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FIGHTING RULES

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"It is not necessary to understand things in order to argue about them."

Caron de Beaumarchais

This proverb encouraged me to write "Fighting Rules."

Next time you are upset with one another try using my "Fighting Rules."

FIGHTING RULES

- Use "I" statements.
- No slapping, punching, pushing, grabbing, etc.
- No swearing, denunciation, obscenities, character assassination, contempt, sarcasm, or taunting.
- Only two people argue; all outsiders do not join in.
- One partner talks two minutes and the other is quiet for two minutes and then the other partner talks their two minutes (no interruptions).
- Stay on the subject. (Not personalities i.e. "you're just like your mother.")
- Do not talk about anything that happened before--only the present subject, not the past.
- Do not assume, guess, imagine, take for granted, theorize, surmise, speculate, make gestures, judgments, funny glances or faces about what your partner means. Find out!
- Say what you feel. Don't assume the other knows what you feel, want, need, or what you mean.
- No belittling each other's accomplishments.
- Both always have equal rights.
- No interrupting, switching, or changing the subject.
- No manipulating.

- Give each other the ability to withdraw or change their mind.
- No criticizing or humiliating.
- No putting undo pressure on the other.
- No ranting and raving.
- No intimidating or bullying.
- Speak softly.
- No getting angry (yelling or exploding).
- Don't make one feel guilty (no guilt trips).
- No martyrdom.
- No discussion while either one of you is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Be kind and courteous.

I have been criticized that no one will be able to remember all these points. It's possible that is true. Which of the above do you think can be deleted? (The last one really covers them all if you can't remember all the others.)

"Anger is never without a reason, but seldom with a good one."
Benjamin Franklin

Technique for "PROBLEM SOLVING"

A procedure that might help when a problem must be discussed is shown in the following prototype:

Along with the other one hundred fifty department heads working at Morristown Memorial Hospital in New Jersey, I received an order. Mr. Clark, president of the hospital, was explaining some of the recommendations of the Management Firm seminar that he had just completed. One recommendation of the firm was that when a department head had a problem and wanted to discuss it with the president, the department head first had to research the problem, find three solutions, and then meet with him. Mr. Clark continued to explain that it was possible he would use one of the solutions or none of them. He might come up with some of his own to be combined with the department heads' ideas or he might take pieces of more than one solution.

I recommend that you and your partner try this method. This technique makes both of you work as a team. The technique will create a true alliance and partnership. Instead of one person just dropping or dumping a problem on the other and walking away, both of you are looking for a mutually acceptable solution to most problems.