



FAIR FIGHTING RULES/COMMUNICATION RULES

1. No Physical Abuse
2. No name calling
3. No swearing
4. No Accusatory statements: Use only "I feel statements – take responsibility for your feelings. Someone does not cause you to feel angry or sad, etc...You choose to feel that way
5. Don't bring in old issues. Stick to the issue or disagreement.
6. Don't make assumptions about the other person's feelings. Check out assumptions by asking them if they are feeling a certain way.
7. Don't walk away or ignore a disagreement. Confront the conflict in order to resolve it. Resolve a disagreement as soon as possible. Don't let conflicts stockpile.
8. Say what you are thinking and feeling. Don't expect the other person to know how you feel unless you directly communicate to that person how you feel.
9. Respect each other's opinions and views of the problem even if these ideas are different than your own. People will see things differently, but it doesn't make anyone more right or more wrong than the other. Sometimes

10. Make a compromise whenever possible. Everyone has to learn to give and take in a relationship.
11. Avoid absolutes. Don't use always, never should.
12. Avoid "fouls" and "low blows". We all know what we can say to our partners that will stimulate a negative reaction. Don't say these things.
13. Solve one problem at a time. As each problem is solved, then move on to the next issue.
14. Solutions need not be forever. Make a firm commitment to the agreed – upon solution, try it out for a specific period of time, and then evaluate.
15. Allow time to change. Make consistent and persistent effort, but remember – some changes take time.

COMMUNICATION

We tend to be irrational under anger and say things we do not mean. We cannot take back anything we do or say.

Fair Fighting Rules

1. Keep your body to yourself (No hitting, biting, kicking, throwing objects, etc.)
2. No sarcasm, name yelling, swearing, yelling or screaming
3. Focus on the reason you are in the conflict – Do not bring up past fights (do not save up anger) Only talk about the facts that are currently happening
4. Use “I” statements Never say “You” always or never
5. Listen to the person. Do not think about what you are going to say in response. Just Listen. Then speak.
6. Allow time-outs when needed.
7. Sometimes agree to disagree or compromise on something. Understand that we are not always going to be right.

STYLES OF COMMUNICATION

Passive:

- Being the doormat
- Fail to assert for themselves
- Allow other to deliberately or inadvertently infringe on their rights
- Fail to express their feelings, needs or opinions
- Tend to speak softly or apologetically
- Exhibit poor eye contact and slumped body posture

Aggressive:

- Try to dominate others
- Use humiliation to control
- Criticize, blame or attack others
- Be very impulsive
- Have low frustration tolerance
- Speak in a loud, demanding and overbearing voice
- Act threateningly and rudely
- Not listen well
- Interrupt frequently
- Use "you" statements
- Have piercing eye contact and an overbearing posture

Passive - Aggressive:

- Mutter to themselves rather than confront the person or issue
- Have difficulty acknowledging their anger
- Use facial expressions that don't match how they feel – i.e. smiling when angry
- Use sarcasm

- Deny there is a problem
- Appear cooperative while purposely doing things to annoy and disrupt
- Use subtle sabotage to get even

Assertive:

- State needs and wants clearly, appropriately and respectfully
- Express feelings clearly, appropriately and respectfully
- Use "I" statements
- Communicate respect for others
- Listen well without interrupting
- Feel in control of self
- Have good eye contact
- Speak in a calm and clear tone of voice
- Have a relaxed body posture
- Feel connected to others
- Feel competent and in control
- Not allow others to abuse or manipulate them
- Stand up for their rights