

Conflict Exercise: In What Corner Are You Standing?

Think of the last time you were in a significant conflict situation, and you reacted instinctively rather than flexibly. What was your response? What was the other person's response? Think over other similar "instinctive response" situations. Is there a common pattern (you may notice that you often respond defensively with a certain sex or age of person or in certain interpersonal situations such as when you feel helpless or unloved)? Where do you think you fit on the diagram?

Determining our defensive corners can take some time to sort out. If you're not sure, let it percolate for awhile, and look for other examples in your life. Note also that if you are generally an adaptable or flexible person (spending a lot of time in the flexible inner circle), you may not have as many "instinctive response" situations, and it may take a while for you to obtain enough information to determine your defensive corner.