

The Counselor's Corner
A place for healing & growth

Fair Fighting

Rashida Williams LCSW-R 204-5552 x 434

Yes, you heard correctly... there is a fair way to argue with your spouse

Here's How:

- Don't let little things that bother you build up until one of you explodes the issue into a large fight. That's not fighting fair in your marriage.
- If you are angry about something and don't try to talk about it with your spouse within 48 hours, let it go. Otherwise, you are not fighting fair.
- If your spouse doesn't want to discuss the matter, set an appointment within the next 24 hours to have your fair fight.
- Fighting fair means you know what the issue is. Then, both of you stick to the subject.
- Keep your fight between the two of you. Don't bring in third parties like your mother-in-law, his best friend, or your children.
- Fighting fair means you don't hit below the belt.
- Fighting fair means you don't bring up past history.
- Fighting fair means no name calling. Even endearing terms and pet names can be hurtful when you are using a sarcastic tone.
- Be careful how you use humor. Laughter is good, but teasing can be misinterpreted and can be hurtful.
- Listen to one another fully while you fight. This includes watching body language. Look at one another while you speak.
- Don't interrupt during your fight.
- Fighting fair means you don't blame one another make accusations.
- Try to use 'I' sentences instead of 'you' sentences.
- If the two of you are not extremely angry, try to hold hands while talking during your fight.
- Be open to asking for forgiveness and being willing to forgive.

Tips:

- Even though it may be hard to forgive your spouse, not forgiving can cause more harm both emotionally and physically to yourself and to your marriage. Holding a grudge is letting someone else live in your head rent free. Remember to not fight to win, but to fight for your relationship.
- Conflict is not the problem. All married couples have disagreements. It's not knowing how to effectively argue that creates difficulty in a marriage.
- Don't use the words "never" and "always" in your statements to one another.

Mind-Body Therapy

From <http://www.everydayhealth.com>

What if the medicine you needed to heal an injury or de-stress was all in your head? The idea is not as far-fetched as it may sound. Guided imagery taps into the body's functioning systems by interpreting visual cues from the brain. Experts say certain imagery techniques can actually help regulate such body functions as your heart rate, blood pressure, and digestion.

This mind-body therapy is hardly new, but traditional medical institutions are now beginning to take notice and implement the alternative practice into their treatment programs. Researchers at Harvard Medical School found that more than 30 percent of adults in the United States had used some form of mind-body therapy. You can, too:

- Close your eyes and relax.
- Imagine a place that is calm, safe, or joyful, such as the mountains, the beach, or a favorite room in your home.
- Take note of where you are and engage all the senses.
- What does it look like? What do you hear? Describe the smells, the taste and the energy.

For more on Mind-Body Therapy see pg. 2

The Counselor's Corner was founded by Deborah Legge, PhD CRC LMHC, a NYS Licensed Mental Health Counselor who has been in private practice for 15+ years. Dr. Legge has a general counseling practice with specializations in: Mood Disorders, Anxiety Disorders, Trauma, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) for Borderline Personality Disorder and for Depression, Life Transitions, and Stress Management

The Counselor's Corner is a fast-growing group of independent mental health professionals, working to meet the counseling needs of the WNY community. Whether you are looking for help with healing or growth, **The Counselor's Corner** will help to link you with the practitioner who best meets your needs.

Call: 716/204-5552 x 401

for general information, or to be put on our e-mailing list for future Newsletters and information about upcoming health-related events

Call 716/204-5552 x 406

to make an appointment with Dr. Legge or for more information regarding her practice. Dr. Legge will also assist you in choosing a counselor who might best fit your needs at this time

Upcoming Workshops & Groups:

Tomasina Cook MS LMHC-T CDVC will be holding a series of workshops titled: "A Woman's Journey".

In March, she will present a workshop for plus-sized women. For more info, call her at

204-5552 x 442



Have you made a New Year's resolution to change something in your life? Is it to become healthier by losing weight or exercising? Is it to become happier by learning how to separate your personal and professional roles better, or to see family and friends more? Many people find it much easier to make a resolution than to keep it. Here are some tips that may help you succeed.

Set specific reasonable goals:

The most common downfall for failed

resolutions is unreasonable goals. If you have never exercised before, the resolution that you will exercise every night after work is unreasonable. Your resolution must be specific, simple and have a foreseeable timeframe.

For example; if your resolution is to come home earlier from work, try doing so one day out of the week instead of every night. Or instead of saying, "I'll be out of debt by year's end," try the goal of getting rid of one credit card debt in 6 months.

