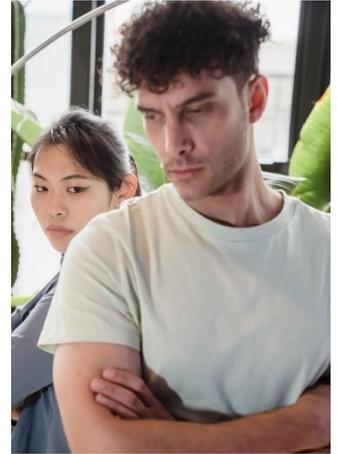


How to Have a Healthy Fight

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Some couples think their marriages are solid because they never fight. However, avoiding disagreements isn't necessarily an indicator of marital health. In fact, having healthy conflict can be a good thing, a vehicle of growth! What's more important than *not* fighting is learning *how to fight*—or perhaps a better word is *disagree*—in a respectful, healthy way. With our basic differences—from male/female to different behavioral styles, different backgrounds, etc., it's highly unlikely to go through married life without a disagreement! Instead of trying to “win” your arguments, why not make each conflict an opportunity to have a “win” in your relationship? (If you're single, this can apply to friendships, relatives, and work colleagues, too.)



In Ephesians 4:32 (ESV), God shows us how He wants us to treat each other: *Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

What to Do	What to Avoid
Listen.	Talking “over” the other person.
Reflect what the other person says.	Making sure you make “your” point.
Stick with “current events,” discussing one thing at a time.	Bringing up past problems/concerns.
Use “I” statements, describing your own feelings and concerns.	Treating your partner as inferior.
Be direct, using eye contact, waiting patiently for your partner to respond.	Reacting in anger.
Take responsibility for anything negative you've said or done. Confess your sin to God (1 John 1:9).	“You” statements.
Look for the “win” in your relationship, not the situation.	Holding a grudge or settling for co-existence.
Pray for wisdom. Trust in God and not your own understanding (Proverbs 3:5,6).	Complaining, negative criticism, or blaming.
Collaborate, working together to achieve progress.	Capitulation.
Forgive freely, meeting on level ground at the Cross.	Demanding perfection from your partner.

Lean on, trust in, and be confident in the Lord with all your heart and mind and do not rely on your own insight or understanding. In all your ways know, recognize, and acknowledge Him, and He will direct and make straight and plain your paths (Proverbs 3:5-6, AMP).

If you're at an impasse and can't work through a conflict, why not talk with your pastor or a counselor? You can find counselors' contact information at the South Florida Association of Christian Counselors (sfacc.net).