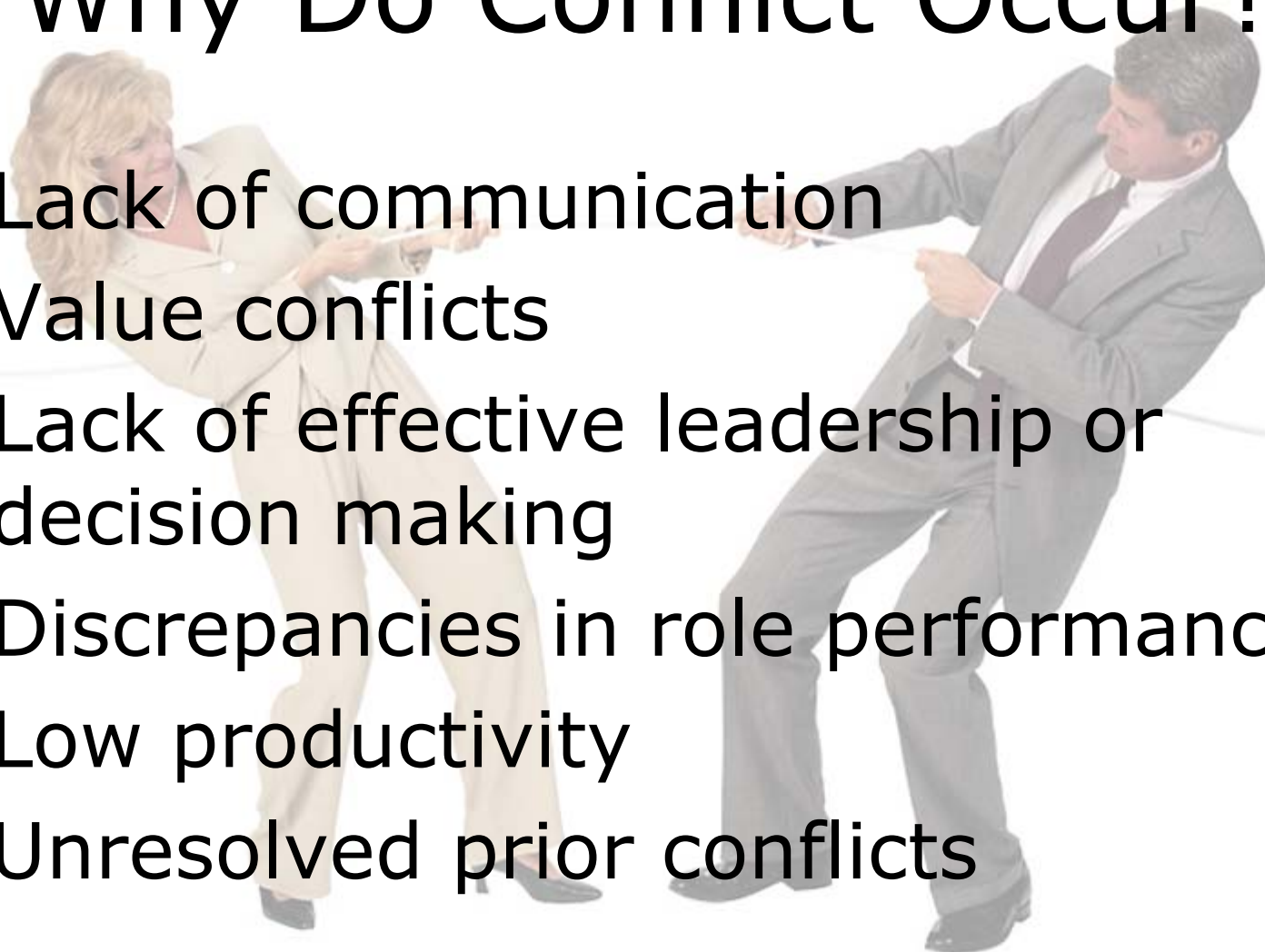
The following items are typical behaviors that create stress between people.

- Which way the toilet paper rolls.
- Turning down page corners instead of using a bookmark.
- Eating or not eating in bed.
- Leaving damp washcloths scrunched in a lump, or wringing them out and spreading them to dry.
- Putting the VCR tapes away or leaving them on top of the VCR.
- Whether or not you read the instructions before you use something or put something together.
- Whether the toothpaste should be used from the bottom up or from the top down.
- Whether or not you tear off the pillow tags that says DO NOT REMOVE!



Why Do Conflict Occur?

