THE FOUR HORSEMEN
AND HOW TO STOP THEM WITH THEIR ANTIDOTES

CRITICISM
Verbally attacking personality or character.

GENTLE START UP
Talk about your feelings using “I” statements and express a positive need.

CONTEMPT
Attacking sense of self with an intent to insult or abuse.

BUILD CULTURE OF APPRECIATION
Remind yourself of your partner’s positive qualities and find gratitude for positive actions.

DEFENSIVENESS
Victimizing yourself to ward off a perceived attack and reverse the blame.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY
Accept your partner’s perspective and offer an apology for any wrongdoing.

STONEWALLING
Withdrawing to avoid conflict and convey disapproval, distance, and separation.

PHYSIOLOGICAL SELF-SOOTHING
Take a break and spend that time doing something soothing and distracting.

The Gottman Institute