

## ***Femail: How You Can Use Email To Take The Bite Out Of A Fight.***

I've been married for almost 26 years, so I've learned the right way and the wrong way to have an argument with my spouse. I'd like to say the right way is, for me to always be right and him to be wrong and for him to come to me on bended knee for an apology. But that would be the Facebook version, meaning none of was true.

It's not like we fight all the time, but 26 years with the same person you're bound to have a heated debate at times. There are people who call them discussions, but when you discuss something, there are no right or wrong people and when you fight there is definitely one person who's right and one who's wrong.

I don't think there's anything wrong with the occasional argument as long as you keep it clean. And when I say that I mean no calling each other names, no comments about your physical appearance, and no blaming their parents for all their faults. I've found these rules to be mostly easy to follow, although I have to say there are times it's easier to blame my parents for my flaws than to take responsibility for myself.

I wouldn't say I cause most of the arguments, I would say I cause 60 percent of them, but if my husband reads this, I cause 20 percent. Our arguments have usually happened because one or both of us has gotten defensive and stopped listening. It's at these times, that I think it's better to go to bed mad, yes, I said go to bed mad and let one or both of you go off to work in the morning. This gives you both time to cool off and see what your part is in the argument. At this point I found the best solution is email. I send an email to him and lay everything out that I'm trying to say, without his interrupting.

An email also protects me, because I can react defensively when pushed, and so electronic mail is my buffer. In the time it takes to write an email and check it for spelling errors, yes, besides being defensive, I'm also a perfectionist,

writing helps me calm down. This prevents one partner, okay, me, from flying off the handle and saying something they might regret later.

Can this cause stress at work, probably, but truth be told at that moment I don't really care. It definitely causes less stress for me because I'm far away when he reads it. You can call me a coward, and yes, okay, I'm a coward, but I've actually found that email is a great way to avoid more conflict. An email allows him to process whatever stupid thing one of us said or did, and to accept an apology without us having to face each other.

I probably started this when email came into being because I realized very quickly I don't really like apologizing. It's just not as much fun as gloating when I'm right, and let's be honest, I'm definitely not as good at apologizing as I should be for all the times I've overreacted or been wrong. See where the coward thing comes in?