Build your success with smaller goals:

Set and write down your short-term goals for 3 to 6 weeks at a time. As you achieve those goals, move on to new ones. This will help you recognize the accomplishments you have made and will motivate you to continue. For example, if you are resolving to become healthier by walking, try walking for 30 minutes

every other day for 6 weeks. Then, either add 10 minutes to the walk or walk more days out of the week.

Reward your successes:

Congratulate yourself when your smaller goals are met. It can be as simple as a book, music CD, buying a small item; but the idea is that it has to be meaningful for you. By doing this you are acknowledging that you have overcome some obstacles in your life.

Don't punish the setbacks:

If you get sidetracked or do not meet a smaller goal, do not punish yourself with negative thoughts. Your resolution isn't a complete failure. Reassess your goals and readjust as needed. The ability to recognize this and move forward with get you headed in the direction of your goal again.



Living "Mindfully"

Deborah Legge PhD

You don't have to spend your life in a toga, meditating at the peak of a mountain to live "mindfully". *Mindfulness*, as defined by author, Jon Kabat-Zinn, is simply being in the present moment, in a non-judgmental way. This means to notice (not change or alter) what you are doing, in the moment, without

judging the experience. Judging things as good or bad really takes away from the simple experience of noticing. For example, notice your breath — how it feels as it enters your nostrils; how your belly rises with each inhalation; the tingling you might feel as the oxygen fills your body. Don't judge that you are breathing in a shallow way and try to change it — you might note your pace of breathing today, but not to judge it, just to note it. Tomorrow you might note a difference pace of your breath. By being in the moment (non-judgmentally) with your breath, you might also notice a feeling of peace that comes from this simple exercise.

Our society is such that *mindfulness* might seem impossible to you. Busy lives, deadlines and multi-tasking are expected of most of us. Surely you know the feeling of doing one thing as you think of the next while you are worrying about what has already passed. This phenomena of worrying about the future or ruminating about the past while we live each day leaves little time or energy for really experiencing the present. How tragic when we can really only appreciate parts of our lives only when they become memories! How many times have you remembered a wonderful moment only to wish you had really taken the time to enjoy it while it was happening?

Don't despair. Even though your life may be crowded with lots of "stuff", you can practice *mindfulness* each day to help you connect with your life and make it feel more meaningful and cherished. Choose something simple -- looking into the eyes of a loved one, creating something with your hands, counting your blessings, walking through the snow, or simply your breath. Note the experience with full sensory detail — how it feels, smells, tastes, sounds. Allow yourself a moment or two just to bask in the experience. Notice how you feel once you are finished.

Finally, try to integrate *mindfulness* into your relationship experiences. When you hold someone's hand, BE THERE! Notice how the hand feels in yours, notice the energy between you. As other thoughts enter your mind, let them go. For now, you are being mindful of something — those other thoughts are for another time. The moment you are in will soon be gone. Cherish your life **now** — not just as a bunch of good memories!

For more information on Mindfulness Meditation and Living

Who's Who

at The Counselor's Corner?

Tomasina Cook, MS LMHC-T CDVC is a Nationally Certified Domestic Violence Counselor. She has been working in the human services field for 13 years working with: at-risk families; developmental disabilities; mental health; and child and adolescent issues. Since 1998 she has been employed in the criminal justice system as a Domestic Violence Victim Advocate/Counselor. She is currently offering several coaching groups on Saturdays. She is also an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice and works in the Domestic Violence Unit of the Niagara Falls Police Dept. **204-5552 x 442**

Lori Ann Hildreth, PhD CRC NCC LMHC is a NYS Licensed Mental Health Counselor, a nationally certified Rehabilitation Counselor and a National Board Certified Counselor. She has been working in the counseling field for over a decade helping clients with concerns including bereavement, grief and loss, end of life, chronic and life-threatening illnesses, vocational and career counseling, and mental health matters. She has a general counseling practice where she sees adults in individual and/or group therapy. **204-5552 x 433**

Rashida Williams, LCSW is a NYS Licensed Clinical Social Worker who has worked primarily in the non profit sector with multi-risk individuals, families, and groups of all ages and walks of life. Over the past several years she has had a general private practice where she sees individuals and families with specializations that include: addictions, mood disorders, trauma, parental concerns, marital counseling, eating disorders, DBT for Borderline Personality Disorder, bilingual/bicultural (Spanish). **204-5552 x 434**

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