



Respectfully Disagreeing

There's nothing like a good argument to clear the air. But whether the fight is between friends, spouses, or parents and children, experts say there are rules to keep the proceedings respectful and create opportunities for greater understanding.

- **Stick to a single issue and avoid past grievances.** If you're bickering about the family deficit, don't dredge up distracting complaints about in-laws or vacation plans.
- **No name-calling.** It will only make the argument vindictive.
- **Be honest.** Say what's on your mind and get the fight over with.
- **Listen.** Let the other person have his say. Then have yours.
- **Don't nag or battle in public.** Respect others and yourselves.
- **Never hit.** Nothing justifies violence.
- **Don't threaten the end the relationship.** It's usually unrealistic.
- **Don't walk out in the middle of a fight.** Nothing is solved.
- **Apologize when wrong.**
- **Compromise.** Show respect for the other person's feelings by meeting halfway. You won't get very far trying to change people.
- **Don't hold a grudge.** Learn to live with whatever resolution you both agree to. As the Bible says, don't let the sun set on your anger.

Disagreeing with people we care about is part of life. The key to an honorable and productive argument is respecting the other person.