Finding Common Ground Exercise

(Adapted from the Finding Common Ground Exercise by John Gottman, Ph.D.)

Each partner will complete their own circle diagram, like the one seen below. In the inner circle, write your “bottom line(s)” related to the identified problem – the things that you cannot compromise on. In the outer circle, write the thing that you would like to have but are willing to compromise on. Come together and share your circles. Ask each other the following questions:

1. What do we agree about?
2. What are our common feelings?
3. What goals do we have in common?
4. How can we both better understand this issue?
5. What compromise can we both live with?