1.3: Types of Conflicts

There are **three** types of conflicts that involve people.

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**Simple Conflict**

This type of conflict is focused on a specific subject or topic. The disagreement is over differences about substantive topics of a social, political, or economic nature. Various books and surveys list the following as the major areas of simple conflict in marriage that lead to over 90% of all divorces in the United States; **sex, finances, raising children, in-laws, religion**.

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**Pseudo Conflict**

This type of conflict occurs when there is a communication breakdown between the sender and receiver. Such conflicts are created when the receiver decodes a message differently than the sender intended, when he or she encoded it. You send your special someone flowers as a symbol of love, but he or she interprets the flowers as a symbol that you are guilty of doing something wrong. You make dinner in order to give your spouse the night off; he or she interprets the message, as you don't like his or her cooking. In both cases a conflict occurs where no conflict actually exists.

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**Ego Conflict**

This type of conflict occurs as a result of personality differences between two people. This is the most difficult type of conflict to resolve because one's dignity, or self-esteem, or self-respect, or pride is involved. In the early days of this country, pistol duels were a common way of resolving ego conflict. In 1804, Vice-President Aaron Burr shot and killed Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton in a duel. Burr challenged Hamilton to the duel because he was angered by
several letters that Hamilton had written and published which questioned Burr’s character and fitness for office. This book will not be suggesting duels to resolve any type of conflict.