

*by Molly Pearson*

You may be surprised to find that this is not Peter Pearson speaking. No, I am the humble guest writer, his daughter Molly. Oftentimes my dad's articles are inspired by interactions from the two of us that end with "man, there's gotta be a lesson in there somewhere." This time is no different. But since in this situation, I'm the offender, he entreated me to write it in exchange for exonerating my wrong.

I had just come home from a long day in San Francisco biking around Angel Island. On the traffic-infested drive home, I remembered that I had promised to do some work for my dad and we were going to review it that night. "Shoot!" I thought to myself. "It's my boyfriend's last night in town and the last thing I want to do is pore over pages of copy editing. I'll ask Dad when I get home if we can push it back to another night."

But the idea slipped from my mind as fast as it entered. I got home, grabbed a snack and Dad approached me. "Hey Molly, you gonna be ready to go over that work stuff tonight?" I sighed. He beat me to it, and this was only going to be an uphill battle. "Well dad... Since it's Konrad's last night..." I lamely replied, starting the dither of ugly excuses.

We waged back and forth for a minute, neither of us wanting to back down on our stance. Ultimately, I realized he was right, and no matter how much I blamed the fact that he hadn't given me time to ask, or that "I swear I was thinking about it in the car!", I should have approached him first.

But I couldn't end the discussion without getting one final word in. "Argh, sometimes I just wanna punch you!" That prompted a barrel-chested laugh, and "You hate it when I'm right don't you? You HATE it." "No Dad, I don't hate it when you're right. I don't mind if you're right. You can be right all you want. I just hate it when I'm wrong."

We had reached an impasse. He was frustrated with my excuses, but impressed by my distinction. I could see the wheels turning in his head. What a difference precise language makes. Saying what you mean, and meaning what you say. How does this lead to relationship

help? Maybe the problem in your relationship isn't that your partner is "right all the time." Maybe the problem is your difficulty admitting that you are wrong. There is a definite difference between the two. Hmm, there's gotta be a lesson in there somewhere.

*Note: To learn even more about being right, admitting wrong, and other relationship help, attend my dad's weekend workshop for couples. The next one takes place October 24-25. Click [relationship help](#) to read all about it, hear an audio sample, and read what past participants say about their experience.*