

emotionally invulnerable

incapable of being hurt, wounded or damaged emotionally

We've all had this experience: Someone says something, we think they're judging us, and we take it personally. Some of us may get angry and somewhat aggressive, while others may seethe in silence, pretending it's not a big deal, but feeling tormented inside. Then we spend hours, sometimes days, ruminating about what was said or what happened, unable to learn from it and move on.

When people disrespect you or do not treat you well, it is easy to take their behavior personally, to blame yourself and think you have anything to do with someone else's behavior. Taking things personally is emotionally draining, and an unnecessary, constant reevaluation of your self-esteem. There's a difference between being reflective and constantly taking slights personally, one is productive and lends itself to self-improvement, the other is the opposite. Not taking things personally gives you more control over how you respond, your emotions and your energy level. Here are a few ways to stop taking things personally:

Stop Worrying About What Other People Think At the end of the day, it really is not anyone's business what people think of you, or anything else. You should worry about what you think of yourself, and what people you know love and care about you think of you, and that's it. Strangers and acquaintances volunteering their opinion of you has nothing to do with you, and everything to do with them. The sooner you do not care what other people think, the more liberated you will feel, and you will have more of a sense of self.

Know Your Worth You're not going to believe what other people think and say about you, when you know who you are, and you like who you are. Having self-confidence, and knowing your self-worth is the foundation on which everything else is built: your achievements, your relationships, your ability to keep going when life and work gets tough. Doing the work to have self-confidence, and self-worth is the best work you will put in. The dividends will show in every aspect of your life, personally and professionally.

Don't Jump To Conclusions According to Psychology Today, when people make a judgement about you, or critiques, they are rarely about you. "In fact, it's almost always about them, their issues, their needs, and their desire to control you and/or a situation," writes Dr. Abigail Brenner. To help manage your response to confrontation, know what you're sensitive about, and what triggers your emotions so you can prepare yourself if someone mentions them.

Let Things Go Frame painful experiences as lessons, on how to be stronger and how to better navigate bad situations. Do not let them make you angry or bitter, use them to make you better and move on. Holding on to pain does more damage to you than to the other person. So learn to let things go, make more room for joy and happiness.

Don't Climb Down When someone disrespects you or is cruel to you, the worst reaction is to reply with more negativity and toxicity. Do not climb down the rabbit hole, and be part of the problem. It may be satisfying in the moment, but it won't be in the long term, and will likely be something you regret. Take the high road, and let it wash off of you.

Be Wise Sometimes, tapping into this higher self takes a bit of work. Dr. Martin Seligman's "3 Ps" approach is an excellent way to do so because it helps you build perspective around the evaluation. If you tend to take things personally, work on the first P, which is "Personal." Ask yourself: "What other factors may have been at play that led to this evaluation?" In her book *Playing Big*, leadership expert Tara Mohr says that feedback tells you a lot more about the person giving the feedback than it says about you. Thus, you may want to ask yourself: "What can I do differently next time that helps me grow and also benefits our relationship?"

Life is lonely in a bubble. We're social animals, wired to learn, grow, and find meaning through our relationships and experiences. When we open up to external evaluations instead of taking them personally, we magnify our chances of living our best lives.



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