Argue more effectively



To argue is to be involved in a conversation in support of or in opposition to a particular idea or issue, often in an angry or heated manner. At its core, an argument revolves around a disagreement of some kind and often includes some reflex behaviors that happen spontaneously and unexpectedly.

While arguments can sometimes descend into unpleasant situations during which we may quarrel with someone over a differing viewpoint, they do serve a useful purpose in giving us a way to present our thoughts and feelings about something important. When done intelligently, someone who knows how to argue well can become the master of their social surroundings, whether in business or social circumstances. When done wrong, arguing can leave both parties frustrated and unsatisfied.

To argue more effectively, one should first employ active listening tactics to try to understand the issue(s) involved and the motives of the other person. We usually respond automatically by quickly injecting powerful counterpoints, often without any persuasive evidence. By jumping right in with a rebuttal, we demonstrate that we aren't showing any respect or consideration to what the other person is saying, and that can alienate them. It can come across as arguing just for the sake of arguing. Instead, express some curiosity by asking, "Really, why do you feel that way?" or say something like, "Tell me more," or "That's interesting." This tactic can transform what could be a head-to-head conflict into a collaborative partnering approach.

Another argument killer is to criticize the person arguing with you rather than to focus on the premise of the disagreement itself. This is known as an ad hominem attack. Even if you believe the other person is an uninformed dunce, attacking or insulting them will only make the intellectual divide wider rather than narrower. In fact, if your goal is to genuinely influence another person, it would probably be better to resort to trying to demonstrate some level of respect and esteem for the other person.

The key to prevailing in an argument is to do everything you can do to get the other person to want to agree with you. Focus on using a calm, conciliatory tone of voice and welcoming body language to minimize emotional/psychological resistance, and suggest examples of how agreeing with your point of view can result in personal benefits for them as well. Refrain from trying to win the argument; don't keep trying to prove you are right, and instead stay calm, ask specific questions, and put the other person in the position of having to explain their points.

Break down the logic and analyze the elements for and against your position, so that your conversation partner feels they have a part in the conclusion. Work to establish common ground. Most people are much more likely to listen to you once they feel genuinely heard and understood. Adopt a give-and-take approach so that the "argument" gracefully transitions into a "discussion."

Finally, a great deal of evidence shows that emphasizing the reason for a person's point of view can be an important factor in persuading others. In a study done at Harvard way back in 1978, when copies were made at Xerox machines rather than with computer printers, participants asked people waiting to use a bank of copiers if they could get in line ahead of them. The study found that those who were asked responded much more favorably when a reason was given.

When participants said, "Excuse me, I have five pages; may I use the Xerox machine," about 60% of those asked responded, "Yes." However, when participants used the same phrase but added "because my boss is waiting for them," 94% of those asked responded positively. Using the word because in an argument can increase effectiveness as it takes the focus off the arguer and places it on the reason or purpose of the premise of the argument.

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Autoimmune Hemolytic Anemia



DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm about to turn 70. A month ago, I was diagnosed with autoimmune hemolytic anemia (AIHA) that's idiopathic. Two CT scans and many blood tests have cleared me of all tumors; however, my spleen's enlarged. My hematologist put me on prednisone, which is working very well. I don't know how long I'll have to take prednisone, but I'm tolerating it very well. I'd appreciate any information and advice that you have on AIHA. – M.L

ANSWER: As its name suggests ("hemo-" is blood, and "-lytic" is destruction), with this condition, the body's immune system destroys its own red blood cells, causing a low blood count. It's not a common disease, and most of the time, it occurs by itself (idiopathic, as you stated). But your doctors carefully looked for underlying conditions, especially leukemia, lymphoma and systemic lupus.

Prednisone is the usual first-line treatment, with many experts also starting people on rituximab (a powerful drug that reduces the body's ability to make antibodies) in the beginning. But some people do well with prednisone alone.

AIHA requires an expert – a hematologist. They use their judgment, but a general rule of thumb is to taper the dose of prednisone once the anemia is under control. It takes several months (or longer) to bring down the dose.

We don't recommend the long-term use of prednisone because, even though you're tolerating it well, it can cause high blood sugar (even overt diabetes), high blood pressure, bone loss, cataracts, weight gain, infections, and many other problems. If prednisone can't be tapered off entirely, then it may be time to consider rituximab.

