



life after divorce
COACHING

with Doreen Yaffa and Jeff Wilson

Ep.63 - Arguing with Purpose



Hey, my beautiful friends, and how are you? So today we're gonna talk about arguing effectively, really arguing with purpose, because the bottom line is that if you want to have closer relationships, you are gonna argue. So you can either pretend things aren't going on and avoid arguments, or you can try to argue with.

As I said, purpose, and I bet after just getting out of divorce, or maybe you're still in. You've probably been doing your fair share of arguing, so

let's learn something today, use it moving forward, and if you are ready, let's get started.

Are you ready to create a life that's better than ever before? We are Doreen Yaffa and Jeff Wilson, and we are here to give. Strategies you need to create the life after divorce that you deserve and desire. As partners, both in marriage and coaching, we use our expertise as well as our own personal experiences to help you make the next chapter of your life the best chapter.

Okay, so how is everybody? How are you, Jeff? I'm doing good. How are you? Well, let's do some arguing today. I think we already did. We actually were arguing about the microphone because right now we only have one microphone that we use, and she's a micho. Well, I am a micho because you have a very loud voice.

You don't have to be that close. Oh, okay. Well, maybe I wanted to get close. All right. Well, at least we didn't argue too much. Not too much. And. Of course. I always let you. That's true. Well, not always. So let's see what's going on in our

life today. Anything going on? Uh, what's going on? I don't know. It's a beautiful day out.

It's October. Yay. You could feel it in the air. Yeah, so it's getting a little cooler down here and sunny south Florida. And we actually went, took a friend out for lunch today. And it was so pretty. We had the, the top down on the car and it was nice. It's just, uh, we love it here in Florida, in the wintertime.

It's, it's just so nice. It's hot though in the summer though. It is. I know. It's like I keep saying that we should definitely, and I'm gonna do this, I promise I'm gonna do this this year, is get a place somewhere a little north, um, to spend like a few weeks in the summer, cuz we can basically work from anywhere, right?

Well, they say that it's sometimes it's hotter in New York City than it is in Florida. So I'm not talking about New York, like in the mountains. Well, that's, well the mountains, I would kind of know not to go somewhere as hot as. Uh oh. Are we arguing? We're arguing. Just leave it to me. Okay. I'll give you a couple options.

How's the I'll? I'll be on the boat. You do what you want. Okay. You can be on the boat and be hot. All right. So I hope everybody's doing good out there today. I wanna dive into the subject of arguing. Why? Well, I think I was inspired by this as I was having a disagreement with another lawyer, and I thought that conversation.

About arguing would be something that maybe our listeners could benefit from. You know, people after enduring divorce, they do a lot of arguing with their ex, obviously, and me, maybe even with others, because I always say like, you tend to find out who your friends are during divorce, the people that stick around you and are aligned with you and people that.

Because a lot of times when you are in a marriage, you're going out with couples and when you're getting a divorce, the other couple friend, couple friends. Does that make sense? Yeah, it does. Friends that are couples, they don't know what to do, right? Like they're like, oh boy, so now we're getting a divorce and I don't really know, like, do I line myself with the wife or with the husband, or how do I stay neutral?

The wife or the husband gets upset cuz the friends start seeing the other one or talking to them or whatever. So I think that after divorce, it's a really good time to learn about the art of arguing, to determine who's important in your life, like

the relationships that you really wanna build on. And so I was thinking that someone vice on how to argue better would be of interest.

So we're not necessarily talking about arguing, we're talking about arguing better and more effectively. You know, I think that people, and maybe this more common with men, they just don't want to engage in arguing. Arguing, and so they just shut down. They, you know, they leave the situation or they'll do anything they can to avoid it.

I know I do that in our relationship sometimes, but I, I do it because they just don't like the way it. Well, and because I'm always right. Huh? But seriously arguing, but doing so in a healthy way is needed from time to time in relationships. I think you would agree, right? Yes, I do. And arguing with your ex may not be smart.

