

How to Stop Being Teased and Bullied Without Really Trying

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But first, a little story.

Johnny is visiting a new town. In front of a big, magnificent old house, he sees another boy, surrounded by hundreds of pigeons, throwing bread crumbs on the sidewalk. Wanting to start up a conversation, he asks the boy, "What's your name?"

"Billy," says the boy.

"And what are you doing?" Johnny asks Billy.

"I'm making the pigeons go away," Billy answers.

"What do you mean, you're making them go away?" the astounded Johnny asks.

"Yes. I'm making them go away. Every day, day after day, for many generations, these birds have been coming to our house at the same time every morning. They are a terrible nuisance. The noise they make is unbearable and it's almost impossible to walk on the sidewalk. And the slippery, yucky mess they leave all over the place is the worst thing of all."

"So why are you throwing them bread," the impatient Johnny asks.

"My ancestors tried everything, and discovered that the only thing that makes them go away is bread crumbs. As soon as the last crumb is finished, they suddenly can't stand being here. Then they all fly away and we don't see them again for a whole day!"

I hope this story made you laugh, or at least chuckle. That Billy sure was stupid. He thought he was chasing the birds away, but he was really making them come. "So, what," you may be wondering, "does this story have to do with teasing victims?" Lots! Just keep on reading and you'll soon understand.

How to stop being a teasing victim:

The Instructions

Read these lessons carefully. If you are a teasing victim, they will change your life. Just follow the simple advice you'll get here and your days of being a teasing victim will soon be history. I have to warn you, though: ***You must follow the advice exactly, or I can't promise that you will succeed.*** Do it even if you have a hard time believing

that it will work or that it can be so simple. Don't worry, though. Everything I will tell you to do is very, very easy. One week should be enough to know if it's working. You've been doing things your way for years, and you're still being teased. Now I'm asking you to do it my way for only seven days.

You may think it's crazy for me to be telling you that you can stop your teasers quickly and easily. After all, you have been working so hard for years to make the teasing stop, but nobody -- not you, not your parents, and not even your teachers -- have succeeded in stopping people from teasing you. If all your efforts have brought you nothing but frustration, then the solution must be very, very difficult! Right?

Wrong! The solution is **not** difficult. In fact, it's incredibly easy! What **you** have been doing is extremely hard. Way too hard!!! Think of it this way: What are all those kids who **don't** get teased doing to stop their teasers?... Nothing?... That's right! **Nothing!** They are doing **nothing!** Why? Because they're not getting teased! If you're not being teased, how can you be doing anything to stop it?! Only people who are teased can be trying to make it stop. If you are going to become someone who isn't teased, then you have to become someone who isn't doing anything to stop the teasing!

Does this sound confusing? If it does, that's fine. Because I'm going to make you **unconfused**. And unteased.

The instructions are presented in ten easy lessons. As you will see, these instructions require you to do almost nothing. They are all based on **seeing** things differently, and then **not doing** the things you have been used to doing. You will save a lot of energy and get the results you really want. Sound good? Well, it should, because it **is** good!

You don't need to learn all ten lessons to start. But you should read the first five. They are not long, and the benefits will be well worth your time. The first five lessons will give you what you need to make the teasing stop. If you want to read the others now, that's fine. But it's also OK to read them in a week or so, after you have had a chance to see how wonderfully the first five lessons have worked.

Lesson One **KNOW WHY YOU ARE TEASED**

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You probably don't really know why you are teased! You may think you know, but you don't really know. If you knew the real reason you are teased, you wouldn't be a teasing victim! The simple truth is that there is really only one reason that teasing victims are picked on over and over again, and it's always the same reason. And the most important step to making the teasing stop is to understand why you are being teased. When you truly understand the reason, it becomes a snap to follow the next steps.

Why are kids teased?

Sam wears glasses and gets called **four-eyes** all day long. He believes he is being called **four-eyes** because he wears glasses. But Sam is wrong. Maybe he wears glasses, but that's not the reason he gets teased.

Mary gets taunted by kids who yell, "**Your mother's a fat pig!**" She thinks they insult her because her mother's overweight. But Mary is wrong. Sure, her mother may be overweight, but that's not the reason kids taunt her.

Billy gets pushed every day when he's on line in school. He doesn't know why the kids do it to him. The only explanation he can think of is that they hate him. But Billy is wrong. Maybe some kids hate him, but that's not why they push him.

Josh gets called **gay** by his classmates. He likes girls and he doesn't know why they do this to him. Josh believes they do it because he likes art and stays away from sports. But Josh is wrong. He may be artistic and un-athletic, but that's not why they tease him.

