

How to Remain a Loving Family While Fighting

Happy families work to find a solution that's good for everyone.

Everyone wants to be a member of a loving family and every loving family has disagreements, arguments and silly little quarrels. Some disagreements lead to a better understanding, and others, well, no one remembers after the fight is over what started it in the first place.

Loving families create a safety zone where anger can be expressed without anyone getting hurt. Such a family is not threatened by disagreements, they know that families can argue, learn something new and still get along. They're aware of each member's strengths; they value different points of view and consequently they won't let anger fly out of control. They take care of each other even when they're fighting. Here's how you can do that too.



Ya know Judy, we've really gotta work on our conflict resolution skills

One parent's advice...

Always be the first to apologise after an argument. Certainly never go to bed without patching up. Apologise for the things you said that hurt, and for not listening to the other person's point of view. We all need to lose the paranoia that, if we apologise, we will be taken advantage of.

By your own example teach your child how to apologise. It is better for parents not to argue in front of children, but in any case let them see you apologise. And learn to apologise to your child as well when it is warranted... for your impatience, for hasty punishments, etc. A child who knows how to apologise has acquired the life-skill to restore relationships. We all need this skill in abundance.

1. Physical violence is not allowed. Loving families have an irrevocable rule against physical violence. They may get into shouting matches, but they would never hit each other, throw things or destroy each other's property. There's a mutual respect for each other's point of view, and even when they're in the heat of an argument, there are places they won't visit. They don't insult each other or call each other names.

2. Handle disagreements in a way that's best for all members. A happy family knows that the goal of arguing is to clarify what's happening. If one person is upset, family members want to find out what is going on rather than winning. They know that proving yourself right tears a family apart, but trying to understand what life is like from your family member's perspective solidifies your connection. Happy families work to find a solution that's good for everyone.
3. Assume positive intention. Happy families use anger as a signal that they need to sort through the muddle and find clarity. When one family member is angry, instead of assuming the worst, they come to each other in a spirit of cooperation. This provides a better chance of a positive outcome.
4. No blame allowed. When one family member is angry or upset, every member feels it. Instead of blaming the person who is angry, happy families commit to resolving the problem so that each member feels better.
5. Appreciate the differences. Instead of erasing differences, a loving family finds ways to incorporate elements of both points of view. There's nothing wrong with feeling frustrated that your family member doesn't do things the way you would do them, but avoid the trap of thinking that the reason your life is difficult is because of them.
6. Instead of saying, "We can't get along," say out loud, "We're having a disagreement, but we'll figure out a better solution."

The world's longest marriage.

Guinness World Records announced on June 1, 2005, that Percy and Florence Arrowsmith had the world's longest marriage. In addition, their combined ages broke a record for a married couple. Percy: Percy died on June 15, 2005, just two weeks after celebrating 80 years of marriage with his wife Florence. Percy Arrowsmith died peacefully at his home at the age of 105. Florence was by his side. Florence: Florence died on April 9, 2007.

Florence speaks on the importance of saying sorry: "If you've had a quarrel, you make it up - never be afraid to say sorry. We have had our arguments but we work through them together. We always go to bed as friends and always make up before we go to sleep with a kiss and a cuddle."

Percy sums up the secret to marital success: "Saying Yes, dear."

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