



Don't Go to Bed Angry: Stay Up and Fight

Deb DeArmond

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With the warmth of close friends, the DeArmonds gently urge couples to engage with each other and reach the roots of conflict.

Don't Go to Bed Angry, by husband-and-wife duo Deb and Ron DeArmond, is a journey through the land mines of marriage to a healthier way of communicating.

Blending psychological methods with spiritual guidance, the DeArmonds draw on their experiences as relationship/Christian counselors, with forty years of marriage between them, and offer advice to married couples to successfully resolve conflict. Their approach—what could be called “healthy fighting”—is a positive alternative to allowing grumblings to turn into grudges that can cause permanent rifts, is encouraged throughout. Acknowledging the inevitability of conflict, the DeArmonds ask couples to cast away idealized pictures of first love and learn to navigate through the everyday occurrences of the marital relationship.

Central to the book's premise are rules of engagement for fighting fair when arguments do occur. Chapters are capped with recommended exercises, scripture to reflect upon, and a suggested prayer. Additionally, couples are encouraged to keep separate journals and have periodic conversations over them. At the book's conclusion, additional resources await, including templates for vision and mission statements to be completed jointly.

Although primarily for married couples, many of the solutions to marital strife, particularly the emphasis on listening and valuing the other's thoughts, can be applied to relationships of any kind between two people. With the warmth of close friends, the DeArmonds gently urge couples to engage with each other and reach the roots of conflict, learning about one another in the process, especially through knowing when to use open- or closed-ended questions. The Christian foundation is prevalent without being overbearing. Practical anecdotes and techniques are balanced nicely with selected Bible verses.

In a very positive way, *Don't Go to Bed Angry* grants permission to put on the boxing gloves and constructively spar into a stronger marriage.

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