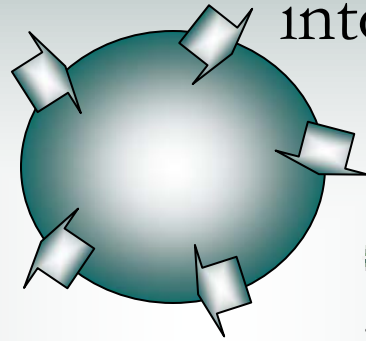
- Lack of communication
- Value conflicts
- Lack of effective leadership or decision making
- Discrepancies in role performances
- Low productivity
- Unresolved prior conflicts



Unresolved Conflict is a Vicious Circle

- Playing games (If it weren't for you..., Look how hard I've tried...,

- Destroys the problem-solving process

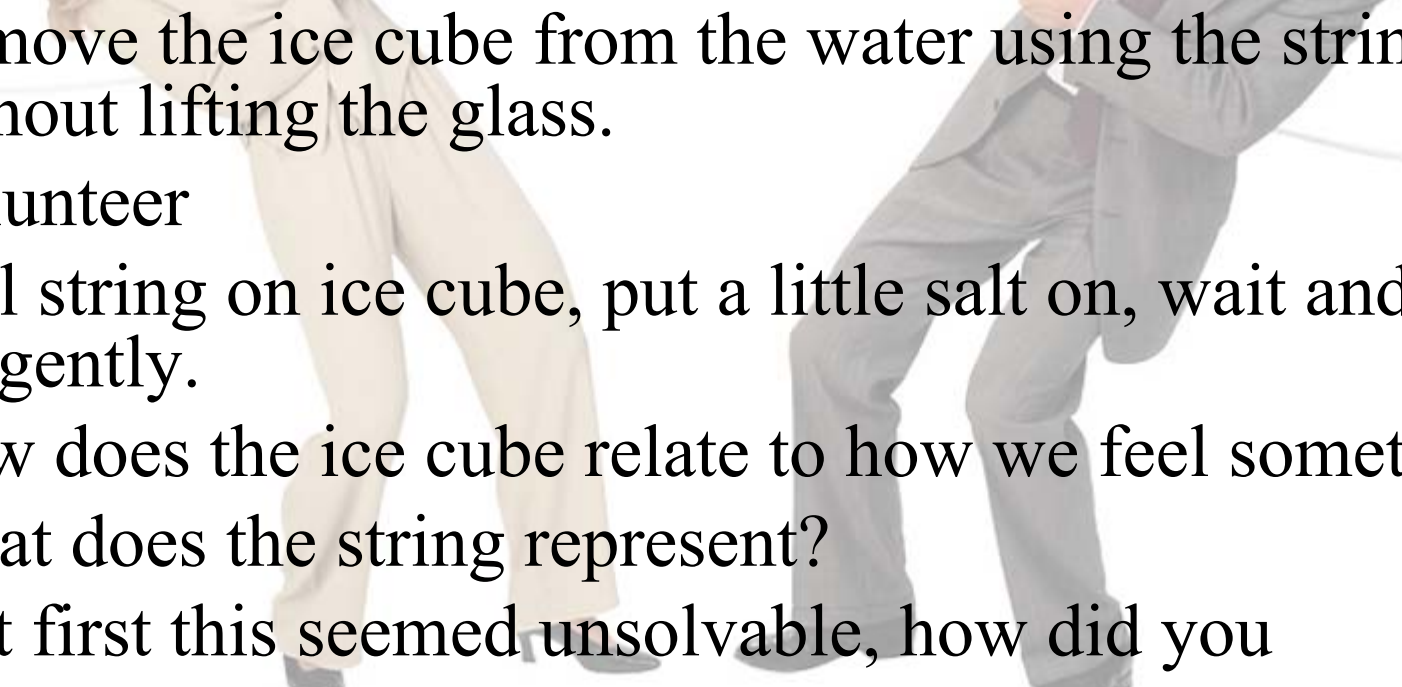


- Relationship degenerates into a power struggle.

- Develops “ritual impasse”, stuck at the same point (refusing to talk after working so hard.

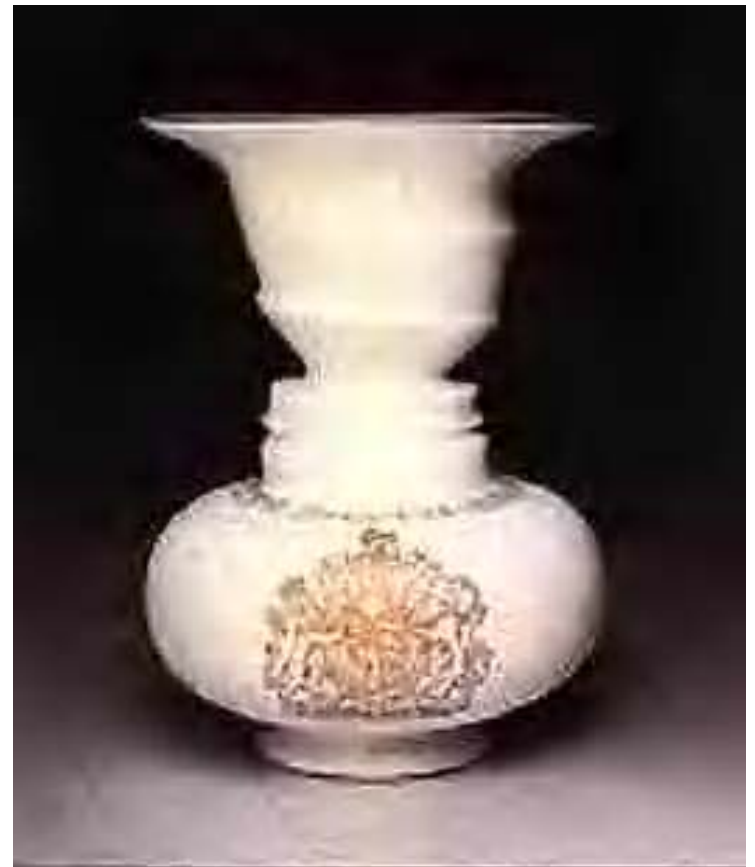
- In the end, the marriage fails because neither partner's needs are met.