And let me just take a minute there because the relationship is over, right? But if you have children together, then that means you will still be in a relationship. It's just a different type of relationship. So learning how to argue effectively with your ex is also going to be important. What I want to suggest is that arguing can promote like a deeper connection between people, a more healthy connection, you know, I suppose the reality is that people are going to have different thoughts.

And opinions and views on things. And so the first thing maybe to recognize is it's gonna happen. I mean, meaning, you know that arguments do happen and are expected, right? Yes. And so I have some ideas about it that I wanted to share with our listeners. My first thought is, I think it's important to just realize that arguments are part of relationships.

When we argue about something, when we disagree about something, it gives us the opportunity to be honest, to communicate, to open up, and to be authentic. We're gonna talk about that a little more here. Cause I have some examples I wanna talk about. I know that as an example, and I'll talk about it right now, my mom, you know, conversations with my mom, it's like we dance around them, right?

We're not authentic. Yes, you have. Said as to your mom, don't bring up certain topics because your mom has, uh, very strong opinions on things, and I think you do this because you don't want to engage with her. And she doesn't really know how to argue. Well, she doesn't, and I think a lot of that stems back from our childhood, but a lot of times, like with my mom, I always tell you, let's

avoid, or I tell like you and the kids, and I've done this in the past, but I'm really trying to figure out how to reconcile it.

We don't talk about politics. Right? Right. Religion, and believe it or not, certain sports, like famous sports figures because I know that my mom, who's 84 by the. Um, actually I think she's 83. I apologize. Um, they take a very strong stance and refuse to open their minds to others' opinions and she, she literally will shut down and it's really has been going on for such a long time, even though she's, you know, in her eighties now, I can remember this happening when I was younger, as.

The reality though is that I avoid subjects with her and it has in essence kept our relationship over the years to be distant at times. You know, and I wanna say that it's really important to be authentic and when you can't talk freely with someone, or when you are not, um, conversing and saying the things that are important to you in a respectful way.

It. It can be very harmful to the relationship. But this stems over not just with like parents, it can be with new people in your life, it can be with your kids, right? Yeah. How many times do we avoid conversations with our kids business associates, having honest, healthy conversations with them, even when you disagree?

I'm going through some things like that and on. Yeah, and after divorce, when you are really rediscovering who you are. You know, we have the opportunity to also do a, what I call a checkup from the neck up as to our relationships checkup from the neck up. Yeah, check your brain out. Oh, that's cool. So I hear clients say to me, um, that, like I said before, they really have an opportunity during the divorce and after to find out who the real friends.

People can align with one spouse over another, and so it's a good time to maybe do an audit on who you have around you and in your life, and which relationships you value and why. Right? Being authentic in a relationship is important because if not, and you are instead, you know, biting your tongue as I say, or people say, or pretending, you end up what they call.

Pleasing, which doesn't feel good either. It doesn't, and it, it takes a lot of courage to bring up something when you know the other person doesn't likely share your same ideals. And it takes, uh, courage to speak about something that maybe, you know, is going to be bringing up tension. In that relationship?

Absolutely, a hundred percent. You know, like with my mom, I just plain avoid these certain subjects and if she brings something up, I have a tendency to change the subject or to stay silent so that from my mom's perspective, she may be thinking that I agree with her. When I don't, and that creates more distance.

I know I do this because it's just easier. Right? Yeah. And then I, you know, nowadays I just say, well, you know, she's older and she's got some health issues going on and all that, but it's really not the way the. To build closeness, right? I know that with other people, I can be authentic. Authentic in expressing my opinion.

Even when I may times come off like a little bit crazy in that I can express what I feel and why. You know what I'm saying? Like a little cray cray. A little bit like with us, I think we are pretty good at sharing our thoughts and opinions on things, and I think that it has made us closer. It has, you know, I share a lot of thoughts with you as to things you know to be about myself, and I can put myself out there and be vulnerable even when it means exposing my insecurities.

But I also think that by doing this with you, it has made our relationship better and I value having that. Safe space. Space, safe, space, safe. Say that five times fast. Uh, safe space. Safe space. Five times. Okay. But it does, it creates a safe space where I can talk to you and be honest and vulnerable. I think it's healthy.