Jennifer's friends bring her rumors of other kids calling her **stupid** behind her back. Jennifer does great in school and gets 90's and 100's on all her tests.

Jennifer believes the rumors are spread because other kids are really jealous of her.

But Jennifer is wrong.

The other kids might be jealous of her intelligence, but that's not why they are spreading rumors about her.

There is really only one reason that these kids are being picked on, but none of them can see it. It's also the reason you are being picked on, and you can't see it, either. It has nothing with your looks or personality, or your mother's looks or personality, even though it seems that way to you. You see, there are plenty of fat kids in the world who don't get teased. There are plenty of ugly kids who don't get teased. There are plenty of smart kids who don't get teased. There are plenty of dumb kids who don't get teased. There are plenty of un-athletic kids who don't get teased. **There are plenty of kids just like you and they don't get teased.**

So why you and not them?

Because you are making a simple mistake that every single teasing victim makes, and that mistake is ruining your life!

What mistake are you making? Let's see what happens in your everyday life. Bullies come along and make fun of you. You get mad or upset, and then you take some action to try to make them stop. Maybe you tell them to shut up. Maybe you try to call them names back and make fun of them. Maybe you punch them in the face (and get into lots of trouble). Maybe you threaten that you'll get your big brother to beat them up after school. Maybe you tell the teacher or school principal on them. Maybe you tell your parents. Maybe you try to ignore them, until it gets too bad and then you are forced to do something.

What you see happening is that the kids are making fun of you, and you are trying to make them stop. You see this happening over and over again every day, day after day: they keep making fun of you, and you keep trying to make them stop. And nothing works. No matter how hard you try, the teasing continues.

So why do the kids keep bothering you? They know very well that you don't like it, and that the teachers and parents don't like it, so why do they keep on doing it?!! Why don't they just leave you alone and let everyone be happy?

Get ready for this! The real reason you are being teased is because ***you are getting upset!***

This probably doesn't make any sense to you. After all, first the kids tease you, and then you get upset. You aren't making them tease you, you are only making them stop.

But you ***are*** making them tease you. You just can't see it, because it's an optical illusion, and all teasing victims are fooled by the same optical illusion.

It is very easy to be fooled by this illusion. We're used to thinking that the first thing makes the second thing happen. For instance, imagine that I punch you in the face and then you get a black eye. Then I tell you that your black eye made me punch you. You would say that I'm crazy. And you would be right! First I punched you, and then you got the black eye. I made you have a black eye; your black eye did not make me punch you.

But here I am telling you that getting upset by the teasing made you get teased! Isn't that also crazy? The teasing happened first; you got upset second. You didn't cause the teasing. You are only trying to stop it!

But it's ***not*** crazy. Keep reading and you'll see how it works.

When kids call you names and you get mad, how do they feel? Do they feel bad for what they did? They sure don't! If they felt bad about teasing you, they wouldn't do it! When they tease you and you get mad, they love it! They feel great! They can't get enough of it! You are the one who feels lousy, not them. And the angrier you become, the more fun they have. Whatever you try to do to stop them only makes them feel better. They're thinking inside, "Ha, ha, go ahead and try to stop me. You can't do it no matter how hard you try!" Even if you try to hide your feelings, chances are they can tell by the look on your face that you are upset, and this makes them feel good.

You see, they are not calling you fatso because you are fat, or four-eyes because you wear glasses. They really couldn't care less about

how you look! They are not reporters who are being paid to constantly bring you the news that you are ugly or stupid or have a mom who's fat. All they really care about is having fun. We all like to have fun, and one great way to have fun is to try to drive someone else crazy.

Your tormentors have discovered that they can tease you and drive you nuts. They especially look for your weak spots, the things about you that you really feel bad about and don't want anyone noticing or mentioning. These things that you are most sensitive to usually have some truth to them. For instance, it bothers you that you are overweight, and the kids discover you can't stand it when they call you fatso. Or you're upset about having to wear glasses, and they discover that it really hurts you when they call you four-eyes. Or you are tremendously embarrassed that your mother is overweight, and they discover you go totally bonkers when they say your mother is fat.

But it really doesn't matter if the things they say are true or not. All that matters is if it bothers you. If you are beautiful and you get mad when they call you ugly, they will keep calling you ugly. If you are thin and you get upset when they call you fatso, they will keep calling you fatso. Whatever succeeds in upsetting you is exactly what they are going to do again. The only thing that matters to them about you is that you give them pleasure when you get mad. And it goes on and on, day after day after day, year after year, like a train going endlessly around a track. The kids tease you, you get mad, and they have fun. They tease you, you get mad, and they have fun.

