

# a healthy balance

## Are You Fighting Fair?

Arguments and disagreements are bound to happen, but relationships are too often damaged and destroyed over hurtful comments and bitterness. Consider using the following suggestions to “fight fair” and possibly resolve situations before they intensify.

**One argument, two different views.** “You never pick up your dirty clothes!” In one person’s mind, picking up the clothes could have easily solved this request. For the other partner, however, this comment is an on-going attack that they don’t do their fair share. Finding out the intent of the comments can be instrumental in putting the argument into the proper context.

**Accept that mistakes are made.** Mistakes in life are made all the time. Be patient with your partner when a mistake has been made and be willing to admit if you have made a mistake, too.

**Don’t blame. Avoid shame.** Playing the blame/shame game is a recipe for disaster because it puts the person into a defensive mode and can obstruct the reason an argument started. Treat the person with whom you might be arguing as you’d like to be treated.

**Aim to resolve, not win.** Arguments shouldn’t be considered contests. Set your goal for resolution rather than victory. Believe that the other person wants a mutual resolution as much as you do.

**Listen up.** It’s too easy to start thinking about what you are going to say next, rather than to stop and really listen to what your partner is saying. Try to spend as much time listening as you would speaking.

**Don’t add excess baggage.** Bringing in past arguments and concerns can only escalate an argument, so keep your focus on the topic at hand.

**Allow breaks in the action.** Give yourself a break when the argument becomes too much for either one of you, if necessary. Plan on getting back to the discussion when tempers have eased.

**Move on.** Once mutual resolution is found, acknowledge that it’s time to move on. Use this resolution as a healing process. Give the person a hug, or say, “I love you.”

Any of these suggestions can help you resolve and move on from a situation or argument. If you and your partner continue to have frequent and unresolved arguments, discuss the idea of seeking assistance from a mental health professional, either jointly or individually.

## Did you know your Employee Assistance Program (EAP) could help?

Helping couples build stronger relationships is just one of the ways your EAP can help improve a member’s overall health and well-being. For more information, call your confidential EAP any day, any time, for assistance, resources or a referral to help resolve your concerns.

problem

solved