

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING SIMPLIFIED: 6 Rules

Here are the 3 don't-rules to a happy relationship: (1) Don't adopt any of their opinions as self. (2) Don't argue about *who they think* you are. (3) Don't argue about *how they think* to form their opinion of you.

DON'T-RULE ONE: Stop being their opinions as your self. Do NOT own any opinion as self, as self is NOT opinions. If they are negative opinions then you will feel ego-pain and shame. If they are positive opinions then you will feel ego-pleasure and pride. Ego is the false self. Ego is self as high and low self-esteem based on owning real and imagined opinions from self and others. Ego is your collection of past, present, and future opinions as self. Instead, be equal before God.

DON'T-RULE TWO: Stop trying to get them to make a different opinion of you. In other words, do NOT argue with them trying to get them to change their mind *so you can change your mind*. They will feel like you are trying to run their mind so will resist and likely do the opposite of what you want: say and have even worse opinions of you. Don't force them into a defensive mode where they try and prove you to be some negative opinions. That is poor communicating, relating, and motivating on your part. Let them do their own thinking: they will anyway as they must to be a person.

DON'T-RULE THREE: Stop trying to convince them that they can't think straight because you don't like their opinions. In other words, don't try to prove that they are stupid or foolish for thinking negative thoughts about you. Or worse, don't damn them and try to prove they are bad for thinking bad of you. Two wrong people will NOT make you one right person.

MAIN DON'T-RULE: Don't make your relationship an identity struggle.

Here are the 3 do-rules for a happy relationship: (1) Do have faith that they have good in them. (2) Do have hope that the good will come out of them more. (3) Do have charity that they are under God.

DO-RULE ONE: Believe that there is good in them. Encourage the good in them. Bring out the good in them. Find the good in them. Encourage them to find good in themselves. Encourage others to find good in them. Have faith in the good in them. Pray for God to increase the good in them.

DO-RULE TWO: Think positively about them. Speak positively about them. Defend them. Stand by them. Encourage them to have hope that the good will be victorious in them. Encourage others to have hope for them. Have hope that good will win in them. Pray that they express the good more.

DO-RULE THREE: Think well of them. Remember the good. Focus on the good. Encourage the good. Engage in uplifting conversation. Express your love. Tell them you believe in the good in them. Encourage them to trust the good in themselves. Encourage others to believe they are under God. Have charity in that you give them the benefit of the doubt: believe they have good intentions. Pray that they serve the good more and more.

MAIN DO-RULE: Think well of each other and so bring out the good in each other.

“But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation;”—I Peter 1:15