

# Don't R.E.A.D.

If you are having a hard time getting through to your spouse, it can feel like no matter what you say nothing changes - you just can't win them over. When this happens, sometimes

## **the only way to win is to stop playing**

*That means that you don't try to*

**R** (reason with them)

**E** (explain things to them)

**A** (argue with them)

**D** (defend yourself to them)

**They're not listening to you, anyway. In fact, the more you try to get them to understand, the more committed they are to MISunderstanding you.**

### **Here are some times that you have to decide to not READ:**

- when you want your spouse to see your point of view
- when you feel like you have to help your spouse understand something
- when your spouse criticizes you for the way you said or did something
- when your spouse disagrees with you (or you disagree with your spouse)

### **Here's what don't READ can look like:**

**R** - if you've tried to get your spouse to see your perspective by they don't seem to get it, you can simply say "it's OK if you don't understand what I'm saying, I don't need you to understand in order to be comfortable with my position on it"

**E** - if you are trying to justify something that makes sense to you but they refuse to accept what you're saying, you can say "I am not going to try to explain it to you"

**A** - if your spouse has a comeback for everything you say, you can say "I'm not going to continue to discuss this with you"

**D** - when your spouse disagrees or criticizes something you've said or done, you can say "I can see that you don't agree, and that's OK with me."

#### **Other similar phrases can be:**

- "I respect what you want, but I'm not going to go along with it"
- "I can understand why you think that, but that's not how I see it."
- "I'm not going to do that"
- "I can't accept that"
- "Thanks for sharing that information" (and then drop it)

#### **Some things you SHOULDN'T say to someone who insists on their way:**

**Don't ask** questions that you don't want answers to. For example, don't ask:

- "Why do you want to do it that way?" (they'll use it as an opportunity to prove their case)
- "What do you think you (or I) should do?" (they're happy to tell you what to do)
- "Why are you doing that?"/"Why didn't you do that?" (they can justify anything)
- "Why do you think that?" (it makes them think you care what they think and are willing to acquiesce)

**Questions make it sound like you are open to discussion - and open to be influenced. You aren't.**

**Don't answer** questions that they won't respect the answer to. You can say "Are you asking because you are interested in my perspective and are seeking to honor it or because you want to argue with me about it?" If they say they want to know your perspective but then they argue when you give it, don't READ.