

## How to Stop Pointing the Finger in Your Marriage

How you can stop pointing the finger at yourself and your spouse and start resolving the issues at hand.

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You don't want your arguments to be destructive, stop the point and be responsible and accountable.

You and your husband are on the outs this morning—the aftermath of last night's fight has sunk in. Even though you resolved things before going to bed, he's grumpy and leaves without giving you a kiss goodbye.

As you revisit the fight in the midst of work, chores, the kids and all the rest, you start beating up on yourself. Why do you have these fights anyway? It's probably your fault, you think. You're just too picky. You rag on yourself for not appreciating what a great guy he really is, and how horrible you are and, by the afternoon, you're a weepy mess certain your marriage would be perfect if only you weren't such a terrible spouse, stupid and inept.

Enough already. Blow your nose, get up off the floor and let's have a little chat about *accountability* and *responsibility*.

Face the facts. It does you absolutely no good to focus all your energies on blaming yourself or, on the flip side, blaming your spouse. Blaming stops the solution process cold.

This is not what you want. Instead, focus on *accountability* and *responsibility*.

Accountability is your willingness to assess the part of the problem that belongs to you, and the part that belongs to the other. Responsibility is your willingness and ability to respond to that for which you are accountable. You weren't the only one involved here. Regardless of how you are magically transforming your husband into the "good guy" and yourself into the "bad guy," it just isn't that simple.

Yes, of course you have a share in what happened, but "be accountable" does not mean "blame yourself." "Be accountable" means figure out realistically what are the specific ways in which you've allowed or contributed to the situation. "I'm a terrible person" is a non-specific statement. It's unrealistic and doesn't even start to say in any meaningful way how you've allowed or contributed to the matter.

You had a fight, and that's fine. Why weren't you able to have a discussion instead of a fight? What was your part in

escalating things to the yelling and screaming stage? Did you launch into an attack on your spouse rather than coming to him with a calm, "We have something we need to look at" approach? Did you respond defensively to his, "You totally blew our budget!" with a foot-stomping "Did not!"?

What was his part? Did he react defensively to your attack? Did he fly off the handle at your, "Did not!"?

Break it down. Sort out what is yours to work on. Do that, work on it, forgive yourself, forgive him and move on. Give yourself permission to do a little better next time.

The more you are willing to quit blaming yourself and/or others for the disappointments and failures in your life, the faster you are on the road to genuine success. Be accountable, be responsible and watch your happiness soar.

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