

# 5 Ways to Reconcile Arguments With In-Laws



By Deanna Atkins

We all laughed at Ben Stiller's struggle to remain in his fiancé's father's "circle of trust" in the hilarious film *Meet the Parents*, but it's hard to find the comedy of fighting with your own in-laws. Sure, we get to choose the person we marry, but unfortunately for us, we aren't able to pick their parents. Not everyone's father-in-law is a retired CIA agent, but in-laws are almost always tough to deal with. The next time you have to deal with the family of someone you love, try to remember these tips:

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## Communication

**1. Don't complain to your partner:** The last thing you want to do is accidentally insult one of your partner's family members. Family is family, and even if you are just venting, you don't want your significant other to feel like you're making them pick sides. By talking to a relative or friend in your support system instead, you'll be able to get your feelings off your chest without hurting anyone in the process.

**2. Be honest, mostly:** Be clear about your needs in order to settle disagreements, but don't be too firm by telling your mother-in-law that she needs to stop calling so much. This may be true, but that straightforwardness can easily be taken the wrong way. To be safe, say enough to get your point across without going too far.

**3. Arrange a family trip:** A lot of the time, actions speak louder than words, which is especially true when it comes to feuding. If you can't reach a compromise by communicating, it's probably time for some family bonding. Taking a mini-vacation with the family shows that your relationship is more important than your issues. Plus, you'll get to enjoy some time away from home.

**4. Be the bigger person:** Every now and then it's best to just give in. You may be right in the disagreement, but sometimes you just have to count your losses and do what's best for you and your partner. Fighting with your partner's family doesn't benefit you or your lover, so put a quick ending to the problem by saying or doing whatever makes your in-laws happy.

**5. Set some boundaries:** If you've done everything you can to play nice with a feisty in-law but you still find yourself struggling, you might have to just accept that you're not going to get along. Keeping the relationship civil is sometimes better than forcing it to work or taking drastic steps like forbidding them from coming over your house.

Your spouse will appreciate your willingness to keep the peace.

Even if you seem to have the perfect relationship with your in-laws, eventually there will be a time when you'll have to work through an issue. Whether it's as little as making a phone call to resolve a disagreement or just dropping the entire matter, with patience you'll always be able to come to a solution.

**What are some of your own bad in-law experiences? Share them below.**