

The Government website RELATE is an excellent tool to help couples and families negotiate the processes of forming and maintaining relationships. Check it out and find all sorts of helpful tips and ideas– www.relate.gov.org.au. The following tips can be found on the RELATE Website –

GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER

20 Tips for a better relationship – managing conflict

1. First and foremost, remember you're not out to win the argument or change your partners mind.
2. Talking about why you disagree is simply a way to find out more about how each of you can balance your wants and needs through changing circumstances
3. Pick a relaxed time to discuss things. Avoid first thing in the morning or after a long work day. Weekends can be good.
4. Before things reach boiling point, talk them through. If something is annoy8ing you, don't let it continue to bug you.
5. Rather than drive a wedge between you by sulking, try to bring problems out into the open.
6. Don't linger on old arguments and conflicts. It's best to avoid saying "You always..." or "You never..."
7. Insults don't help. It's wise to deal with arguments in an intelligent manner.
8. Compromise doesn't mean you've given up; it is what resolving conflict is all about.
9. Acknowledge your partner's views, but don't forget to say how you really feel. A courtesy nod isn't enough.
10. Don't go into an argument with a "take no prisoner's attitude". You might win the battle but lose the war by damaging the relationship.
11. Rather than deny there is a problem, share it.
12. Do you sulk, avoid issues, over-compromise or tend to dominate? Being aware of your approach can help solve a problem more quickly.
13. The saying, "Never go to bed angry" is usually sound advice. Negotiation takes give and take.
14. Avoid just being a peacemaker. It won't solve the problem and you could end up feeling resentful.
15. Discussing the problem is the best tool to resolve a conflict and work out a solution.
16. Don't think you can read your partner's mind (no matter how well you think you know them). It is always better to them to tell you what they think and feel.
17. Tell your partner how much the relationship means to you by taking time to solve problems, listen and appreciate each other as individuals.
18. Cool off after an argument. Honestly ask yourself if you are also to blame. Accepting responsibility for your part in an argument goes a long way to fixing things.
19. Remember you won't always agree on everything and that it is okay to disagree.
20. Give each other options; don't just insist on one solution. Agree to a solution and give it a go. If it doesn't work, try another



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