Evidence supports the idea that relationship satisfaction is influenced not only by individual differences, but by the interactions couples have day to day. Karney and Bradbury’s Vulnerability-Stress-Adaption Model posits that both intrapersonal and interpersonal variable interactions affect important relationship outcomes such as quality, stability, adaptability, and satisfaction. In the current study, we explored whether conflict communication patterns mediate the connection between externalizing traits and relationship satisfaction in 100 newlywed couples ($N = 199$) by testing various path models. Structural equation modeling was used to examine both actor and partner effects between latent factors of externalizing behavior, couple communication, and relationship satisfaction. It was hypothesized that our analyses would support a mediating role of conflict communication between the overall externalizing factor and relationship satisfaction. Findings have important implications for understanding how externalizing traits lead to marital distress through maladaptive communication patterns.