Ice Cube Activity

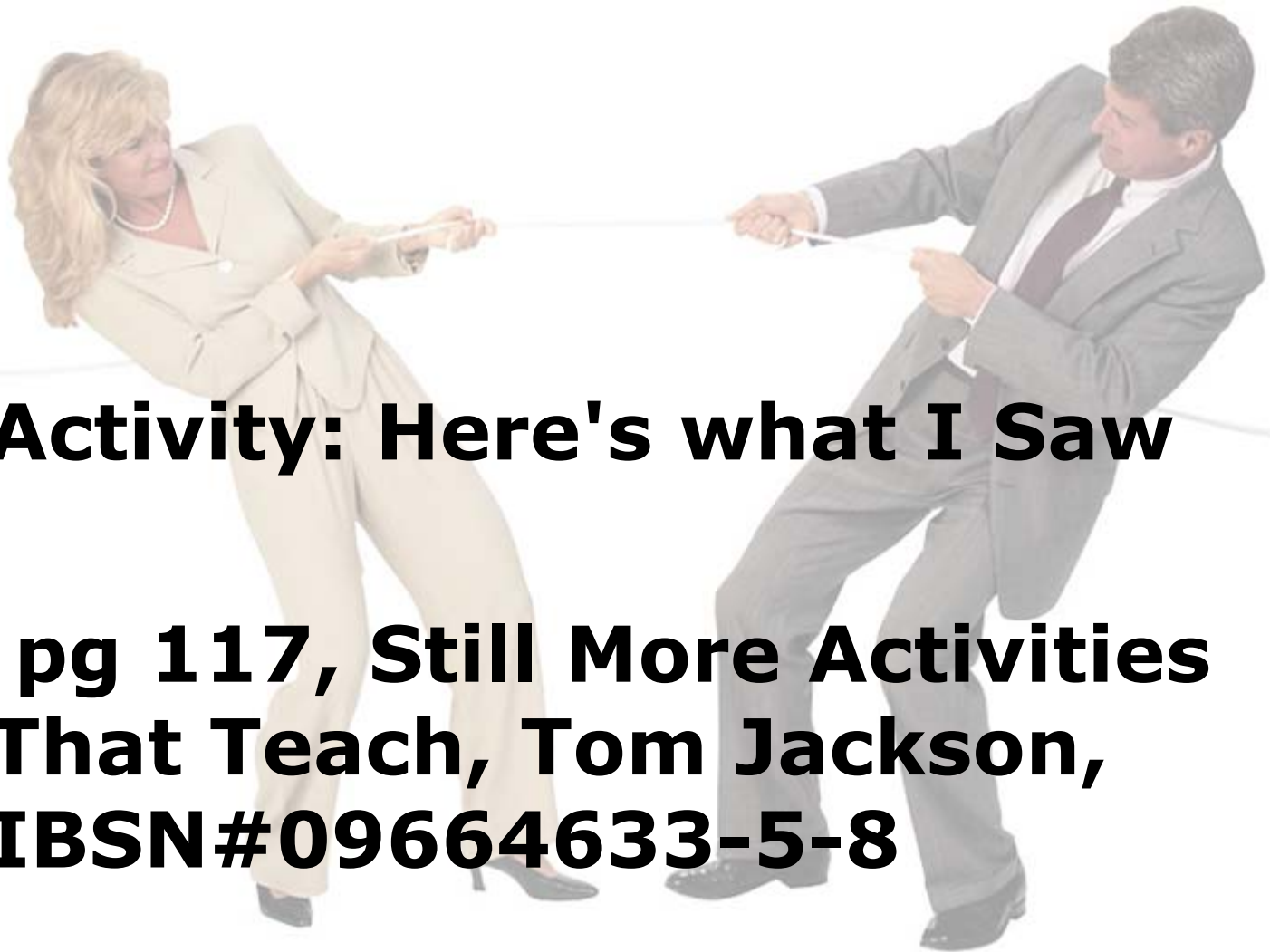
- 
- Remove the ice cube from the water using the string - without lifting the glass.
 - Volunteer
 - Coil string on ice cube, put a little salt on, wait and then lift gently.
 - How does the ice cube relate to how we feel sometimes?
 - What does the string represent?
 - If at first this seemed unsolvable, how did you feel when you figured out how to retrieve the ice cube?

