

# Fair Fighting Rules

## **Before you communicate with another, ask yourself what you are feeling and why this might be?**

By questioning the various possibilities of your emotions before responding to any conflict will help you to react within a more positive and responsible manner. Responding to any difficult situations before taking the time to think things through first can often lead to even more issues arising. Did someone say something negative about the other, in a passing comment, of which you took offence to? Question why you took offence. Maybe this is actually how you feel about yourself? Responding immediately could potentially lead to upset, shouting, an argument starting for no given reason etc. Instead, taking time to question your feelings first could potentially lead to new self-awareness being gained, identifying any areas that you need to change yourself, or, a deeper conversation being held between you and your family, enhancing various positive aspects being achieved by both, such as respect, appreciation, empathy, love, understanding... and much more. All promoting that parent-child bond being established once more.

## **No shouting, screaming, yelling or hollowing.**

You may feel that doing such things will lead you to 'winning' the argument, as you were the loudest. However, these actions are, more likely than not, the reason for even more conflict building and a further distance between you. These are not actions of any winning argument. Being respectful and understanding are key aspects when trying to change and enhance communication skills currently being used.

## **No degrading language.**

This includes no swearing, put-downs, name-calling, verbal abuse, or threats. Fair fighting is about discussing the issue, not the person's wrongdoings to make yourself feel better and an attempt to 'win' a fight.

## **Discuss and resolve one issue at a time.**

'You are always so lazy and untidy. You don't even come out of your room no more.' Can quickly escalate into 'You have no respect for me or this family.' Now it's a case of two issues needing to be resolved instead of one. Be mindful to stay focus on one issue at a time.

## **Replace statements starting with 'YOU' to 'I'.**

Starting statements beginning with 'You' is often a cause for the other person to take offence. Try starting statements with 'I' instead, as this then becomes an emotional response, rather than a blame game.

For example: '**You** make me feel...' to '**I** feel...'

## **Take turns talking to communicate one at a time.**

By using the assertive and effective communication skills, all parties are likely to feel a greater amount of fulfilment and positive satisfaction, compared to the negative impacts of fighting, which only leaves all parties feeling even worse than they originally started. This positive effect is due to being able to offload and express thoughts and feelings without being interrupted. Therefore, feeling positively content as they have been actively listened to, and vice versa. The more this exercise is practised, the more you'll see it's amazing effects and the various positive changes being made within your family's needs.