

## AGREE & DIVERT technique

Instead of starting an argument with someone who criticises us, we look for something to agree with within perhaps, a much exaggerated criticism. We do this to move on to what we really want and need rather than getting bogged down in a pointless argument.

We keep cool and divert the attention away from our 'fault' by agreeing (with what we can, check if you can find a grain of truth in the criticism to agree with) and then moving on to something more important.



E.g. 'You never tidy up after yourself' and you might say 'sorry, I forgot to tidy away my plate this morning, I'll try to do better. Now, where do we want to go for our walk?' or

'You never give me a straight answer' and you might say 'I'm sorry, but sometimes I don't know the answer to what you ask me. Now, which shop do we want to go to first?'

It takes quite the mature person to agree when we feel the other person is picking on us or being unreasonable, but we feel so much better in ourselves for not provoking somebody's anger or bad mood but rather moving on to some common activity or goal. It shows respect for the other person's point of view, agreeing with whatever one can and then guiding the energy to something constructive.



PAUSE and remember/write down a situation where someone criticises/criticised you. Think about how you could somehow agree with something and then move on to something more important to do or talk about – write this down

and/or share this thought within a group or with a partner

## ROLE-PLAY in pairs to agree and divert criticism

**Person A:** criticises person B for one of the following:

- being arrogant
- bullying behaviour
- weakness
- selfishness
- telling tales or
- something of one's own choice

**Person B:** agrees as much as possible without losing dignity and then changes the topic of conversation to something more interesting.

**Afterwards:** swap over

**Discuss** whether you find this a useful skill