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You have likely heard that a relationship has to have give and take to be successful. While this is true, the old 50/50 split is not a realistic goal even though it sounds incredibly fair! What you will generally find is that one of you will give 80% on an issue today while your partner will give as much on a separate issue. Take for instance a dispute over where to spend the holidays, perhaps you and your family have a regular tradition that has been the same for decades while your partnerâ€™s family may or may not celebrate as the mood strikes. In this situation, it would not be uncommon for the traditional spouse to spend 80% of the holidays with their family. This is a real life example of give and take, on the other side of things, perhaps your spouse has a regular family camping trip every summer, this would be your opportunity to give!

Here are some other things to consider about give and take.

Talents

Do you have a division of labor in your relationship? Traditionally there is the idea that women manage within the home and men manage outside. This would seem to fit the 50/50 model quite well, but both individuals could be miserable! Where do your talents lay? Are you a woman who has a mechanical bent or a man with a love of baking? There is no reason not to explore these talents instead of coming up with an arbitrary division of labor where no one is happy. Who cares if you change the oil 100% of the time or your spouse does 95% of the cooking? The important thing is to agree and enjoy your lives together.

Participation

Problems come into a relationship not because one spouse is giving more in an area than another, but when one partner is giving all and receiving nothing in return! If you are constantly pouring out love, understanding, help, trust, respect and advice but never receive the same in return, you are going to run dry! Relationships can be difficult, however one of this nature is nearly impossible to maintain. The best advice you could get is to sit down the non-giving partner and explain your concerns. This may turn things around, it may not the important thing is that you have tried.

Giving

So what should you give in relationships? Advice? Guidance? Love? Any one or all of these are great, but it truly depends on your partner. A good rule of thumb is to give what you expect to receive. Do you expect your partner to be understanding of crazy relatives, then you are going to have to return the favor! (Everyone has at least one kooky family member).

Conclusion

Give and take is great advice for relationships as long as you keep it in perspective and understand how it applies to your particular situation. What works well for one couple may not work at all for you, so tailor your expectations to your individuality and goals as a couple. One final thought for creating a happy relationships, when you argue (and you will) never make it personal. Do not give out insults nor take any in!

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