

## Two Babies and Two Attitudinal Sets

### Two Attitudinal Sets When Approaching Conflict Conversations

#### ***“What the hell is this?”***

Is an attitude that is often fear- or anxiety-based, defensive, or antagonistic. With this attitude, partners don't really listen to their mates; they often just wait for the other person to finish, so they can make their point.



They look for “holes in the argument” that they can rebut. They don't expect any new or interesting information to come out of an argument, so it usually doesn't.

They have an *“I'm right and you're wrong”* attitude or worse: *“I'm right, and you're an idiot”* - belligerence about them. If marriage is a team sport, they are on opposing sides, looking for the advantage or their opponent's weakness.

#### **“What's this?”**

In contrast, the *“What's this?”* approach is one of genuine curiosity. Partners are open to new information. They truly want to know what their partner thinks, even if it is so different than their own. They are open to being proven wrong. They care about the outcome and about how they are coming across. They make repair attempts when the conversation turns negative.