Because a person's red blood cells are constantly being destroyed and remade, they need higher doses of folic acid. Also, people should be warned that excess blood clotting can be a problem with AIHA, so symptoms like leg swelling and shortness of breath need to be taken seriously, as they could signify blood clots in the legs or lungs.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I have an enlarged prostate. I take 0.5 mg of dutasteride (one per day) and 0.4 mg of tamsulosin HCL (one per day as well). Is there anything else I can take to reduce the size of my prostate? – V.F.

ANSWER: Dutasteride does reduce the size of the prostate by blocking a hormone (dihydrotes-tosterone) that enlarges the pros-tate. Dutasteride works slowly over 6-12 months to shrink the prostate and improve urine flow.

Tamsulosin relaxes structures called smooth muscles, which are found in the prostate and in blood vessels. Tamsulosin doesn't reduce the size of the prostate, but it works quickly by allowing the urethra to open up more widely. (Most men get relief within the first three to seven days.)

Since these meds can also open up blood vessels, they can cause low blood pressure and lightheadedness upon standing, although newer agents like tamsulosin and silodosin are much less likely to do so than older drugs. Some experts use tamsulosin at 0.8 mg at night if the 0.4-mg dose isn't enough.

For men who have persistent symptoms despite treatment with both tamsulosin and dutasteride (or similar drugs), then another medication choice is tadalafil, which is particularly helpful if a man also experiences erectile dysfunction. My experience is that this is modestly beneficial. Otherwise, a referral to a urologist to talk about alternative options is appropriate.

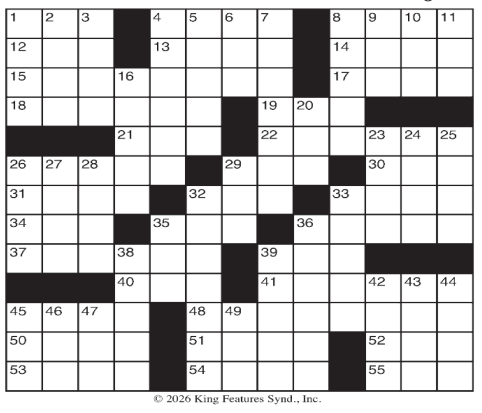
Dr. Roach regrets he is unable to answer individual letters, but he will incorporate them in his column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

Puzzle Corner Solutions on page 8

KingCrossword

ACROSS
1 Personal
4 Poi base
8 Fraud
12 Romance
13 — incline (tilted)
14 Unruly groups
15 Message from an admirer
17 Border on
18 On an angle
19 Vinyl records
21 Before
22 "Darn it!"
26 Scrabble pieces
29 Movie format
30 "Little piggie"
31 Rd. crossers
32 Grant's foe
33 1982 sci-fi film
34 "The Newsroom" actor Patel
35 Farm grazer
36 Resided
37 "I, Robot" author
39 Lanka lead-in
40 Storm center
41 Sculpted trunks
45 Sagan or Sandburg
48 Romantic Ella Fitzgerald song
50 Squad
51 — Stanley Gardner
52 PC linking system
53 Short cuts
54 Snitched
55 Vintage

DOWN
1 They give a hoot
2 Scarf material
3 De — (from the start)
4 Printer refills
5 Battery part
6 Squealer
7 Bob Marley hit song
8 Big hit
9 Corn core
10 — Dhabi
11 Rockies hrs.
16 Tools for duels
20 Third degree?
23 To be, in Tours
24 "Neato!"
25 Superman's alias
26 "There!"
27 Currier's partner
28 Jeans maker Strauss
29 Morning moisture
32 Mini-shutout at Wimbledon
33 Spin
35 Demure
36 Buzzed
38 Thaws
39 Unmoving
42 Aviator's milestone
43 Track shape
44 Email command
45 Young lion
46 Year in Spain
47 Chest bone
49 Granada gold



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Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆◆

◆ Moderate ◆◆ Challenging
◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

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Memorial Middle School Resource Officer Dan Lauer and Middlebury First Selectwoman Jennifer Mahr stand by the e-bike used in e-bike safety presentations at Memorial Middle School. They visited MMS three days to present information to every class. (Submitted photo)

Students learn e-bike safety

By MARJORIE NEEDHAM

Middlebury residents, along with others who walk the Middlebury Greenway have been expressing concerns about the many e-bikes now traveling Middlebury streets and the Greenway. In response to those concerns, Middlebury Police Officer Dan Lauer (the MMS resource officer) and Middlebury First Selectwoman Jennifer Mahr visited the school October 22, 23, and 26, to present lessons on e-bike safety to every student in all three grades, more than 400 students in grades 6 to 8.