The anger that you feel when you are teased is like the bread crumbs that Billy feeds to the pigeons. You are throwing your bullies gifts of anger, and you think your anger is going to make them leave you alone. But your anger is exactly what the bullies are looking for! That's why they keep coming back to you! You make them so happy when you get angry!

Yes, believe it or not, you have been rewarding the bullies for making fun of you! Think of it this way: If your parents are going to pay you to watch television, aren't you going to watch a lot of television? Of course you would! And bullies are just the same. You are giving them so much fun in return for tormenting you. Of course they are going to do it as much as possible!!!

Lesson Two **CHANGE YOUR ATTITUDE**

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It may have come as a bit of a shock to you to discover that you were actually encouraging your bullies to continue making fun of you. Please don't feel bad about this. What has been happening to you is really not your fault. You had no way of knowing what was really going on. And the truth is that the same thing goes on in any relationship where people are constantly driving each other crazy. Whether its parents and children, husbands and wives, or brothers and sisters who are always fighting with each other, they are always making the same mistake. They don't realize that by getting mad, they are pushing the other person to do the very thing that they can't stand. So don't blame yourself. It's not your fault.

Anyway, I would not have risked making you feel bad if I did not also know how to make you feel much, much better. You will feel much better once you use the secret to stopping your teasers.

Lesson Two is the secret, simple method to making the teasing stop. All it takes is a change of attitude. What I mean is that you only have to change the way you think about the teasing. Everything else will automatically follow after you correct your attitude.

Until now, your attitude has been, "Oh, no! They're making fun of me! I have to make them stop!" But this is the wrong attitude. This attitude is what has caused the problem to exist in the first place. The only reason you have been getting teased is that you were hurt by the teasing and thought you have to make it stop. From now on --and you only have to do it for one week to see if it works -- your new attitude will be, "If they want to tease me, it's perfectly OK. They can do it all day long and it doesn't bother me in the least."

You are to do absolutely nothing to make your tormentors stop teasing you. Do not tell them to stop. Do not call them names back. Do not tell the teacher on them. Do not tell your parents or their parents.

Do not even be angry at them! "Not even be angry?" you may be thinking. "Why shouldn't I be angry when they call me names?"

The reason you shouldn't be angry is because it's a lousy feeling to be angry, and it will make your tormentors feel good. Also, since your

new attitude is that it's perfectly all right for them to tease you, why in the world should you be mad at them for doing it?

It's not necessary to act like you're made of stone. If your teasers put their face right in front of yours and say, "What's the matter, don't you hear me?" it's all right to answer, "Yes, of course I hear you!" If you feel like you should be saying more to them, it's all right, as long as you are giving them permission to insult you and you're not getting mad at them. Here are some examples: "If you want to call me names, that's OK"; or, "If you enjoy making fun of me, you can do it all day long." This will stop them very quickly. Just make sure to say it without any anger at all. And you must really mean it when you say it.

So you are now to let them tease you all they want. This doesn't mean that you will be a loser. Just the opposite: it will make you the winner. If they call you names and you don't care, who is going to look stupid, you or them? They are going to look stupid, that's who. And who is going to feel stupid, you or them? They are going to feel stupid, too. A person who is calling out nasty names to someone who doesn't give a darn looks pretty dumb. And the worse the words are, the dumber he looks. So let them tease away all they want, and don't feel upset in the least because now you are going to be the winner, and you are going to make them look like idiots without even trying.

How about if they insult your mother? Should you do anything about that? How can you not defend your mother's honor?

Even if they insult your mother, or your grandmother, or anybody else important to you, let them do it! You have nothing to worry about. If I say to you in front of a bunch of people, "Your mother is a pig and sleeps in the mud," is anyone going to believe me? Of course not. If I insult your mother and you don't say anything, are people around us going to think there is something wrong with you, or that there's something wrong with me? Obviously, they'll think there's something wrong with me. If you start defending your mother against these stupid insults, you will look stupid. If you don't do anything, then I will look stupid. Therefore, even if they insult your mother, it's perfectly OK. When your teasers see that nothing they can say bothers you, they will stop trying.

How about if what they are saying is true? Should you do anything then? What if your mother is a drug addict. Should you do anything about it when kids yell, "Your mother is a crackhead!"?

No, you shouldn't. If you try to stop them, it will only make them do it more. Remember, the real reason they are teasing you is not that they have to tell you the truth about yourself. The only reason they do it is because it's fun to upset you. Even if your mother really is a drug addict, the people who yell it out will still feel stupid if you let them do it. In fact, they will probably end up feeling guilty for having made fun of your mother. So let them say whatever they want, even if it's true. If you don't let it bother you, it will bother them.

There is another way I want you to think about what your teasers have been doing to you.