Perspective –What is yours?

All people are different. We have different likes, dislikes, beliefs, and values. These differences make up our individual perspective.

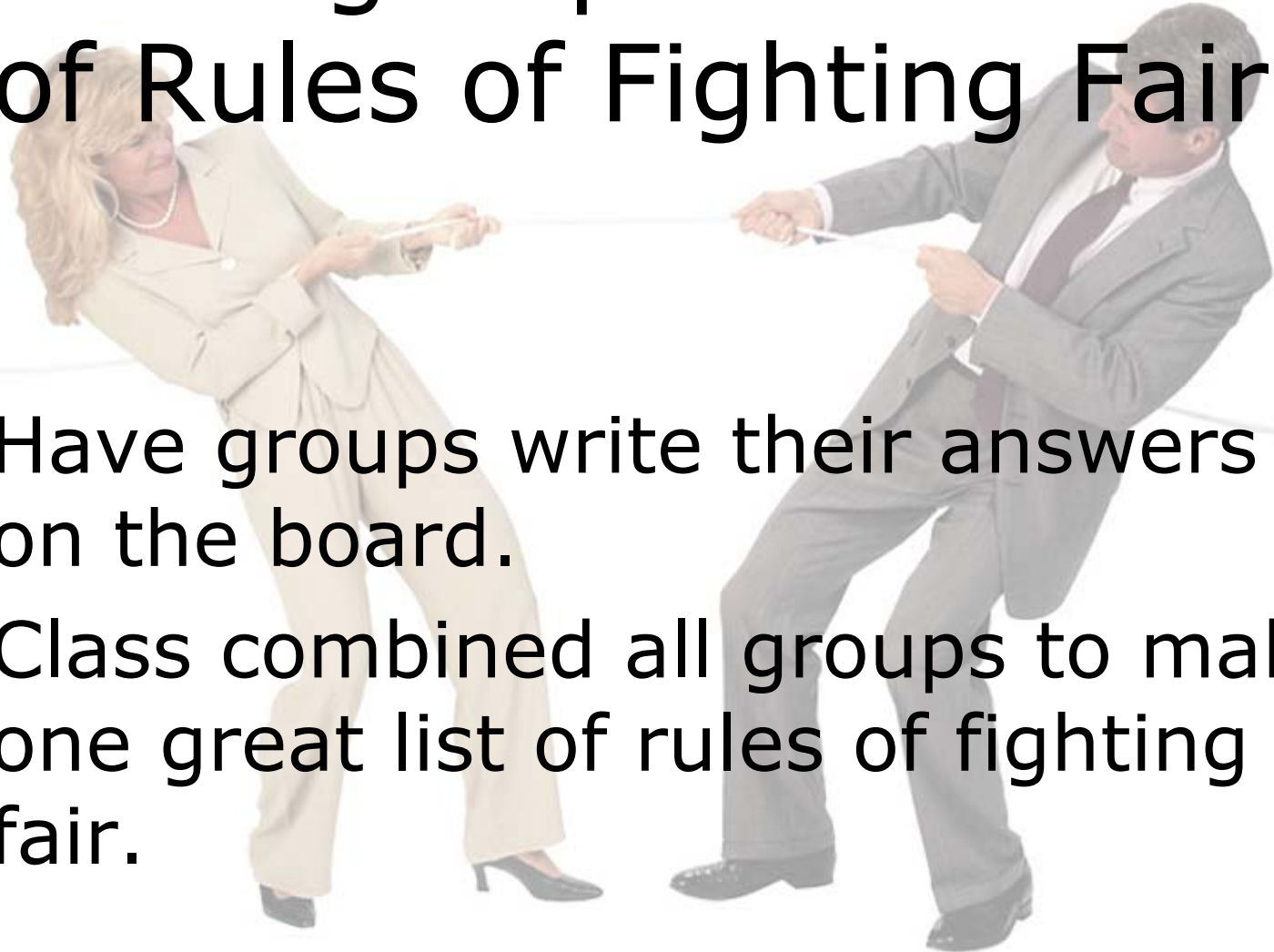




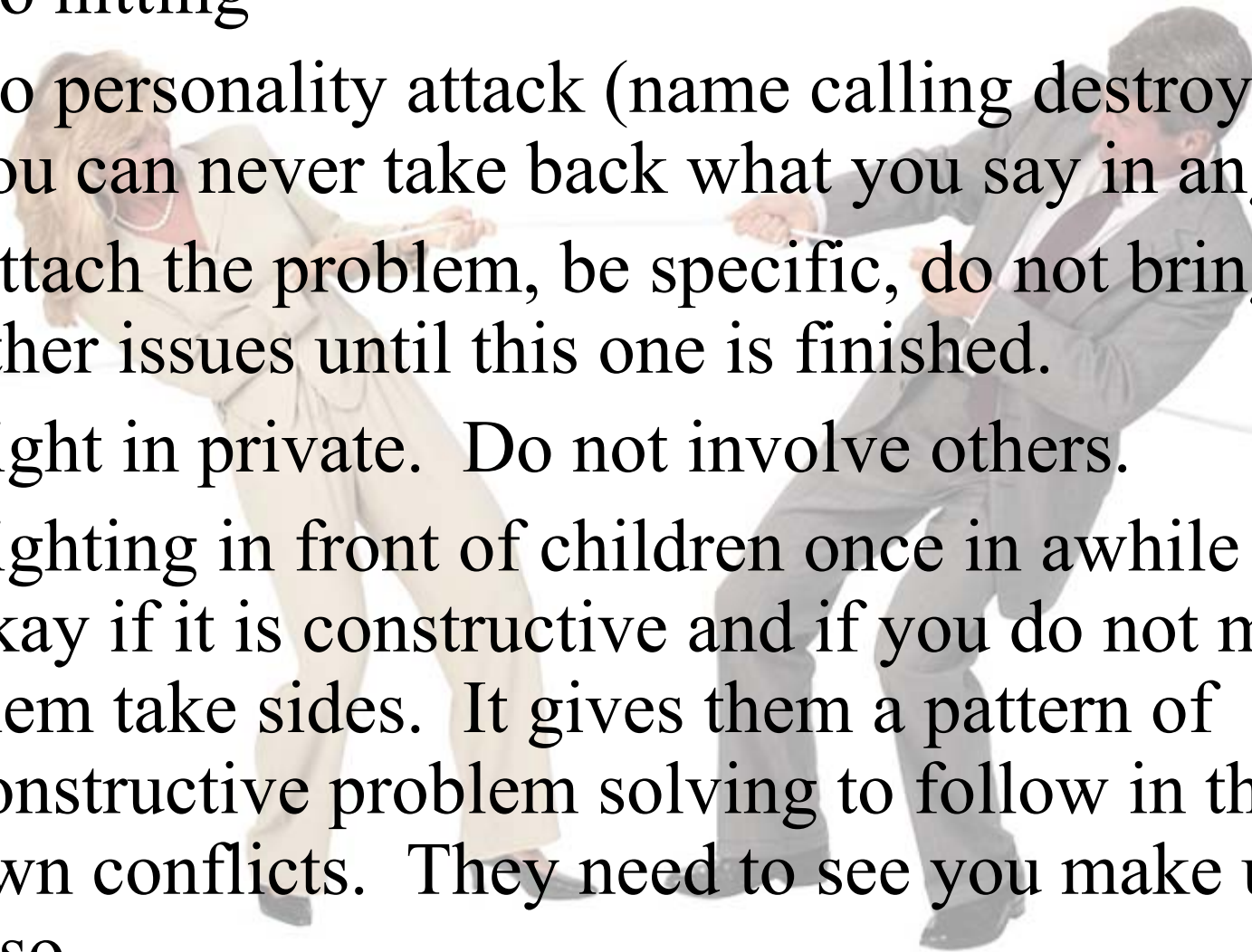
- 
- A man and a woman, both dressed in professional business suits, are engaged in a tug-of-war activity. They are pulling on a thick white rope with significant effort, leaning back and straining their muscles. The woman on the left has blonde hair and is wearing a light-colored suit, while the man on the right has dark hair and is wearing a grey suit with a dark tie. The background is a plain, light color.
- **Activity: Here's what I Saw**
 - **pg 117, Still More Activities That Teach, Tom Jackson, ISBN#09664633-5-8**

