

## FIGHTING FAIR TECHNIQUES

All people, no matter how much they care, will disagree. Try the following ideas when disagreements arise.

Only deal with one problem at a time. Hold back from bringing up the past. If something that happened in the past is bothering you, wait until you have talked through what just happened before you bring it up.

Describe how the problem affects you. Share your feelings with "I" messages instead of "you" phrases. "You" carries blame. Avoid sarcasm and he said/she said.

Describe the problem without attacking the other person. Shouting, blaming, and put downs just make the situation worse. Remember, no one always or never does something wrong or right.

Ask how the person is feeling. Don't guess or tell a person what to think or how to feel.

Keep an open mind and listen to what the other person says. Avoid interrupting or putting words into the other person's mouth. Don't take the position that you have to be right all the time.

Talk without interruptions. Turn off the cell phone, television, or computer.

Keeping a sense of humor is okay, but do not make fun of the other person.

Wait until the effects of drugs or alcohol have worn off. If you are intoxicated, you won't be able to think clearly or know what is really going on. This goes for the other person, too.

Don't try to have 1 winner and 1 loser. If a discussion ends this way, you will both lose. Be willing to compromise. Sometimes the best you can do is agree to disagree.

Take a break if you are not getting any closer to reaching an agreement. This gives each person time to think about what they want to happen and possible solutions. Agree when you will talk about the problem again before you leave.

Do not destroy property. Tearing up letters, poems or pictures will not help work out the problem. And you may regret it later.

Once you have come up with a solution to the problem, remember it doesn't have to be permanent. Try it for awhile and if it doesn't work for one of you, talk about it and try something else.

There is NEVER an excuse for using violence. This includes using threats ("I can find someone else!"), coercion ("if you really loved me..."), and physical violence.

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1. Which ways to fight unfairly do students use most often?
  
  2. Why do people fight unfair?
  
  3. What happens when one person does not fight fair? Is the other person more likely to fight unfair as well?
  
  4. What happened when both people used fair fighting techniques to solve the conflict?
  
  5. Can concerns be discussed and resolved using the fighting fair techniques?
  
  6. Can you use fighting fair techniques with your family, friends or dating partner? If yes, how? If no, why not?
  
  7. Is it more difficult to fight fair with someone you care about? Why or why not?
  
  8. Now that you are familiar with these techniques, how will you respond when someone fights unfairly with you?