

SOME BEHAVIORS TO AVOID WHEN FIGHTING WITH YOUR MATE

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Threatening Dissolution. This is often terrifying for your partner and should only be brought up when you are willing to follow through with it.

Leaving the Scene. This dramatic move is often symbolic of an underlying threat to leave the relationship and has almost the same effect as threatening dissolution.

Attacking Your Mate. Criticizing your mate's character, motives, or worthiness can result in deep emotional wounds that become difficult to recover from.

Attacking Family-Members. Denigrating and/or critically analyzing your mate's family-of-origin tends to generate defensiveness and often leaves enduring emotional scars.

Shifting the Focus. In the throes of an argument it is tempting to bring up the past or otherwise shift to a variety of other topics which makes resolution difficult to achieve.

Bring Others In. Claiming or initiating the support of others in an argument creates more divisiveness and invites your partner to line up his or her own cadres of support.

Feigning Defeat. Using your vulnerability (regressing into tears, depression, and self-reproach) in order to disarm your partner can temporarily reduce the conflict but usually prolongs it in the long run.

Being Defensive. Defending yourself tends to make your partner feel unheard and unacknowledged and often has the consequence of making your partner try harder to get his or her point across.