



Parenting on the Same Page: When Your Partner Isn't Motivated to Get on the Same Page

- **Give space.** Forcing someone to do something is not an effective way to create change. Instead of demanding that your co-parent agree with your perspective, give them time and space to process, think, and explore other parenting options.
- **Offer resources.** If your co-parent is open to learning more, share articles, blog posts from reliable sources, books or videos they can consider on their own time. Again, don't push. Let them know you're ready to discuss it when they're ready.
- **Ask for what you need.** In some situations, co-parents are willing to support the other parent, even though they may not agree with the methods, if they are asked. Use "I statements" and clearly explain how they can help.
- **Notice what works.** If you have a positive experience or notice a positive change, share it with your co-parent in a non-judgmental way. Celebrate your success without demanding that they do the same. Be willing to notice positive, effective approaches that your partner is using and celebrate those, even if you don't agree with his or her other methods.
- **Delay the conversation.** Save parenting conversations for quiet moments when the kids are out of earshot. Don't hash it out or correct the other person's parenting in the heat of the moment when everyone's upset.
- **Consider ways your partner may trigger you.** Reflect on your past – does your partner's behavior remind you of a harmful parent or painful memories? Are you projecting your feelings from childhood onto your children?
- **Stay focused on the kids.** Parenting conflicts are often a sign of deeper issues. Use caution that these discussions don't become about controlling your co-parent, taking something out on them, or teaching them a lesson.
- **Seek help.** Many parents struggle to have respectful, productive conversations on their own. It can benefit your children to seek the support of a marriage/family therapist or parent coach. If your co-parent is unwilling or unable to have parenting conversations with you, it still can be beneficial to talk to someone individually about your challenges and concerns.
- **Practice powerlessness.** Learn to recognize when you can and cannot influence others. Focus on your relationship with your child and recognize what an enormous impact you can have as a firm, kind and connected parent.

