

Dear Valentine, I Hate It When You ...

February 08, 2013

The New York Times:

HAVE you decided what to get for your valentine this year? You could try something classic, like chocolates. Or something blingy, like earrings. Or sexy, like lingerie.

New research suggests that this may be the most valuable present you'll ever give. After all, conflict is inevitable in long-term relationships, and the way people navigate it can affect not only their happiness, but their mental and physical health as well.

Married couples who are hostile when they fight, for instance, are more likely than gently scrapping spouses to have compromised immune functioning, elevated coronary calcium levels (an early risk factor for heart disease), and slow wound healing. The negative effects, in various studies, can be seen in both men and women, and frequently in both the aggressive partner and the recipient of hostility.

Dirty fighting is a lose-lose proposition for pretty much any couple. But a spousal spat isn't necessarily bad. Indeed, fighting can actually shore up a relationship, if it's done constructively.

Read the whole story: [*The New York Times*](#)