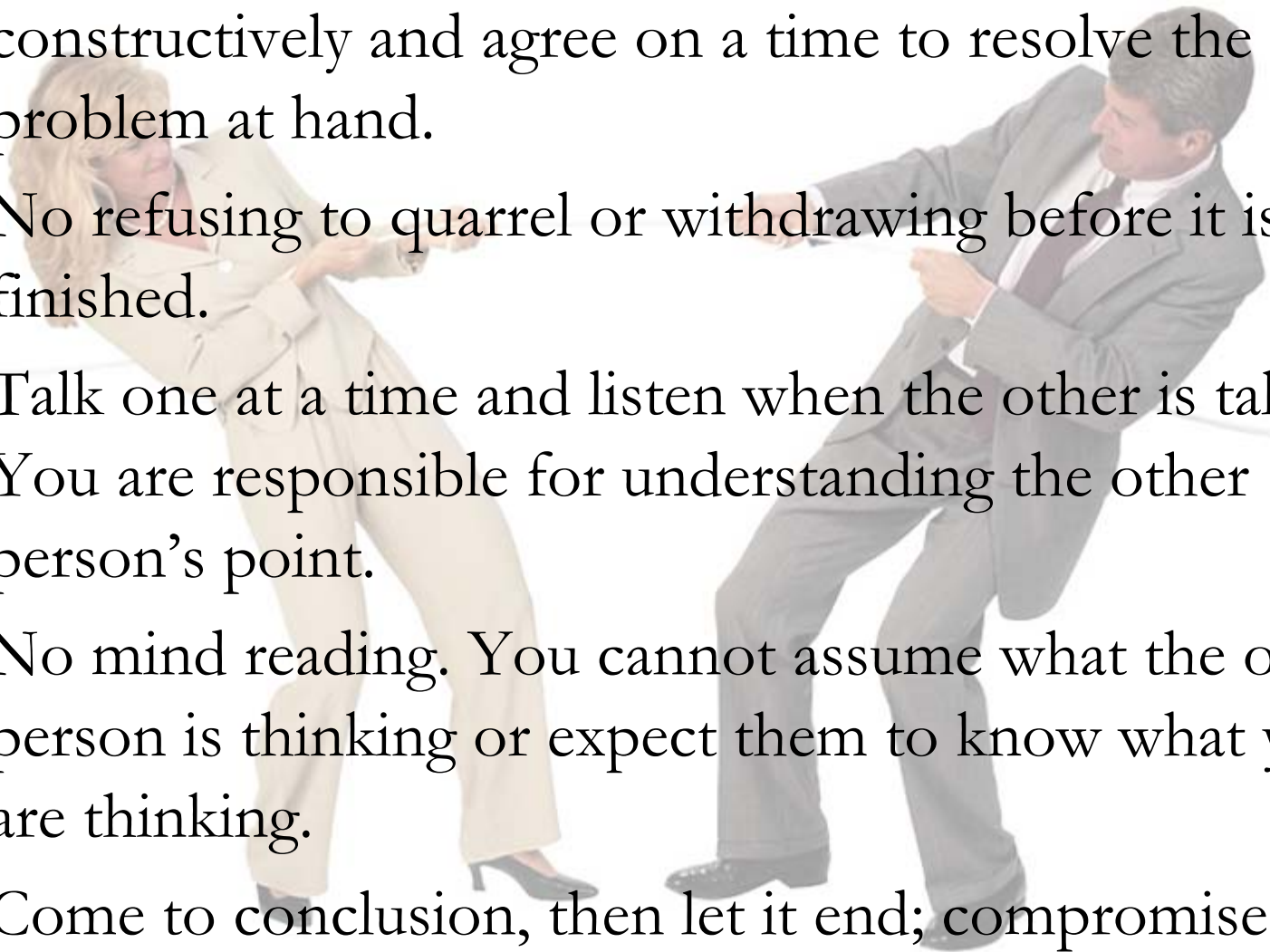
Same groups make a list of Rules of Fighting Fair.

- Have groups write their answers on the board.
- Class combined all groups to make one great list of rules of fighting fair.



Solving Conflicts: Fair Fighting Rules

1. No hitting
 2. No personality attack (name calling destroys ego, you can never take back what you say in anger.)
 3. Attach the problem, be specific, do not bring in other issues until this one is finished.
 4. Fight in private. Do not involve others.
 5. Fighting in front of children once in awhile is okay if it is constructive and if you do not make them take sides. It gives them a pattern of constructive problem solving to follow in their own conflicts. They need to see you make up also.
- 

- 
6. Fight it out at the time, if you can. Do not let it build and fester. However, if a time out is needed, use it constructively and agree on a time to resolve the problem at hand.
 7. No refusing to quarrel or withdrawing before it is finished.
 8. Talk one at a time and listen when the other is talking. You are responsible for understanding the other person's point.
 9. No mind reading. You cannot assume what the other person is thinking or expect them to know what you are thinking.
 10. Come to conclusion, then let it end; compromise, if you can. Give in occasionally, agree to disagree.

- 
- A man and a woman in business attire are shown in a tug-of-war pose, pulling on a rope. The woman on the left is wearing a light-colored suit and has blonde hair. The man on the right is wearing a dark suit and has dark hair. They are both leaning back, exerting effort to pull the rope towards themselves. The background is plain white.
- **Activity: Blow Hard**
 - **pg. 52, Still More Activities That Teach, Tom Jackson, ISBN#09664633-5-8**

Resolving Anger

by Maces

An acronym (AREA) to help couples remember a better way of solving anger.

A -- is for admitting your anger to your spouse.

R -- is the desire to restrain your anger and not let it get out of hand by blaming or belittling.

E -- stands for explaining in a very calm manner why you are angry.

A -- stands for action planning or doing something about the cause of the anger.

Negotiation and Resolving Conflicts

Start with Couples Stopping and Cooling off
before they begin.

Model for Resolving Conflict in Marriage

- Recognize conflict issues.
- Listen carefully to the other person.
- Select the most appropriate time.
- Specifically define the problem or conflict issue.
- Identify your own contributions to the problem.
- Identify alternate solutions
- Decide on a mutually acceptable solution.
- Implement new behavior.