Do you like to play games? You probably do. That's because everyone likes to play games. It's fun. And when you play, do you try to win, or do you try to lose? Unless you are trying to make a little kid feel good, you probably always try to win. Winning feels good, and losing feels lousy. And that's the way it has to be. Mother Nature made us that way.

Now, it's easy to know when someone is playing a game with you when you have cards in your hands, or when you are moving chess or checker pieces, or are working the controls of Nintendo or Sega or Playstation. And it's easy to know who wins and who loses when you are playing these games.

But very often, people are playing games and they don't even know it! If you don't realize someone's playing a game with you, you have no chance of winning!

One of the games kids like to play with unsuspecting victims is name-calling. They call you names, and you have to make them stop. The thing is, you don't really know it's a game, because nobody said, "Hey, anybody in the mood for a game of name-calling?" They just start playing it with you, and you fall into the trap of participating. You think it's for real, that they really despise you and want to hurt you, and you believe you have to do something about it.

The truth is that they don't really hate you and they don't really want to hurt you, (unless you really hate them and are trying to hurt them). What they really want to do is have fun playing and winning. As soon as you get mad, you lose and they win. The more upset you get, and the harder you try to stop them, the more you look like a fool. Unless you are mean enough and strong enough and clever enough to beat

them all up without getting caught and punished, getting mad will never make you win.

When you play a game, you want to win. Without realizing it, you have been playing a game and losing all these years. Now you are going to win, because you know what the game is, and you can't be trapped any more. If you get mad, you lose. If you don't get mad, you win. That' all there is to it! It's that simple! That's all this teasing problem has really been about! Now you finally know how to win, and it is going to be the easiest thing in the world!

Lesson Three

THREE WARNINGS

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You want to succeed. By being aware of the following three warnings, you will avoid falling into traps that will make the teasing continue.

Warning Number One: The Teasing Will Get Worse Before It Gets Better

Of course it would be wonderful if all you had to do was read this webpage and you will never be teased again. Well, it actually is almost that simple, but it's not quite. The teasing will stop if you follow the instructions here, but you must be prepared that it will get worse before it gets better. But it should only get worse for a couple of days. So when you see it getting worse, don't think, "Oh, no, this isn't working! It's only getting worse! I have to make it stop!" It is working. It's just that the teasing gets worse before it gets better.

Why will it get worse before it gets better? Because your teasers have been upsetting you for a long time, and they love it. They have so much fun to insult you and get you mad, and they certainly don't want the fun to stop. Plus, you have been letting them know all along that the teasing has to bother you. They will need a little time to realize that you have changed.

Now, when you go out with your new attitude and your tormentors start making fun of you, they are going to see that you aren't doing anything. They are going to think there is something wrong with you. Perhaps you have gone blind and don't see them. Perhaps you have gone deaf and can't hear them. Perhaps you are distracted by other thoughts. Perhaps you have gone crazy and like to be teased. In any case, they are going to be very confused. They won't understand what in the world happened to you. But they really want you to get upset, and they are sure that teasing has to get you upset, so they are going to try even harder. They figure if the teasing gets really bad, you are going to end up doing something. So they are going to insult you louder, they will say worse insults, and maybe they'll get a bunch of friends together to insult you at the same time.

But it won't work for them. After a while, they will get tired of feeling stupid and will stop. A little bit later, they will try again, hoping you went back to your normal old self and will get mad. Again, it won't work. The next day, they will try again, but again they will only end up feeling foolish. By the third day, they probably won't even try, or if they do try, they won't try very hard and will give up quickly. You see, they want to make you the loser and the fool. They don't want themselves to be the losers and the fools, so they will give up bothering you as soon as they realize that they can't win.

Warning Number Two: You Must Follow These Instructions 100% of the Time

The only way you are going to succeed in stopping your tormentors from bothering you is by following these instructions 100% of the time. If you do it 90% of the time, it won't work. If the people teasing you see that most of the time you don't do anything, but sometimes you do, they will know that the teasing really does bother you, they just have to try harder and more often. So the teasing won't stop. It may even get worse. Only when they see that they can never, ever get you upset by teasing will they stop trying altogether.

Warning Number Three: The Teasing Won't Stop 100%

It is important to know that by following these instructions, your situation will improve dramatically. It may get 90%, 95%, or even 99% better, but it won't get 100% better. No matter how well you follow this plan, you can't expect never, ever to get teased again in your life. Everyone gets teased once in a while. Even dead people sometimes get made fun of. Even the President of the United States gets teased once in a while. In fact, the President gets made fun of more than anyone else in the whole country! More jokes are made about him than about anyone! (You may want to read the page on this website, [An Open Letter to Our President](#)). Can you imagine what would happen if President Clinton's feelings got hurt every time he was made fun of? He would be an emotional wreck! He would never have been able to become President. In fact, he would not even have become Governor of Arkansas. The more famous and powerful a person is, the more people enjoy making jokes about him! So if we want to go far in life, we can't care about people making fun of us. Think of it this way: If the President of the United States can take a joke about himself, shouldn't we?

