

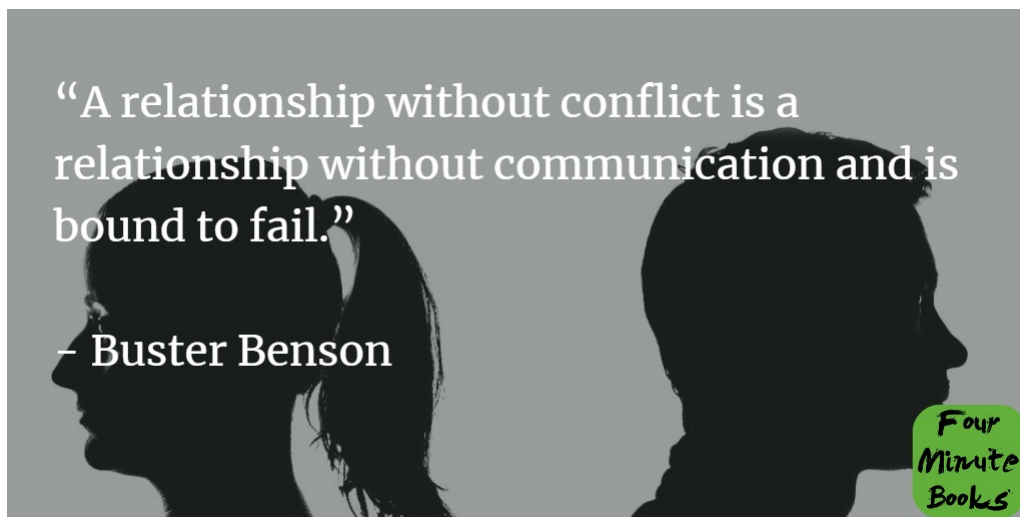
Why Are We Yelling? Summary

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1-Sentence-Summary: *Why Are We Yelling?* will improve your relationships, professional life, and the way you view the world by showing you that arguments aren't bad, but important growing experiences if we learn to make them productive.

Read in: 4 minutes

Favorite quote from the author:



Do you remember the last fight with your spouse or someone on the internet? It's probably not a pleasant memory. But what if you could disagree without being disagreeable? What if arguments could be productive?

Whenever we don't like what someone does or the way they think, it's a signal that something we care about is at stake, and we shouldn't ignore that. The problem lies in the way we react to these situations. Discovering how to respond positively to opposing views will open up a world of possibilities to improve your life.

That's exactly what Buster Benson's *Why Are We Yelling?: The Art of Productive Disagreement* will teach you. His tips will help you discover how to debate productively. After reading this you're going to find that you feel less irritation when someone opposes you, which will help your relationships and world expand and improve.

Here are the 3 most impactful lessons about getting along with others better:

1. When you see or hear an opposing view, the voice in your head tells you different things about it, some of which can open up possibilities.

2. Learning how to ask the questions in the right way will help you get through disagreements productively.
3. We must learn to hear dangerous ideas without endorsing them if we want to get closer to solving these issues.

Get ready for a few ways to have more intelligent views about the world! Let's go!

Lesson 1: **Endless possibilities open up when you pay attention to the different voices in your head and what they're telling you about opposing views.**

Is climate change real? Should we ban guns? Is it a good idea to make vaccination a requirement? These are just a few of the polarizing issues of our times that make us anxious.

Opposing viewpoints create *cognitive dissonance*. **This happens anytime we come across something that contradicts the way we see the world, and it makes us distressed.** To try to relieve the uneasiness that comes with conflict, the voices in our head begin working on us. There are four you need to know about:

1. Power
2. Reason
3. Avoidance
4. Possibility

Let's take a look at the voice of power first. This one tries to get us to win the argument by shutting it down without any acceptance of the opposing view. Someone who believes that vaccines should be a requirement for everyone, might say "Anti-vaxxers are obviously wrong and crazy!"

The voice of reason looks for evidence against the offending position. It might say "there's no evidence that vaccines are dangerous!" If you subscribe to the voice of avoidance, however, you might think neither of these things and just give up on getting involved.

These three voices are problematic because they shut down dialogue that can open up opportunities. That's where the voice of possibility comes in handy. It helps us look at why people might see the world a certain way. This curious perspective on issues opens the pathway to solving them, which we'll get to more in the next lesson.

Lesson 2: Questions are the golden ticket to make it through disagreements productively.

Another tool in your arsenal of arguing effectively is knowing how to ask the right questions.

But first, do you remember the game Battleship? You and a partner would arrange ships on a grid that the other player couldn't see, then ask questions to try to find and sink their ships. What does this have to do with arguments? Well, some of us disagree like we play Battleship, with the intent to destroy our opponents fleet.

The problem is, questions are the pathway through the weeds of disagreement. **Curiosity can widen perspectives, uncover concerns, expand understanding, encourage empathy, and sometimes solve problems.** But this only works if we learn how to use it appropriately.

Think about the game Twenty Questions now. When playing, one person thinks of an object or person and the other can ask twenty questions to try and guess what it is. This game provokes creative, open-ended questions while preventing questions that have a specific answer. These are the types of questions we need to ask when arguing.

Let's say you have a friend who believes in ghosts. You might try to sink their ship with a question like "Do you have any evidence that ghosts exist?" This would shut down the dialogue and might even offend your friend, depending on how you ask it.

Asking instead about the experiences they've had that have led to this conclusion will help you see their perspective a little better. It might also let you hear some interesting stories!

Lesson 3: It is possible to disagree with dangerous ideas while also letting them into the conversation, and doing so helps solve these problems.

You might have an easy time applying the lessons so far with everyday issues, like what to eat. But hotter topics like gun control or euthanasia can be tough. It's pretty difficult to even begin to entertain some of the abhorrent viewpoints people have out there. We can start by trying to engage with our head, heart, and hands instead of just ignoring them.

Looking at offensive views from your head, or rational mind, means trying to see the logic behind that person's view. It's better to attempt to comprehend what they're thinking and why than just try to assume you know.

Using your heart, or emotions, to combat awful ideas, involves using questions to try to see a person's core anxieties. Open-ended, genuine queries will help you unearth the emotional reasons for a viewpoint.

Also try considering these extreme thinkers with your hands, or from a utility perspective. This means looking for ways the idea can be beneficial to you. For example, exposing the deeper thinking might help you develop better arguments against these views.

What we need in this day of great polarization is people who are good at arguing productively. Take these lessons to heart and work on your skills of debate to help out!

Want to get more out of everything you read?

Get our reading guide. You'll remember more, better, and longer - no matter what you read.

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Why Are We Yelling? Review

Wow, I am thoroughly impressed with [Why Are We Yelling?](#) and I believe you will be too. This message and these tactics are what we all need in this day of immature and unintelligent arguments all over the internet and world. I think the little bit of extra understanding that implementing these tactics can bring will go a long way in improving our world.

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Who would I recommend the Why Are We Yelling? summary to?

The 54-year-old republican who is set in their ways and thinks everyone who believes differently than him is crazy, the 31-year-old millennial who has too many arguments on the internet, and anyone who cares to try to make the world a better and less conflicted place.