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Arguing

To argue, from the Latin *argutari* 'prattle,' means to exchange or express divergent or opposite views, typically in a heated or angry way. You can *argue someone into* or *out of* something. And you can *argue the point*. Here, we're talking about a good 'ole fashion argument when two people stand toe-to-toe and let each other have it.

People don't always get along, nor do they always see eye-to-eye. Parents argue with parents, brothers argue with sisters, and kids argue with parents. Fact is, the more familiar you are with someone the more likely you are to argue with them.

It's a fact that arguing is so ingrained in some people it comes as easy and naturally as breathing. For them, any time's a good time to argue. Arguing is how they discuss things and how they resolve disagreements with others. The trouble is, it doesn't work that way.

For example, if Chase and Garrett disagree about who gets to ride shotgun in the family car, Chase would probably say 'I called it first' and then Garrett would point out that Chase rode shotgun yesterday. The rhetoric gets more heated with each exchange, points and counter-points are made, and then it turns personal with raised voices and name calling (see Calling People Names).

Instead, Chase and Garrett could step back, take a deep breath, and try empathetic listening. That's when they restate each other's position, followed by "Did I get that right?" Chase would say something like, "What I hear you saying is that I rode shotgun yesterday and today it's your turn. Is that right?" Garrett would agree with Chase and then say something acknowledging Chase's position. They continue taking turns talking, all

the while remembering that there's another person involved in the conversation who has a different opinion.

At some point, Chase and Garrett may settle on a compromise, agreeing to take turns riding shotgun. Or they may agree-to-disagree. Either way, each person's opinion is recognized and respected by the other. Resolving an argument this way takes some time—and practice—but it's worth it because it works.

Arguing Dos and Don'ts

- Don't argue—talk.
- Stay calm. Having a cool head makes it easier to resolve disagreements and helps the other person stay in control, too. (See Losing Your Temper)
- Don't get personal. Focus on the issue, not the person.
- Use empathetic listening to see the issue from the other person's perspective. (see Not Listening)
- Look for ways you both can win. Be open to a compromise that satisfies you and the other person.
- Get help when you need it. Sometimes, another person who's not involved can bring new ideas and perspectives to the table.

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