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Therefore, if you find yourself getting teased once in a while even though you are no longer getting upset by it, don't think, "Oh, no! I'm still getting teased! This plan isn't working! I have to make them stop!" It is working. But everyone gets made fun of once in a while, and there's nothing in the world we can do to change that. The difference is that it will happen much, much less often than it used to, and it won't be done by the same individual more than once or twice. Most important of all, it won't bother you. And if the teasing doesn't bother you, then what is the problem?!

Lesson Four
HOW TO HANDLE RUMORS

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If you are a teasing victim, chances are that you are also a victim of rumors. Kids can torment you not only by saying insults to your face. They can also do it by saying bad things about you behind your back, then other kids come and tell you what's being said about you. The following conversation between Rob and Cindy is a typical example of how it happens:

Rob: I heard your mother sleeps in a dumpster.

Cindy: That's not true!

Rob: But that's what everyone is saying.

Cindy: They're all big liars! Tell me who is saying it!

Rob: Everyone is.

Cindy: I want to know who started it! Tell me who started it!

Rob: I don't know who started it. But everyone knows it's true.

Cindy: It is not true! And you better stop saying it!

Rob: I'm not saying your mother sleeps in a dumpster. But everyone else is.

Cindy: Oh, I'm going to kill the person who started this rumor!

Rob: But it's true, isn't it?

Cindy: It is not true! You better not believe it! It's a big fat lie!

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Rob: But I think it is true. Everyone is saying it, so it must be true.

Cindy: It is not true!

And so on, and so on. This conversation can go on for a long time. Now, what is really happening here? Cindy is told a mean rumor by Rob. Then she starts defending herself and her Mom from the rumor, and tries to make the rumor stop. But is she succeeding in convincing Rob that it is not true, and is she making him stop repeating this rumor?

No, she is not succeeding at all. Rob continues repeating it, and enjoys getting Cindy upset. And the thing is that Rob doesn't really believe the rumor. Of course Cindy's mother doesn't sleep in a dumpster. But Rob sure is having fun getting Cindy upset with this rumor. Cindy thinks that she has to defend her family from this lie. But as soon as she defends herself, she is automatically the loser. Why? Think of a court scene. Who is in the stronger position, the accuser or the defendant? The accuser, of course! It is very uncomfortable to have to defend yourself in a court of law. The accuser is on the top, and the defendant is on the bottom.

When someone brings you a rumor, what he is really doing is playing a game with you. The game is to try to make you defend yourself from stupid rumors. It's very easy to fall into this trap. Your instinct tells you that you are being threatened and must defend yourself in order to win. But as soon as you defend yourself, you automatically lose, because you put yourself in a weaker position than your accuser! And the harder you try to make the rumor stop, the more you look and feel like a loser.

So what should you do if someone brings you a rumor? Don't be duped into the trap of defending yourself. Win the game by turning the tables on the rumor-bringer. Make him defend himself. How? By using the following four-word question: "DO YOU BELIEVE IT?" It works like this:

Rob: I heard your mother sleeps in a dumpster.

Cindy: Do you believe it?

Rob: No.

Cindy: Good.

And that's the end of that. Rob has nothing more to say about the rumor.

But what if Rob answers "yes," that he does believe it? Then it goes like this:

Rob: I heard your mother sleeps in a dumpster.

Cindy: Do you believe it?

Rob: Yes.

Cindy: You can believe it If you like.

Again, Rob gets stuck, with nothing smart to say. If he keeps asking if it's true, just keep telling him he can believe it if he wants to. You see, Rob wants to make you the defendant, because that puts you in the lower position and he wins. So refuse to defend yourself. Make him defend himself. By asking him if he believes it, you are really asking, "Are you really that gullible?" And if he is dumb enough to say that he believes it, well, that makes him stupid, which should be just fine with you.

What if the rumor is something that is true? What should you do then?

The answer is that it makes no difference. It's just like with name-calling. The real reason they call you names has nothing to do with the truth. It only has to do with making you the loser. Whatever gets you upset, that's what they will say. So if you want the rumors to stop, whether the rumors are true or not, just ask the person bringing you the rumor, "Do you believe it." And be sure to say it as calmly as possible. Do not get angry or upset about the rumor, or others will be more likely to believe it is true. And don't try to find out who started the rumor. You must let everyone see that you truly don't care about the rumors, and if they enjoy spreading rumors about you, it's perfectly OK with you.

