

“ Life is a journey where we can choose to discover and practice the personal tools that can build a foundation from which we can live the best of life has to offer. ”

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Fair Fighting Rules

1. No threats during the argument.
2. No blanket or labeling judgments, such as "you are stupid," "thoughtless," "domineering," "a lousy lover," and so on.
3. Stay on topic. Save other topics for other arguments. Focus on specific behaviors.
4. Don't interrupt. Stay on some eye level, either sitting or standing. Check to make sure you have heard the other correctly before responding.
5. Don't use "never" or "always".
6. Stay in the present tense - past tense reference is usually utilized to prove one point to "win". Just because we acted a certain way in the past does not necessitate that we will act that way in the future. Deal with here and now issues. What is in the

past can't be changed.

7. Don't discuss sensitive issues in bed, when you're exhausted, hungry, in a hurry, or close to bedtime.

8. If arguments get real heated, one party can call a time out for a specific amount of time.

9. No finger pointing - it invites either compliant or rebellious response which interferes with effective problem solving.

10. State what you're willing to change about YOU.

11. Take responsibility for feeling the way you do. Rather than saying, "You make me so....," use "I am mad," instead. It is enough to take responsibility for the messages you are sending ("I" language), rather speaking for the other person (telling them what they are feeling or thinking). Instead, say what you FEEL about specific behaviors (e.g. "I feel hurt when you rush into intercourse. I think you aren't interested in me as a person but just in your own release. I would like more touching and kissing and talking before we have sex").

12. If you suspect an argument is developing, write down the topic or problem. This can help you stay on the topic and manage (control) your own process.