

When opinions threaten friendships

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(HealthDay)—Friendships are supportive connections, and it's not always easy to make them in adulthood. So protecting them is important.

People tend to pick friends and stay connected to those who have similar interests and beliefs. But what happens when you and a good [friend](#) disagree on an important issue?

Here are some tips on how to enjoy your friendship despite strong differences, whether they're over money, parenting techniques or even politics.

One approach is to agree to disagree. When neither of you is going to change your mind, there's often no point in even having the hot-button discussion. If [previous experience](#) tells you not to talk about a certain topic with your friend, make conscious choices for conversation that are "safe"—like work, travel and hobbies.

Focus on what you have in common and remind yourself of the experiences you've shared. Look at the friendship from 20,000 feet. One annoying difference of opinion is likely a minor issue, especially if your friend has been there for you many times over the years.

No matter what differences of opinion you might have on any topic, focus on the reasons you became friends in the first place. Remind yourself of your friend's strengths—such as loyalty, generosity or a great sense of humor.

One thing you might not want to do is engage in controversial topics through social media. A survey of Facebook users done by researchers at Georgia Tech and the University of Minnesota found that 60 percent of respondents ignored comments from friends when they didn't agree with them. But when they did decide to comment, it led some of them to question the relationship and stop associating with the friend.

More information: To learn more, visit Futurity.org.

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