There is one possible exception. When people who truly care about you ask about a rumor, and you really want them to know the truth, then tell them. But don't get into a long discussion. Tell them one time only. If they say they don't believe you, do not defend yourself! Just say, "You can believe it if you wish." It goes like this:

Rob: I heard your parents are getting divorced.

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Cindy: No, they're not.

Rob: But that's what everyone is saying. Is it true?.

Cindy: Do you believe it?

Rob: Yes.

Cindy: Well, you can believe it if you wish.

Rob: But is it true?

Cindy: I already told you. If you want to believe it, that's your choice.

Lesson Five

HOW TO HANDLE PHYSICAL BULLYING

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WARNING: I want it to be clear that what I tell you about physical bullying applies only when the bullies are kids who are more or less emotionally stable. Even though they are a small minority, there are kids who are extremely disturbed and dangerous. If they are bullying you, you should either avoid them or make sure you have people to protect you when you are near them.

Teasing does not have to be limited to words. Often, kids may try to get you upset by pushing you or hitting you. What should you do then?

It all depends on how much it hurts you. Usually, kids do not really mean to injure you. They're just playing another game with you. They want to annoy you and hopefully get you in trouble. For instance, you are standing on line in school and the kid behind you gives you a shove. Then you turn around, push him back really hard, and yell, "Stop pushing me!" Nobody saw the kid pushing you, but everyone, including the teacher, saw and heard you, and now you are the one in trouble. So the kid who pushed you scores a real big victory.

The best thing to do, if you didn't get hurt, is just to make believe you didn't notice. The kid who pushed you does not want to get in trouble, he only want to get you in trouble, so he has to avoid being seen pushing you. Therefore, he probably will not risk pushing you again, or maybe he'll just push you very lightly. If he does, then you should again make believe you didn't notice. And don't tell on him, because then he'll know it bothered you. He'll also be mad at you for telling on him, so he'll try to get back at you later. But if you don't do anything back, then he won't have the pleasure of annoying you, and he also won't have any reason to be mad at you.

What if the kid really hurt you? Should you ignore that, too?

No! No one has a right to hurt you. But it's important to realize that serious fights don't just happen from out of nowhere. Strangers don't just come up to you and hit you in the face with all their might. Almost every physical fight starts with a word fight. Kids call you names, tempers flare up, you start threatening each other, and before you

know it, fists are flying. However, if you follow the advice that I've given you till now, then words will never make you mad, and physical fights just won't develop.

But what if someone does really hurt you? Unless your life is in danger, don't hit back. If you hit back, then you might get into trouble along with the kid who hit you. Also, he may hit you back even harder, and the fight will get worse and worse.

What, then, should you do? If you weren't injured so badly that you need first-aid from a nurse or doctor, calmly let the kid know how hurt you are. Don't sound mad, because that will only make him madder at you. Chances are that he'll even apologize at this point. If he continues hitting you then it's OK to go ahead and tell a teacher or other adult authority.

If the hit was so serious that you needed medical help, that's the time you must let the authorities know. Remember, no one has a right to hurt you, and if they do, they need to be disciplined so they won't do it again. But if it doesn't really hurt, then why should you make a big deal over it? You will look like a baby and lose the respect of your friends if you go around telling on kids who didn't even hurt you.

There is another common type of physical bullying. Kids will demand that you give them your possessions, or they forcefully take your things from you . What should you do about this?

If they ask you for things, like money or your lunch, ignore them. Make believe that you don't hear them. When you do this, don't look scared. Even if they are bigger than you, they are still not allowed to hurt you, and they will probably leave you alone after a while.

If they continue to pester you, say calmly, "I'd love to give you what you want, but I can't." Don't explain why, and don't get into a debate about why you can't give it to them. If necessary, repeat something like, "I'd really like to help you, but I can't." By starting out saying that you would like to make them happy, they can't claim that you are against them.

At this point, they will probably leave you alone. But they might not. They may take something by force. What do you do then?

It's important to realize that when bullies take something away from you, they are usually not doing it because they really want to keep it.

They are only playing a game with you and trying to get you upset. That's why the worst thing to do is to get mad. It's also a bad idea to try to grab it back. The best thing usually is to be calm. Say something like, "I really need my xxx back." Chances are that if you wait patiently, they will give it back to you, and the calmer you are, the quicker it'll happen. You also have another choice, but I don't recommend this unless you really can pull it off smoothly. If the thing they took is not fragile, like a baseball cap, you can turn it into a game of Monkey in the Middle. You try to get it back while they throw it back and forth to each other. If you are going to do this, it has to be clear to everyone that you are having fun, that you aren't mad, and that you are being a good sport. The bullies just might end up being your friends when you do this.