The Art of Negotiation

1. Affirming loyalty to the marriage.
2. Assessment and clarification of needs.
3. Achieving conciliation.
4. Declaring what each will do and when.

- 
- A man and a woman in business attire are pulling on a rope, likely participating in a team-building exercise. The woman is on the left, wearing a light-colored suit, and the man is on the right, wearing a dark suit. They are both leaning back and pulling with effort. The background is plain white.
- **Activity: Shoe Size**

- **pg. 197, Still More Activities That Teach, Tom Jackson, ISBN#09664633-5-8**

Problem Solving

1. State the problem
2. Look for areas of agreement
3. Explore alternatives
4. Try a solution
5. Evaluate results

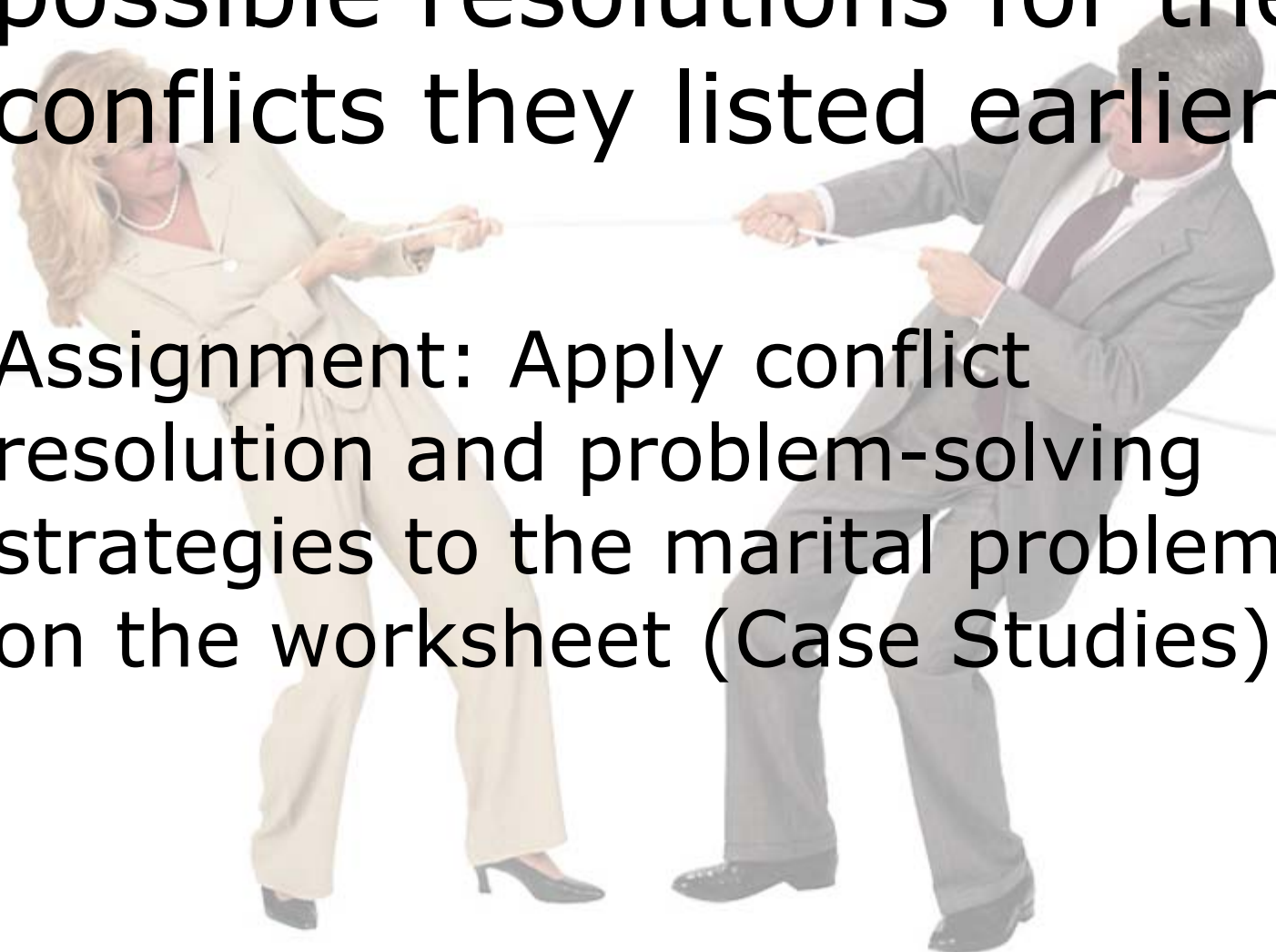
Joint problem solving does not mean one person wins and the other loses. Work toward finding a win-win solution, where both feel satisfied.

Always strive to build on the positive aspects of your relationship.

