

OVERCOMING CONFLICT



Which is better, being right or being at peace?

In the middle of a conflict with a friend or loved one it is easy to lose perspective and forget this question, but with practice you can create healthy relationship habits that carry through even the toughest of times.

Here are three simple tips for coping with conflict:

Keep the conversation solution-centered.

Many times in an argument, both people push each other to only see the problem - one person harps on a mistake or a bad habit, and the other person becomes defensive of their behavior.

Instead, focus on possible solutions that will minimize drama and place you and your loved one on the same team, not pitted against each other. Use these questions to keep the conversation solution-centered:

This relationship is very important to me and I want us both to be a happy. How do you think we can make that happen?

I think we are both very emotional about this right now, and I'm having trouble focusing on the solution. Can we talk in a few hours when we can both think clearly about what the problem is and how we can solve it?

How do you think we can resolve this with a win-win solution?

Conflicts repeat themselves.

Many arguments grow from a reoccurring conflict. Perhaps you and your loved one fundamentally disagree on a sensitive subject, or they handle situations differently and it rubs you the wrong way. Engrained differences in character and perspective can lead to a loop of endless arguments. Fighting about it again and again does not usually resolve the root of the problem.

Try bringing the conversation to the next level - acknowledge that you both may never be on the same page about this issue.

How can you create a pattern that's productive and supports the relationship?

Is one of you willing to compromise on this problem?

Or perhaps you can agree to a trade-off so one person isn't carrying the entire burden of the problem?

Forgiveness.

Sincere forgiveness can be a tremendous relief and a simple strategy to overcome conflict. Remember everyone is human, makes mistakes, and comes into their relationships with a different perception of the world and their place in it.

Take your entire relationship with this person into consideration and ask, "Is focusing on this conflict good for me? Will the relationship progress with this conflict?" If the answer is no, simple forgiveness might be the answer.