

He is Distant After an Argument – 4 Relationship Experts Reveal How To Reconnect With Your Partner After a Fight

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Let him have his space and build your own support system



You have had an argument with your partner and now he is distant.

Men and women often have different ways of coping after an argument.

While women will often want to talk it out and connect, men often retreat with periods of silence and withdrawal.

This can trigger discomfort and anxiety for women.

Let him have his space.

Your partner needs time to reconstitute himself and regroup. If you intrude upon him when he is trying to restore himself emotionally, the argument could flare up all over again rather than heal. You will have plenty of time to talk about what happened when you are both ready to talk.

If you find yourself feeling dependent, needy, or unable to give him space, you may need to examine your own abandonment issues.

- Did you have abandonment in your early life by your father or some other important family member?
- Have you had a pattern of feeling abandoned in your other relationships in the past?

If so, you may carry a deep-rooted abandonment anxiety that does not allow you to have separate time away from people that you are intimately involved with.

It is very important to learn how to be by yourself and soothe yourself when necessary.

No one can be there for us all the time, and people have their own feelings, needs, and patterns of behavior that are different from ours. We need to learn how other people operate, and give them what they need.

One thing that makes this easier is to have your own support system separate from your partner.

Cultivate a network of people in your life that you stay connected to on a regular basis and who give you strength and support. This can include a therapist, spiritual advisor, friends, family, and spiritual activities.

When you have your own team of support people, you will never feel alone, even if your partner needs some time to himself.

Trust the outcome and trust the abundance of the universe.

Let your partner do whatever he needs to do after an argument, and shift your focus to taking care of yourself.

When you take good care of yourself, everyone benefits, especially you and your partner.

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If he does pull away, allow him time to process his thoughts and emotions



There are times you feel very close and in-sync with your guy.

He is giving you lots of attention, you are spending time together, communication is good, and you feel emotionally connected and in love. Things could not be better.

Then you have a disagreement and he pulls away and becomes distant.

He goes into his shell. This can happen after an argument when you think it is over and you are ready to move on, but he is still quiet and reserved. This can happen without you even being aware that anything is wrong leaving you wondering what in the world happened.

There are a variety of reasons this happens and is actually quite normal.

Men and women are different in how they process information and emotions.

Yes, I am generalizing, and I do realize personalities come into play but understanding these general differences can be very beneficial to your relationship.

By nature, women process emotions and issues in relationships by talking about them. They seek out others to talk to when they have a problem or are

feeling stressed about a situation. This is one way they can release the stress and feel better.

Women talk things through in order to problem solve. Men generally communicate differently.

They prefer to avoid the emotions and get to the bottom line as quickly as possible. We mentioned that women solve problems by communicating but men like to think about all the possibilities alone and then discuss a solution once they have their thoughts together.

Women often interpret this as him not caring or not being interested. Really it is just that men and women problem solve in different ways.

It is important not to criticize, judge, threaten, or tell him what to do during a disagreement.

It will not move the conversation forward in a positive direction. Men want to succeed in all areas of their lives, and this also applies to communication. If he feels he won't be successful at finding a solution, he may shut down or stop communicating.

If after a disagreement, he feels he cannot be successful in this area of your relationship or he feels you have been disrespectful, he will pull away.

It is important that you discuss the issue at hand in a way that he doesn't feel attacked or his opinion doesn't matter. When you can do this, you can feel heard and he can feel good about the conversation. It can become a win/win situation.

If he does pull away, allow him time to process his thoughts and emotions.

By giving him the space he needs, you can enjoy reconnecting when he comes back. You will build a stronger relationship this way. The safer and more accepted he feels, the less time he may need alone and the quicker he will come back. He will learn to trust you, and his love for you will deepen.

Lori Ann Davis, MA, CRS, CRC — www.lorianndavis.com

Look at disagreements as an opportunity both for deeper connection with your partner but also deeper connections with yourself



We've all been there unfortunately... that precarious moment after you and your partner have fought and probably end up in some form of retreating to your separate corners/lives.

