

How-To Guide

You don't have to land on common ground to find success in conflict. Sometimes, the win is learning something new --about the other person, the issue, or even yourself.

Disagree Better by How You Think



- Avoid making assumptions about someone's motives.
- Ask about the why behind the opinion or belief. What led someone to believe what they believe?
- Be curious.
- Look for values you have in common.
- Consider that someone else might be able to teach you something (you might be wrong).
- Your opinions are what you think, not who you are—same for the person across from you.
- See disagreement as an opportunity to expand your thinking, not a threat to your identity.
- Respect opinions.
- Focus on finding some common ground in a disagreement – what can you agree on?

Disagree Better by How You Listen

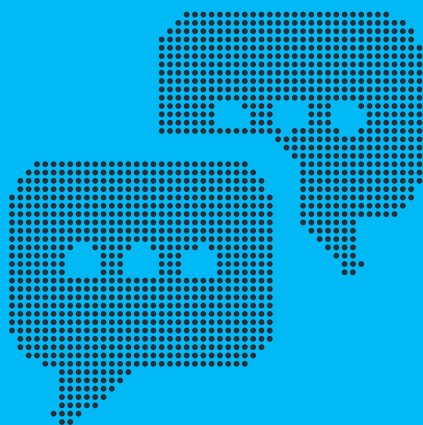
- Listen to understand.
- Commit to listening more than speaking in your next conversation.
- Challenge yourself to avoid interrupting during a discussion.
- Practice active listening by summarizing what the other person said before responding.
- Learn about how to increase your listening and conversational skills through [partner resources and courses](#).



Disagree Better by How You Speak



- Avoid name-calling or labeling in conversations.
- Practice explaining your viewpoint without using negative language.
- Practice gratitude by thanking someone for sharing their perspective.
- Compliment someone for their passion, even if you don't share their opinion.
- Use "I" statements instead of "you" statements in disagreements.
- Commit to not raising your voice during a disagreement.
- Be passionate and respectful in sharing your perspective.



Disagree Better by What You Say

- "I respect your opinion, even though I don't share it. Let's keep talking."
- "I see your point, and I'd like to share my perspective as well."
- "That's an interesting perspective—can you tell me how you arrived at that view?"
- "Thank you for sharing that with me. I learned something from you today."
- "I appreciate your passion on this topic—it's clear you care deeply."
- "I hear what you're saying, and I'd like to offer another way of looking at it."
- "I could be wrong."
- "I respect your opinion, even though I don't share it. Let's keep talking."
- "I hadn't considered that angle—thank you for bringing it up."
- "Let's agree to disagree on this, but I value the conversation we're having."

Disagree Better by What You Do

- Write down three things you admire about someone you disagree with.
- Identify an opinion or perspective you hold and research the opposing perspective.
- Invite someone with a different viewpoint to coffee or lunch.
- Share a positive story about someone you disagree with on social media.
- Share a book or article that helped you understand a different perspective.
- Send a text to someone you've had a disagreement with, expressing appreciation for their perspective.
- Write a thank-you note to a community leader of a different political party.
- Attend a cultural or religious event outside your own tradition.
- Avoid sharing inflammatory or divisive content online.
- Help a neighbor with a task, regardless of their political or social views.
- Organize a neighborhood cleanup or potluck.



Learning something about the other person, or yourself, or the issue all qualify as "conflict done right." Pick one tip and try it today. Small steps, big changes.