However, if other kids take your hat and don't return it even though you are being calm, you should not allow them to get away it because this is stealing, and stealing is crime. Calmly say something like, "I really do need my hat back." If they don't return it by the time you need it, you can say, "I would like my hat back, and I really don't want to get anyone in trouble." If they don't get the message and return the hat, then you can report it to the appropriate adults. If the object was taken by schoolmates, tell the school. If it was done by neighborhood kids, tell your parents and the parents of the kids who stole your stuff.

Under no circumstances should you give your bullies money or lunch or things like that. They will take you for a sucker, and keep coming back with more demands. If they are seriously threatening you, tell your parents, teachers, or principals. If nothing helps, you can always go to the police. Stealing and extortion are serious crimes, and society should protect you from this when necessary.

Lesson Six **GETTING REVENGE**

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You have been suffering day after day for years because of the cruelty of other kids. The more you have felt hurt, the more you have wanted revenge. You certainly have spent a lot of time imagining ways to pay them back for all the pain they have caused you. You have probably dreamed of bombing them, of shooting them, of slowly roasting them over a bonfire, or at least of making them look like the biggest fools in history. Without a doubt, you would like to make them regret they ever thought of picking on you, and be so scared that they will never, ever be disrespectful to you again.

While I've been bringing you a lot of good news till now, I'm afraid what I'm going to tell you next won't make you jump for joy -- though you will soon realize that it really is for the best.

Getting revenge means that you have to give your teasers back all the pain they have caused you all these years. Try to add up all the pain you have had -- the thousands of days of being depressed, of keeping hurt and anger bottled up inside of you, of thinking there was something wrong with you, of not having friends, of not being able to concentrate on your school work, of getting in trouble for trying to force them to stop -- and you will realize that you would have to do something awfully terrible to truly get your revenge. Giving them back all this pain at once would either kill them or send them to the hospital for the rest of their lives.

You may believe that this is exactly what they deserve. And maybe they do. But how would you feel if your wish for revenge really came true? How do you think you would feel for the rest of your life knowing that you were a murderer, or ruined someone's life forever. The truth is that there have actually been a few kids in the past few years who got revenge by shooting up kids in their schools, and you probably have heard about them. The most famous ones were Eric Harris and Dylan Klebald, the kids who committed the massacre at Columbine High School. Do you think any of them are happy now after getting revenge? Eric and Dylan killed themselves, because they knew that their lives would have been worse than hell if they had stayed alive after getting revenge. They also completely ruined the lives of

their own family members. Some of the other kids who murdered also killed themselves after killing their victims. The rest are all in jail, and possibly wishing they were dead.

Do you want this to happen to you? Of course not! If you actually succeeded in getting true revenge, your life would be worse than it is now.

So how can you get revenge in a way that doesn't make your life worse?

There are four things you should understand.

Number One: You have to accept the fact that, without becoming a criminal, you will probably never be able to give back all the pain that your teasers gave you. So you might as well relax and save yourself the time and energy that it takes to dream of this revenge.

Number Two: Every minute you spend thinking about revenge is a minute that your teasers are continuing to defeat you! Instead of living your life for yourself, you are wasting your life thinking about them! They probably don't waste much time thinking about you. If you are thinking about them more than they are thinking about you, this means that they are winning. They are continuing to control your thoughts without even lifting a finger! You are doing the work for them!

Number Three: Accept that your teasers are not completely to blame for what they have done to you. Of course, you are very angry at them and want to see them punished for the terrible injustices they have committed against you. As far as you have been able to tell until now, you have been nothing but an innocent victim of cruel kids, and they deserve to pay for their cruelty. And its true -- you have been an innocent victim because you did not want your teasers to be treating you the way they have.

However, that doesn't mean that it is all their fault, either. As you learned in the beginning of these instructions, when you were getting mad at the bullies and trying to stop them, you were actually making them continue, just like Billy was making the pigeons come by throwing them bread crumbs. They were really just playing a game with you, but you couldn't see it, and you couldn't see that anything you did to win would automatically make you lose. By getting mad,

you were forcing them to win. And since the normal thing is to want to win, they had to continue trying to get you mad.

Of course, you couldn't understand this at the time. But now you do. Can you really expect them to receive a horrible, horrible punishment when you were practically begging them to torment you? It's really not fair to them. It's like throwing bread crumbs to pigeons and then shooting them for the crime of eating the crumbs.