There is often a raw emotionality to this moment that can be truly difficult to navigate and might even lead us to sweep whatever issues we were discussing before the argument under the rug just to keep the peace and make things better.

While understandable, I think it's more helpful if we can look at disagreements as an opportunity both for deeper connection with our partners but also deeper connections with ourselves.

In order to help you with this, the most important first step is to work on processing your thoughts and feelings before attempting to reconcile and reconnect.

If you are still in a more reactive emotional state, it will be hard to come together and discuss what happened and support each other.

It might be helpful to check in with yourself to determine why you think you became upset or what the underlying issue was beneath the topic that triggered the argument if the topic seemed minor.

If you can help yourself figure out what happened for you and why, without blaming your partner, then you are closer to being able to communicate that effectively to them.

Once you feel calm and have room in your heart for compassion for your partner, start small.

Maybe you just ask for a hug or to hang out a bit together but keep it light at first to help yourselves warm up to being together again (this step all hinges on just how big the argument was).

If you said things you feel you regret, own it and apologize.

Even if your partner doesn't apologize first, it will help if you model how to do this. For example, you can say "I said some really hurtful things and I am really sorry. I love you and did not intend to hurt you in that way."

If this goes well, you could share with your partner that you would like to talk more about what happened between you and see if they are open to doing so as well.

If so, set up a time to talk and you could even set it up to be a bit further away to give you both time and perspective away from the emotion of the situation.

For that talk to go well, remember that you want to express your feelings and perspective without defensiveness and blame.

You want to listen to your partner to truly understand their perspective and feelings. This is all information for each of you to understand each other better and why the disagreement happened. This is a hard thing to do but so important in relationships!

Practice listening and reflecting your partner's point of view with comments like, "I hear you saying this... do I have that right?" or "I'd like to understand this better; can you say more about what you mean?"

The more we seek to understand, rather than defend our point of view as right, the better this will go!

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Understand that men handle conflict differently and follow the below tips



Feeling upset because your guy is distant after your last argument?

This is a common feeling for women. It can be tough for both partners to reconnect after a fight.

Sometimes hurtful words are exchanged, and it can be tough for men to re-engage after a painful interchange.

It's important that you understand a few key facts about how men handle conflict.

One, men's cardiovascular systems are more reactive than women's and take longer to recover from stress (such as intimate relationship conflict). Because of this difference in wiring, men may seek to avoid conflict because it feels so uncomfortable physically.

What does this translate to?

You will probably be ready to discuss the sensitive topic(s) before he is, and he may remain distant because he assumes that discussing it will lead him back to feeling flooded physically.

Additionally, many women are verbal processors, and are therefore seeking reconnection in order to talk through what happened that caused (or worsened) the argument.

In my experience as a couples counselor, men can find it frustrating to talk through a previous argument just for the sake of understanding and validating; they may want to “fix” it, and can feel frustrated if there's no obvious solution to the problem.

Okay, so given these key differences in men and women, does that mean that I just have to grit my teeth and bear it when he's acting distant? No!

However, you can do some things to help him reconnect.

- Let him know that you're ready to have a calm, non-blaming talk whenever he's ready.
- Let him know that you'll be open to listening and that he can come to you when he's ready.
- Also, don't assume that because he's distant, he's plotting against you, pulling away from you in a permanent way, etc.

It's more likely that he just needs a little extra time recovering from the intense discomfort of the conflict, and he may not have a good self-care routine that helps his body turn off the fight-or-flight response.

John Gottman does a wonderful job of explaining the difference in flooding responses between men and women.

One more suggestion: when your partner is distant and you're giving him space, go do something for yourself that takes your mind off of the conflict.

Go for a walk, chat with a reassuring girlfriend, etc. Sitting around obsessing about your relationship will make you feel worse, and may lead you to try and re-engage with your partner before he's ready — which will make things worse for both of you.

Try to remember all of the times you've gotten through conflict before, and ended up feeling reconnected.

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