Well, well, I think that holding space, that means, you know, listening without judgment is key to a healthy discussion. You know, many times, uh, when people have the courage to share, uh, they just want to talk and get it. Uh, what they're thinking and how they're feeling, but so many times, all the other person wants is that safe space to speak and it's not asking for the listener to come up with, uh, how to fix the issue, you know, not easy for some of us, you know, especially me.

You know, I think it's important to be aware of this. To just listen and hold that space and not jump into fixing it. Yeah. So let's talk about holding space for a minute, because as coaches, we do that a lot with our clients, right? Yes. I do that with my divorce clients, but I also do it with our coaching clients.

We hold space by not judging them. You know, not trying to tell them that they're right or wrong or what the, what we call in coaching, jump into the pool with them. Like, oh my gosh, she must have been so mean to you. I try to avoid that because, When you give someone your opinion, whether it's a good opinion for them or a bad opinion, you're not letting them explore their thoughts.

Right? Right. You're kind of just going with them as opposed to maybe just letting them kind of work through it, and I think that it's really important to. To try to, to hold that space, to try to let the person just say what they need to say and just do a lot of listening. Right, right. You know, I reached out to a friend recently and I just said, Hey, I am like, I'm the ledge here on this.

And I was able to just be upfront about what I was thinking, and it was so nice and felt so safe that she just listened and didn't judge me. It really helped me. You know, in other words, I was having a really bad day and I just said, I just need somebody to talk to. And all she did was listen and didn't really say much more, and I felt so much better.

Well, that's a nice friend for you. And often when you build that bond with certain people, they can also share their own perspective and this turns and creates a more meaningful relat. It can really go two ways. Right? And it depends on how the conversation is approached. Absolutely. Like I talked about before, right?

But I think it's really important to think about something that is a little deep, but I'm gonna bring it up. Remember that conversations are generated by what we are thinking about, what we call a circumstance, and then what we actually say has to be heard by the other person. Who then has a thought about what we said, and then they speak and then the other person has to hear it and they have a thought about what's saying, and it just keeps going in circles.

Do you understand? It's so convoluted, right? You know, we are talking about a thought we are having and then the person listening hears the words and then they have a thought. Then they talk. You know, so you can see that there are many opportunities for misunderstandings, for blame, and sometimes being defensive, I would say often being defensive.

I think that happens a lot, right? But again, that's a, that interpretation things. Somebody says some something, you have a thought and for whatever reason you, your thought goes to something in which you feel you have to be. You can choose to have a different thought, for sure, right? Absolutely. But circling it back to arguing or discussing things that are hard, knowing that there is this back and forth, and being aware of it first and appreciating that even raising the subject was likely hard for the person.

And then being aware that that person has the courage to do so. Right? Yep. And then the second thing is taking the time to hold that space and listen. And

then third, being mindful of your thoughts about what they are saying. And then the last is responding back in a way that is best. But hold on a second.

I really want people to understand that. And if you have to listen back, do it. But there's a lot going on in a, in a conversation in any conversation, but especially when you're conversing about something that's challenging or dis, you know, difficult. You know, the other thing is that many times in an argument or a difficult conversation, that people are more focused on being.

Trying to convince each other, uh, to come over to their side. You know, we just want to be right and we want to be shut. We wanna shut the other person up or shut 'em down. And we are looking for that apology. Yeah. That happens a lot in politics. We have a lot of political stuff going on right now in Florida, I guess, throughout the country.

And you see that a lot, you know, when you see the debates. But I know that's a lot of, I'm gonna use the word staging. I don't know, but, you know, it's, it's gainsmanship on a lot of levels. But I think it's important that we teach also, this is really important, our children about arguing effectively so that they can bring it into their relationships in the future.

I mean, think about this. Sometimes parents, especially like with teenagers, right? Mm-hmm. We have these opportunities and I'm gonna call them opportunities cuz they really are, everything we do with our kids is an opportunity, right? But we have opportunities specifically with our teenager. To have disagreements with them that are helpful to building a relationship with them, a closer relationship with them.

