

Worksheet for Life Lesson 8: Ignoring Teasing Will Not Make It Go Away

Everybody gets teased sometimes. So what can you do? Here are four steps you can try when you are teased.

First, you need to be able to recognize the truth about what was being said. Let's say you get a really bad grade on a math test. Another kid notices it, laughs, and calls you "Stupid." So, what does the truth sound like? It could be "I hate it when I get a sucky grade." It could be "Yeah, math is really hard for me." What would you say?

Here's another example. Let's say someone calls you a loser because your parents don't have enough money to buy you the most popular kinds of clothes. What's the truth sound like? Is it, "Yep, we don't have the money to buy \$200 sneakers"? What would you say?

Second, you need to realize that agreeing with the truth that you're not perfect doesn't make you worse than somebody else. We've all got our downsides.

Third, you have to fight the urge to be mean back. Even if you're pretty good at coming up with stuff to say back, that's like pouring gasoline on the fire. Most of the time, we're just teased because somebody wants to play the reindeer antler pushing game with us. Once you start teasing back, they have even more reason to keep it up.

Fourth, instead of being sarcastic or mean in return, you need to discover a way of looking and a tone of voice after being teased that says "I'm not afraid of you, I'm not mad at you, but I don't want to play the teasing game." The goal here is to show strength but not meanness. If you were called "Gigantor" because you are so tall and your answer was some version of "Yep, tall genes run in my family," what else is there to say? Without saying it, you're calmly asking the other kid some version of "That's true . . . and your point is?"

Now the other kid may want to push around a little more, but the game's over. You showed that you could accept the truth, that you weren't scared, that the other kid isn't better than you, and that you don't

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want to push back and forth and play the teasing game. You can now just walk away to be with your friends or do something you'd rather do. If the other kid keeps it up, threatens to hurt you, or starts to get physical, tell an adult because there really is something wrong with that child and he or she needs some help.

PRACTICE TIME!

The first step in dealing with teasing is to get good at accepting the truth of any put-down. To prepare for possible put-downs that might come your way, take a couple minutes to fill out the following list. Keep in mind that insults thrown at other people and not directly at you also count in the silly, move-to-the-top-of-the-heap game that kids play.

TOP 10 INSULT LIST

Here are the top 10 insults I hear at my school (directed either at me or someone else):

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

(continued)

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Now that you have your list, write down some of the ones that kids tease *you* about. Only this time, also write down what the “truth” is when it comes to you.

Here are some of the things kids say to tease me:

1. _____

The truth is _____

2. _____

The truth is _____

Finally, plan out what you will say to tell someone who’s teasing you that it’s GAME OVER. Practice role-playing your lines with someone else. Remember to use a tone of voice that is strong but free from sarcasm or meanness. If you have time, try to come up with some good responses to any of the Top 10 Insults so you can help out others next time they get teased.
