

The Three-Legged Walk

Thomas and Sarah struggled to get along. It seemed there was always something for them to disagree over. The funny thing was that both of them seemed to make friends fine with everyone else. They even shared the same friends. However, Thomas and Sarah seemed to frequently find things to argue over. And so when they were teamed up for a party activity, things didn't start out well.

"Thomas!" Sarah exclaimed in frustration. "I'm trying to go one way, but then you want to go the opposite way and we fall."

"And what about me?!" Thomas responded.

Thomas and Sarah each had one leg in a large pair of pants, and whenever one tried to go somewhere, it seemed the other was

insistent on going in the opposite direction. From the time they had each put a leg into the same pair of pants, they hadn't managed to get anywhere; they were a heap of legs, arms, and angry words.

"You tripped me!" exclaimed Sarah.

"This is not working AT ALL!" Thomas exclaimed.

"Well, it's not my fault," Sarah replied.

Just then two of their friends, Matt and Karen, came strolling by. They were playing the same game as Thomas and Sarah—both had one leg in a pair of pants—but unlike Thomas and Sarah, Matt and Karen were walking along without any problems.

"How do they do that?" Sarah asked. "We keep falling."



Thomas called out to Matt and Karen, "How do you make it work? Every time we try, we just fall in a heap!"

"It's quite easy," Matt answered. "We follow each other. First Karen takes a turn and we go her way and then I take a turn and we go my way."

"Sarah, I think I know what our problem is," Thomas said. "It seems we've both been trying to go our own way, and that's why we just wind up in a heap again and again."

Sarah stood up. "So, I'm just supposed to go wherever you want to go?"

"Well, we're pretty stuck right now," said Thomas. "We need to find a solution. We could decide together where we're going, and then take turns leading the way and yield to each other. If I go where you're going, and then you go where I'm going, we'll make it to our destination."



"I-I guess we could give it a try..."

Thomas put his arm around Sarah, and she put her arm around him. At first there were a few trip-ups, but slowly they started to get the hang of it. Soon they were walking happily together to their shared destination, arm-in-arm.



Is there someone you find yourself in conflict with? Try being considerate of his or her needs and desires. It may be the secret to developing a new friendship.