We can teach them by our own conversations with them how. We can get upset with people we care about and after divorce is a perfect opportunity because there's likely going to be disagreements and difficult conversations. Like let's say, not wanting the child says, I don't wanna go to dad's house or mom's house, or maybe they're even concerned about money issues.

That happens a lot with teenagers or there's different rules now in both houses. Like there's a lot of challenges going on. This is. Of an opportunity for them to learn how to get upset. How to get upset. They're going to get upset. They're human. Yeah. And, and to reconcile that, right? Yeah. What did we learn when we were younger?

We learned like a lot of the generations learned, kind of, um, be seen and not heard. Remember that? Yeah. Yeah. And I think it's changing, you know, I think

it's changing with parents. I think there's been a lot of good in that way, but you know, why not try to speak effectively and, and calm with your teenager?

Well, this is where we can hold space. It's not just to shut the teenager down, uh, like, I, like do this or don't do that. Or, uh, more than being a listener, right. You know, letting the teens speak. You know, they learn that you can have an issue with someone, you can get upset with someone, and it'll be okay.

Absolutely. And when you're in the middle of it, parenting teenagers, and we have experience on this level, um, when they're rebelling against you and they're so upset, right? Like, oh my gosh, like, why can't I do this? Or, all my friends are doing it and they're arguing with you about every freaking thing. It just seems really exhausting.

It's easy to think when you're in that place that there is no value in argu. Right. They can learn though, that they have a safe place to communicate with you and with people that they may not agree with their thoughts on. You understand, like it's a, it's really a lesson in learning and that they can learn, that you can still be loved by that person even though they don't agree.

You know, some deeper discussions on this to consider. As so many people, I think, feel that arguments require this flight or fight, or fight and flight or flight mentality. In other words, that it has to be a blow up. Or a blowout, nasty argument, or let's just avoid it all together. And that's the flight part, of course, right?

So it's like one or the other. Like if we're gonna address this, it's gonna be like this just crazy blowout fight, which is the fight, or just to avoid it, which is the flight. But what we're hoping to convey here today is that there is a third option, and that is that we can decide not to yell and scream or push hard as to being right, right?

And we don't have to shut down, but we can instead just listen and disagree with integrity. Yo. And we do this by listening. I like that expression that, uh, God gave us two ears and one. To do twice as much listening as we do speaking. Yeah, I like that one. Sometimes I use that when somebody's like over talking.

I don't know, maybe it's a little rude. Well, I, I don't think it's rude at all. I think it's just a nice way to point something out. It's just like God gave us two ears and one mouth. Like we might want to just do a little more listening. Yes, but listening and hearing what the person says, like, listen, really listening and

hearing what the person says, even when you don't like what you're hearing, even if they're blaming you, even if they're saying it's your fault.

Right. It's hard work to just let someone. Allow them to have their thoughts, allow them to be maybe wrong about you. Like to totally say something that's off, allowing them to be upset. Get a little cray cray, have lots of emotions, but still say stay present. I think that we can really change the tenor of things by simply saying something like, you know, really like your tone of voice.

Like while we disagree on this, I want you to know that I love you and even though I know you're hurt and you're upset or we have a difference opinion, I'm still going to love you. There isn't a lot right, that anybody can do with that if you approach somebody like that, and I really would ask the listeners to try it, just try it out for size, try it with your kids.

They can't do anything with it, right? Yeah. Well, it's, it's very human to feel like we're being. And move into that defensive. I don't think that it's abnormal. I just think that some, it's something to be more aware of. Absolutely. I just see it happen so often. So many people, I think just avoid difficult conversations and as a result, they walk around with all this resentment as well, or they are.

Agreeing and doing things that they don't agree with to avoid the argument. And so that's the other side of it, right? It's just not healthy to hold onto all that and it's really just being fake. So I wanna suggest that the more you can have an open and honor honest conversation, the better and healthier it is.

