

Getting help

If you do decide to get some counselling or join a support group here's some services that you might want to get in contact with:

Phone Counselling

Kids Help Line 1800 551 800

Confidential phone counselling, 24hrs (5-18yrs)
Web chat or email a counsellor at: www.kidshelp.com.au

Lifeline 13 11 14

Confidential phone counselling, 24hrs (all ages)

Mediation Services

Mercy Reconnect 1800 800 046

Mediation for Young People & Parents/Guardians
Relationship Support/Counselling

Relationships Australia 1300 364 277

Counselling for Relationships / Families

Kinway 9263 2050

Counselling for Relationships / Families

Domestic Violence

DVAS 9227 5832

Domestic Violence Advocacy Support

Womens Helpline 1800 007 339

Mens Helpline 1800 000 599

Mental Health Support Services

YouthLink/Youth Reach/YouthAxis 1300 362 569

Counselling & psychotherapy (13-24yrs)

Youth Focus 6266 4333

Counselling, Education, Peer Support (12-18yrs)

Headspace

Australia's Youth Mental Health Foundation

<http://www.headspace.org.au/> 1800650890

Ten tips to arguing well

1. No ambushing
2. Present your argument sensibly
3. Start with "I"
4. Listen carefully to the other person
5. Stick to the issue
6. Agree on what kind of behavior is acceptable during the argument
7. Keep all blows above the belt
8. Don't overreact
9. If you can agree, decide how to carry out your decision
10. If you can't settle the issues, leave it for later, at a specific and agreed upon time

If you still can't work it out
get a neutral Referee, maybe from one of
the services listed on this brochure



Geoffrey Sambell Centre
23 Adelaide Terrace,
East Perth 6004
Web: www.anglicarewa.org.au
Email: step1@anglicarewa.org.au
Ph: (08) 9325 7033
Mob: 0418 942 475



223 James St
Northbridge WA 6003
Web: www.youthlink.perthwa.net
Ph: 9227 4300
For referrals: 1300 362 569



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Arguing without Agro

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Youth Mental Health Program

How do you argue?

Arguing is a normal and everyday part of life.

With so many people with different ideas and plans there is no way that we can avoid getting into an argument now and again. The question is, how can we argue in a way that is constructive and respectful that gets a good result for everyone.

We all have different arguing styles, depending on your personality, and what you learnt about arguing as a kid.

Most people generally work from one of these styles.

Aggressive: These people are forceful in an argument. They can yell, threaten, belittle or abuse to get people to agree with them. They sometimes get what they want but damage the relationship in the process.

Agreeing: These people try to keep everyone happy. They often sacrifice their own wants to keep the peace. They prefer no conflict and can get taken advantage of. Sometimes they can use sly methods to get what they want. Things stay peaceful, but at a cost of the persons wants and needs.

Problem Solving: These people respect themselves and others. They want their points to be heard and understood, and they want to hear the concerns of others. They try to look for ways that everyone can get what they want. They are open to negotiate and compromise.

What is a fair argument?

The goal of a fair argument is for those involved to feel listened to, understood, and for a decision to be made that both are happy to work with. All good arguments have rules.

These are the rules for a fair argument:

- 1) No ambushing**
Make a date to talk: for a certain time and place, and for a particular issue. It's never helpful to start a fight at 10pm at night after a hard day.
- 2) Present your argument sensibly**
As preparation, work out for yourself exactly what you want, and the reasons why you want it. And work out what you're willing to compromise for a solution. Organise your arguments. Be sure that what you're asking for is really what you desire.
- 3) Start with "I"**
It's better to say "I feel taken for granted when you don't do the dishes" than "You never do the dishes! You just take me for granted!" Fill in the blanks "I feel ___ when you ___"
- 4) Listen carefully to the other person**
Every time they make a point, tell them in your own words what they said to make sure you understood correctly. Did you get it right? Then take turns in speaking and repeating back. Ask questions if you're not sure about something.
- 5) Stick to the issue**
Argue about no more than two related issues at a time. If side issues come up, save those for another time. Stay in the present, don't go over past issues. No name calling or always / never statements ("You're always..." "You never..." "You're such a..." "You ...")
- 6) Agree on what kind of behavior is acceptable**
This needs to be negotiated between you both. Is raising your voice ok? Should you stand or sit. What about eye contact, body movements, facial expressions? Violence, abuse or threats are never acceptable in an argument.
- 7) Keep all blows above the belt**
If you know each other well then each person knows the sensitive areas of the other. They know just what to say to really hurt them. Attacking in this way is a "foul".

8) Don't over react

While it is important to argue about minor issues so that they don't build up, don't argue with more force than is needed for the issue. Are you hiding larger feelings behind something small? Is this minor issue triggering off something from your past?

9) If you can agree, what now?

Who will do what, is there a deadline? If you become unhappy with the decision later, you can make a time for another argument to make some changes.

10) If you can't agree, leave it for later

Often a complicated issue can't be worked out at one time. A temporary "time out" can be helpful in reviewing your ideas, cooling off, or simply recovering from tiredness. A time and place to continue the argument should be agreed by everyone.

Still can't work it out?

Sometimes, even after your best efforts, you just can't seem to get things to work out.

Perhaps one person isn't interested in working it out, maybe it's too complicated, or there's a lot of past stuff to work through.

This would be the time to consider getting in a neutral person to act as "referee". Someone that every one's happy with. It may be someone you know, or possibly a counsellor, youth worker or family mediator.

Check the back of this pamphlet for agencies that could help you out by being "referee".

