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# *Overcoming Conflict*



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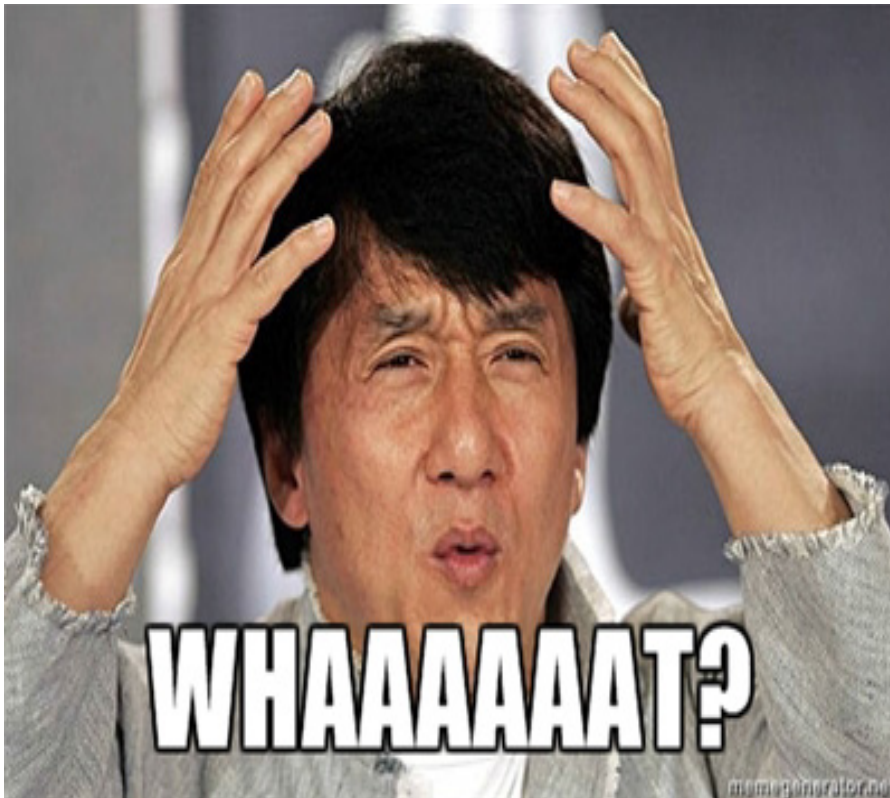
# *Expressing your feelings*

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The first step to resolving a conflict is to express your feelings. Majority of the time when there is a conflict the source is usually a lack of communication and ignorance when it comes to someones feelings about a particular subject or act.

So you want to tell your partner how you feel about whatever it is. Do not just say you're mad or sad. It is good to identify and point out to your partner what exactly it is that they're doing that is triggering your reaction. Letting them know the exact source of your discomfort or unpleasant feelings allows your partner to know what to avoid or amend in the future.



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In the heat of the moment it could be hard to speak rationally but making a active effort is very important. The first thing you want to do is gain your composure either by taking deep breaths, walking away and taking time to calm down or think. Conveying your feelings while screaming, yelling and crying no matter how warranted usually leads to a negative reaction, confusion and misinterpretation. Speaking calmly to your partner puts them at ease, not making them feel as if they need to defend themselves but more willing and accepting to listen to what you have to say.



It is also good to the best of your ability to explain why something makes you feel the way you do. You do not want to leave your partner in the dark. Providing depth to your feelings gives your partner more depth to understanding you as a person. Also providing a reason helps your partner make sense of your feelings. As humans when we do not understand the reasoning behind someones actions or motives we make assumptions, assumptions that are usually wrong. When we make assumptions it is usually to fit our own wants, making us insensitive to those around us.

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Expressing your feelings

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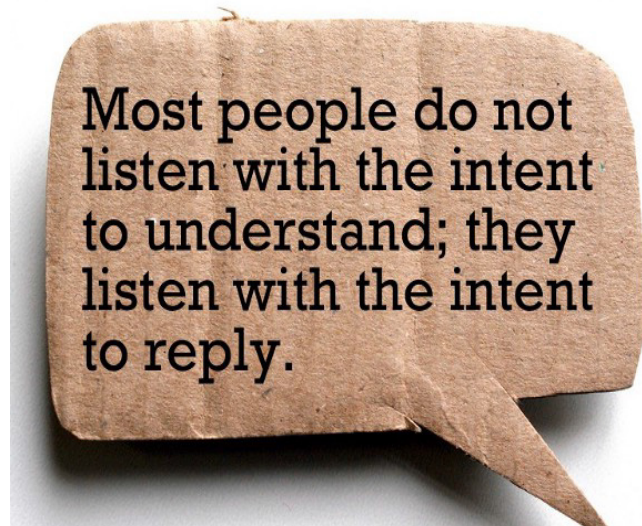


# *How to Listen*



When it is finally time for your partner to speak to you, you should be all ears. The first thing you want to do is be silent, let them talk and do not interrupt unless they ask you a question or stop. You must make very effort to listen attentively to every word they're saying, as well as every gesture and expression that they make. If this is someone you truly care about it would be in your best interest to hear and understand what they have to say.

In order to truly grasp your partner's words and feelings, you have to recognize that their feelings always have some truth or validation to them. Sometimes what affects our ability to listen is our perception of the speaker. If we don't respect them and instead find them annoying or hysterical then everything that comes out their mouth will seem silly and not worth paying attention to. When this happens, you end up completely belittling your partners feelings and cause a severe neglect of their needs.



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When everything is finally put on the table, it is now your job to put yourself in their shoes. When we begin to imagine how this person feels and why they feel this way it is easier for us to understand them. Being able to empathize is to forget about your wants and needs just for a moment and think about what the other person might possibly be going through.



Ex: You are walking down the street and pass a homeless guy. They call for your attention and ask you for a dollar. Your initial thought is, "but I only have a dollar today. I don't think I can spare it." Then you have another thought, "I can always eat at home, but this guy does not know when his next meal is going to be," and so you give him a dollar. By trying to imagine what the other person was going through, you become empathetic towards them and show compassion and understanding.



# *Compromise*

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The hard part about overcoming an obstacle or problem is coming to a compromise. Your partner comes up with a solution that would make them happy. Then you tell them to what extent can you give or do this thing that they are asking of you. For example: Your partner is complaining that you don't spend enough time with them. They want you to hang out with them every day but you're unable to do so cause you to school and work. So instead you come up with a more reasonable time and suggest three times a week. It is not what your partner fully wants but it is better than how things were previously. Now, you negotiated and have come up with a mutual agreement which satisfies both of your needs.

Another example is that you complain your partner doesn't make food in the house anymore and demands that food is made every day. However, your partner thinks that this is unrealistic so they suggest how about they cook three times a week while the rest of the week is take out. Or that the original partner, who is complaining, make the food themselves a couple of times a week. It is not exactly what you wanted but better than before. This is how compromise works, you give up something that you want ideally for something that you're okay with in order to satisfy each other to the best of your ability.

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After the argument is over, you guys come to an agreement on what you were arguing about but choose to forget about the negative things that were said during the argument. After an argument it is best to forget and forgive any misunderstandings or unnecessary, hurtful words that were said. You both have to recognize that sometimes emotions get the better of us and we all need to let go otherwise it can cause a stress on our mental being. Both parties need to apologize and move on. If a party holds resentment and becomes petty by still bringing up the argument after it is done with, nothing is going to be really resolved and will create a constant violent and unhappy environment that will eventually lead to severed ties.