And you know, for me, one of the things that I really like, if I don't like to do something I'm pre, I think I'm pretty good at just saying. You know what I'm saying? Like I, when I was, um, you know, when the kids were younger, I just didn't like to go to certain places that kids like to go to, like Chuck E.

Cheese and nothing against Chucky Cheese, but like for me it was torture. I did not like going there and I just, I got to the point where I said, I'm just not gonna do this because, and there's so many things you can do with kids, you know? And I said, well, go ask your dad to take you. You have something against big rats.

No, I don't. It's just like, it was a little bit too much stimulation for me. I guess. It was like over kid there screaming, yelling, and I was like, no, I can't do this. Like, there's so many other things I'd rather do with you. So I was also thinking about how many times you hear a conversation, like for example, I listened to my, we were just with my mom and my sister yesterday.

My mom had a knee replacement. She's doing really, really well. But I was watching them and I know. They both, they both are not being really authentic. And then when I speak to, like my mom later, she'll start complaining, did you hear your sister say this or say that? Or she had an opinion about it. And I'm like, mom, why don't you just approach it with her?

Like, can't you talk to her in a way that you can just be honest? Because it seems to be like the same types of things that are coming up all the time between the two. Right. Yeah. So I don't know. I mean, I just think it would've been so much healthier for them to address it earlier in life. All right, so here's the deal, right?

We wanted to let the listeners know that we can be aware and learn how to argue, right? To really think of arguing as a skill that you can develop, so that you can build honest relationships moving forward, and as they work on rebuilding their lives after.

You're so cute. You're stuck on thinking about your mom and your sister, aren't you? No, because we just did that one. Like we were just there, so I know it's kind of there. Uh, that's when I go to the cafeteria. Well, you're avoiding it. I'm avoiding it. You do it too. See? I do. I admitted it. Yeah. But again, you have to think about, is this a relationship that I wanna be really close to this?

Because when you avoid difficult conversations with someone, you're not able to get really close with them. Right. Because you're living in this false world, you know? And with my mom, you, you know, I mean, we've been married, what, 14 years? It'll be 14 years. And remember, it's not that you don't wanna have a close relationship with her, but it's a different relationship than my sister would have.

But anyhow, okay, I'll move on. Um, it's a different podcast, right? A different episode. Yeah. And then being truthful and letting people know what bothers you, I think is, is important if you do it in the right way. You know, and staying calm, like I said, like the person, the other person could really be just losing their, you know what, and just kind of have a real conversation and stay calm.

And believe me, I've had some arguments with you as an example where I have reacted in a way I didn't want to. I've said things I didn't wanna say. I've been defensive, sca, but that always comes from a place of being defense. Scared, hurt on guard or because you're dealing with your own guilt about what you're pointing fingers at.

So what is the expression? Hurt people. Hurt people. Right, right. Hurt people, hurt other people. Yeah, that's right. So I, I think when we are hurt, which is so, uh, heightened during and after. We tend to lash out sometimes. Yeah. Yeah. Because it does take, it does take two to tango, they say. I see that a lot with our divorced, um, clients.

You know, the coaching, they come to us. One of the things we first do, and we always like to, to do is see where you are emotionally, like kind of check in and do a check-in, and it's. Some people are really vocal and really hurt, and you could just tell by the way they're talking. And other people, it's like really torture, pulling it out of them, and they're on that de, they're on that flight, meaning they just don't want to talk about it, right?

And so before we can start to work forward on getting them the best life and rebuilding their life, because divorce is such an opportunity to rebuild your life, right? It's a devastating circumstance for many people. It's not great. I mean, nobody goes into a marriage thinking they're gonna get divorced, but it's such an opportunity to rebuild your life.

So we start there, you know, where are they they coming from? And you know, one last thought. When we argue, and I think it is not done enough, is to come back and apologize. I think that's so underused, and I don't mean to apologize for your position, right? You know, especially if, let's say it's political. If you believe in whatever you believe in, don't, you're not apologizing for that, but you may apologize for being unkind or mean-spirited, or the way in which you delivered the conversation.

