

How to dump the blame game

Get More From Your Relationship

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Are either of you coming out a winner when it comes to the blame game? Read on below to learn how to drop the blame and start getting more from your relationship.

How to stop pointing blame in your relationship



Round One: "It's your fault we don't have any savings, you blew it all on golf clubs!" "My fault?! Who *had* to pick up the tab for everyone at your girlfriend's birthday lunch?"

Round Two: "You forgot to get the dry cleaning--again! "Don't blame me, I had to work late!"

Round Three: "If you got that raise, we wouldn't be in this mess!" Door slam.

Ouch. Nobody's happy. How could they be? You're angry and frustrated. So is he. Meanwhile, there still aren't any savings, the dry cleaning remains parked at the cleaner's and that raise isn't happening.

In other words, blaming each other only brings up bad feelings, and does nothing to resolve the problem. OK, I take that back. Blaming him makes you feel great (as in righteous) for about 10 seconds. Then it does nothing to solve the problem.

Dump the blame game



Start by dumping the blame game. Your 10-second high is a cheap one. You're better than that. What's done is done, so rise above, sit down together and brainstorm solutions.

Maybe you create a "fun fund" that builds up as you can contribute for golf clubs and lunches out. Separately, establish a savings account you deliberately grow, and use only for emergencies.

Perhaps you can both agree that if whoever was supposed to pick up the dry-cleaning, the groceries, the whatever, can't do it, they call to let the other know--and know why. Often what launches the blame game is when we don't know why our partner failed to do something. We assume they don't care, a hurtful assumption.

Discuss together, without blame or fault-finding, what might support his ability to get a raise. Does he need to improve his skills? Would signing up for a seminar or class benefit him? How can you help him achieve that?

You are in this love together. It's not "his fault," it's "our concern." "His fault" separates you. "Our concern" unites you. Your love will thrive as you work on issues and seek to solve them--together.

SheKnows Love Expert, Dr. Noelle Nelson, is a renowned relationship expert and an internationally respected psychologist, author and seminar leader. She has given life-changing guidance to couples for more than 20 years. Dr. Nelson is the author of nine books including her most recent, *Your Man is Wonderful* (Free Press). Others include *Dangerous Relationships: How to Identify and Respond to the Seven Warning Signs of a Troubled Relationship* (De Capo Books), *The Power of Appreciation: The Key to a Vibrant Life (Beyond Words)* and *Get Your Way* (Prentice Hall).