Activity: Working Through a Conflict Situation

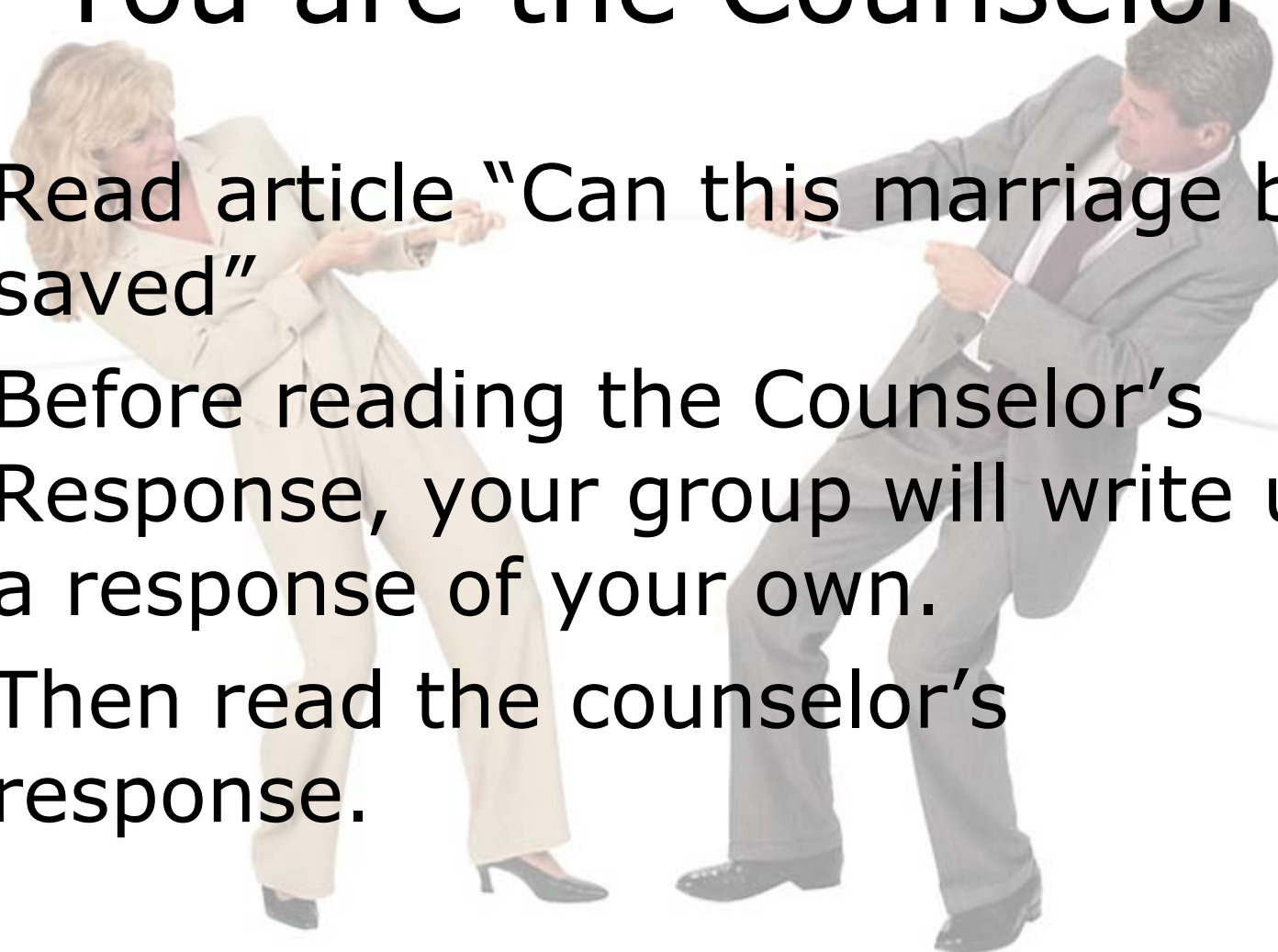
Get in pairs and discuss possible resolutions for the conflicts they listed earlier.

- Assignment: Apply conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies to the marital problems on the worksheet (Case Studies).



You are the Counselor

- Read article “Can this marriage be saved”
- Before reading the Counselor’s Response, your group will write up a response of your own.
- Then read the counselor’s response.



Summary

The potential for conflict exists whenever and wherever people have contact.

Remember the words of Robert Townsend: "A good manager does not try to eliminate conflict, he tries to keep it from wasting the energies of his people." All conflict cannot be resolved. Sometimes individuals do not think it is in their best interest--the price is too high. Resolution means negotiation toward a creative solution--if one party is unwilling to do that, the conflict will continue.

- Marriage – A many-Splendored, Sometimes Splintered, Thing
Dr. Daniel Wayne Matthews
http://www.utahmarriage.org/functions/function_frame01.cfm?link=http://
- **Still More Activities That Teach, Tom Jackson, ISBN#09664633-5-8**
- **“Fighting Fair” in Marriage” and “Managing Conflict Successfully”**
Herbert G. Lingren
University of Nebraska-Lincoln Cooperation Extension
<http://www.utahmarriage.org>