So many times we don't do. And that just makes a world of difference in a relationship. It's very tender and it can really bring such close closeness, right? Apologizing for anything and everything. I always say apologizing for how someone feels. You can even say, I'm so sorry. You're hurt. You know, I did. I didn't mean to hurt you.

I'm just trying to have a conversation with you and, and you know, please understand that I love you, right? And uh, sometimes you just have to let the ego go and apologize and it's really easy. Yeah, it's really not that difficult. It's really easy just to say, I'm sorry, it's just a few little wor words, right?

Yeah. Easiest thing in the world. And listen, being right is also overrated. It's. Nowhere near as amazing as love Loving is so much better than being right. So try it out. My friends, especially those of you who are in fights with someone

right now, tell them you're sorry that they're hurting. Tell them that you love them.

Have a suggestion. You know, I've heard of also about some people setting like, uh, game rules on arguing in advance. You know, this is something else to consider with those that you have close relationships with and those that you see often. Yeah. That, you know, I just did that with, uh, a business associate because we, we do butt heads a lot and I said, why don't we look, we're both intelligent.

We both have the best intentions. We just sometimes butt heads a little bit. Why don't we come up with some game rules on how to argue more effectively so that we can have a better, more. Business, but you know, in relationships like people that you're close with, that you see often, especially where you have that tension going on, you know, especially in like our relationship, like a love relationship or a, a teenage relationship.

Um, close friends parents, right? Why not try it? You know, having some rules and a game plan for how you're going to argue and then tell each other the truth. Trust me, it's worth it. I wish we had known this when Spencer, my son, was a teenager, but I think as parents also, a lot of us grew up with that dated philosophy that you don't argue with your parents, you just do what you're.

Yeah, we talked about that a little bit. And I really don't think that's healthy for, for our kids, you know, because again, I just think that they need to learn. They're gonna run into conflicts and relationships. They just are. And where are they gonna learn how to argue effectively from what they see from us?

Exactly the way we argue, the way that we argue with them. And what I wanna suggest is that just don't, it just doesn't. Healthy, real and close relationships when they're adults, it, it absolutely probably does. So I think it's a great idea to set the rules and let everyone know, you know what I'm saying, ahead of time and from.

It can go something like, Hey, you know, I know that there's things that we don't agree on. There's things that we differ on. Um, but why don't we have this understanding that if we're gonna discuss something, that we do it when we both are available. You know what I'm saying? Like, I'm, we're not in the middle of like, Cooking dinner or walking out the door when we start the argument.

So we are available that we, you know, that we both are gonna keep our voices down, that we're gonna end the conversation on the note of not agreeing or disagreeing necessarily. We're coming up with a solution, but we're just gonna talk it out and we're still gonna love each other. So I think that's, A really important thing and a great topic, and I hope the listeners take it with them and try it out.

I think it's a great topic and, and a very important one as well. You know, you can read all the books you want on working out or listen to us or listen to us. That's even the better option. But, uh, you can read all the books you want on working out, but if you don't get your butt in the gym, It's, you're not gonna see the results, right?

In other words, we're trying to give you these thoughts and coaching tips for you to apply, not just to listen to while you're taking a walk or doing whatever you're doing, but really try 'em out because if you want changes in your life, you can't just read the book, how to work out and know how to do it.

You gotta actually go to the gym and put the hard work in. So that's what we want you to do. Listen. And girls have an amazing week. Be really loving to yourself. Be kind to people. And you know what? Apologize to somebody that you hurt and do it in a kind and loving way. Set some rules on arguing in the future, hold space and have a most amazing, beautiful, beautiful week.

And remember my friends, yes, you can have a have an amazing life after divorce. Divorce. Bye bye everybody. Talk to you soon.

You have the vision of what you want your life to look like after divorce, but maybe you just don't know how to get there. So if you're ready to take control of your. And want to find out more about our coaching, visit us lad-coaching.com. That's l a d as in life after divorce-coaching.com. Until next time, have an amazing rest of your day.

And remember, yes, you can have an amazing life after divorce.