Mahr attended each session, speaking directly with students about recent community concerns regarding the increased presence of e-bikes on Middlebury's roads. She had helped organize the presentations as part of National Walk, Ride, and Roll to School Day earlier in October.

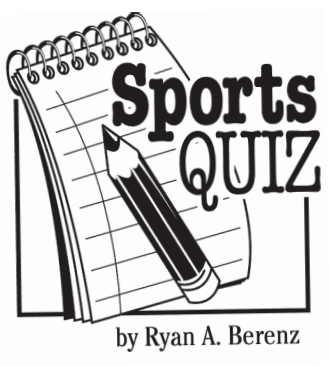
Middlebury is registered as a Safe Routes to School Community and has recently sponsored a School Resource Program in Middlebury's schools. In his presentation, Resource Officer Lauer focused on the differences among Class 1, 2, and 3 e-bikes and current laws governing their use on Middlebury's roads and Greenway. He emphasized basic safety rules and etiquette, proper helmet use, and the importance of yielding to pedestrians.

Lauer said he thought the students were very receptive to the information he presented, with many surprised to learn about force dynamics and how it affects e-bike riders. He told the students he wanted them to have fun and have a good time, but to do so safely, responsibly and with respect towards others. He also discussed the importance of not just wearing a bike helmet but also wearing it properly so it would be able to protect the rider in an accident.

When Mahr researched bike helmets following the presentations, she discovered that most regular bike helmets are rated for a crash speed of about 14 mph while e-bikes can do 20 or 28 mph depending on the class of e-bike. Motor driven cycles (dirt bikes, electric or otherwise) can hit speeds of 40 to 60 mph.

Mahr said a known safety gap exists for riders whose e-bikes exceed 14 mph if they're not wearing an upgraded helmet (either a light motorcycle helmet or the Dutch e-bike standard). She offered the following link to one brand, ridelumos.com/blogs/stories/nta-8776, that she believes has a great explanation to help parents make an informed choice. Other brands will come up if parents search on "e-bike helmets."

Lauer said the students were eager to learn about riding safely and responsibly. Armed with their new knowledge, some likely will change the way they ride their e-bikes.



Questions

1. What stadium in suburban Honolulu was the site of the NFL Pro Bowl 35 times from 1980 to 2016?
2. Name the catcher who played for the Philadelphia Phillies from 1983 to 1997 and penned a book about the paranormal titled "If They Only Knew" in 2007.
3. Tennis player Marcos Baghdatis, 2006 Australian Open finalist, hailed from which Mediterranean island?
4. Which USC Trojans tackle became the first offensive lineman to be selected No. 1 overall in the NFL Draft when the Minnesota Vikings picked him in 1968?
5. In 2021, Brazilian footballer Marcelo became which team's first non-Spanish club captain since 1904?
6. Name the only father/son duo to be elected to the National Baseball Hall of Fame. (Hint: Neither was a player.)
7. Henry Cabelus, Michael Mena, C.J. Bartholomew and Duncan Murray are all top competitors in which extreme sport?

Answers

1. Aloha Stadium.
2. Darren Daulton.
3. Cyprus.
4. Ron Yary.
5. Real Madrid CF.
6. Larry and Lee MacPhail, both baseball executives.
7. Extreme pogo stick (Xpogo)

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Now Here's a Tip



- Use baking soda as a dry cleaning agent for fabric items such as suitcases, backpacks, boots, canvas items, etc.
- "Try this baking tip from my mother: When you have a recipe that calls for dry spices (cinnamon, ginger, ground clove, etc.), cream them with the butter instead of sifting them with the dry ingredients. I do feel like they become infused in the recipe better." – A. in Illinois
- "To remove paint or stain from hands (even oil-based), use an old dry washcloth with liquid hand soap – no water. After the paint is loose, rinse with warm water." – H.P. in Washington
- Fresh ginger can be frozen. Simply grate as needed. Flavor remains and it will stay fresh much longer.
- "I found a terrific metal magnet strip that is for use in the kitchen. It was a great price at a local resale shop. I have used it in my mini workshop to hold jewelry-making tools by my craft desk. It is especially handy now that I am making many ornaments for gifts." – E.L. in New Jersey
- "An oldie but a goodie, and certainly considerate of dear old Mom: In my family, you come to Thanksgiving dinner with your own plastic containers for leftovers. If you don't bring your own, you don't go home with tomorrow's lunch. Mom instituted this rule after the first Thanksgiving when all the kids had moved out. We practically cleaned her out of Tupperware!" – E.Y. in New Mexico

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 1800 Pembrook Drive, Suite 300, Orlando, FL 32810.

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