Number Four: This is the most important thing. The best way to get revenge is to turn your tormentors from winners into losers. From this moment on, they will feel like fools whenever they try to bother you! They will be shocked and disappointed to find that they can no longer beat you! Of course, this may not be as gratifying to you as seeing them carried off in an ambulance, but it is a much healthier solution for both you and your tormentors. You will also have the satisfaction of feeling that they respect you more than ever before. You may even discover that kids who once used to make fun of you all the time are now trying to become your friends! Ending the teasing and changing your life for the better is really the best revenge of all.

To help you with this step, it might be a good idea to repeat the following summary to yourself every once in a while, till it becomes a part of you.

I didn't realize it all these years, but I've been allowing myself to be made a fool. It wasn't my fault, because I couldn't see how it was happening. I'm smarter now, and they can no longer defeat me. My best revenge is for everyone to see that I've gone from being a loser to being a winner, and that I've grown up to be a mature, self-respecting person instead of a over-sensitive kid who used to get upset over nonsense.

Lesson Seven

HOW TO STOP PEOPLE FROM HATING YOU

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For years, kids have been making fun of you, and you have been sure that they hate you. Otherwise, why would they be treating you like dirt? As you know very well, it's horrible to feel hated. So how can you make other kids stop hating you?

Actually, it is an incredibly easy thing to do. You just have to understand how hatred works.

Who do people hate? Do we hate people who are nice to us and make us feel good? Do we hate people who love us? Of course not! When people love us, we love them back. It is our enemies that we hate, the people who are purposely causing us harm. If someone makes us suffer and enjoys doing it, that is a person we can hate.

Now think about the kids who have been teasing and bullying you. It definitely looks like they hate you. And how do you feel about them? You hate them, too. Why shouldn't you hate them? After all, they have been causing you to suffer and have been enjoying it! They are obviously your enemies and deserve your hatred.

Now, ask yourself this question: Who hates more, you or the bullies who pick on you? To answer this, you have to understand who is suffering more. Are you causing the bullies more pain, or are they causing you more pain?

Of course, you are the one who is suffering more! The bullies aren't suffering. They're having a roaring good time at your expense! They love it when you get upset. They aren't feeling pain, you are! You are suffering much more than they are. This also means that you probably hate them much more than they hate you! And you have good reason to hate them more, because they are hurting you much more than you are hurting them.

But what happens when you hate them? Does it make them love you? Of course not! You don't love people who hate you, and neither do your enemies. So how could you expect them to love you when you hate them so much?! As long as you hate them, they are going to hate

you! You haven't thought of it like this before, because you have been too busy thinking about how much they make you hate them. You couldn't possibly have been thinking that you are making them hate you back!

There is another reason they may hate you. Have you been telling on them to teachers or principals? Have you been trying to get them in trouble for bothering you? If you have, do you think that this is going to make the bullies like you? Do you like it when others tell on you? Of course you don't! It makes you mad!

And the bullies are no different. When you tell on them, it makes them mad! It makes them hate you! If you try to get them in trouble, they will try to get you in trouble. And it's going to be like a tennis match that never ends: you try to get them in trouble, then they try to get you in trouble, then you try to get them in trouble, then they try to get you in trouble... And you are going to hate each other forever.

It's simple to make this tennis game stop. Now think of it this way: Can you hate someone who really doesn't hate you?

No! You may be able to hate him for a short while, but when you see that the person really, honestly doesn't hate you and doesn't do anything to hurt you, how in the world are you going to continue hating him? There's nothing to hate him for! It will be impossible for you to continue the hating!

But everyone else is like you, too. They can't go on hating people who honestly don't hate them. And this is the secret formula you are going to use to make everyone stop hating you. From now on, you are going to stop hating them, no matter how mean they have been to you in the past. Do not try to stop your enemies from hating you. Let them hate you if they wish! But they will find it impossible to hate you for long when they feel you have no hatred towards them. When you no longer get mad at them for teasing you, when you no longer try to make them shut up, and when you no longer tell on them, they are going to see that you really aren't their enemy. This is not going to make them hate you more. It's going to make them like you more. It's going to make them respect you more. And when you are no longer hating and telling on the bullies, it's going to make your teachers like and respect you more, too. You are going to be the big winner, and you won't even have to do anything!

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There's another thing you should understand about the kids who tease you. Since they are making fun of you, it seems like they hate you for being different, and that if you were just like them, then they would love you. But it only seems that way. The truth is that they are happy that you are different. That's because, deep down, everyone wants to be special. In order to be special, you have to be different from other people. If you were just like your teasers, that wouldn't please them! You would be preventing them from feeling special!

Part of us wants to be the same as everyone else so that we won't stick out and be made fun of. But another part of us wants to be different from everyone, so that we can feel special. If people were all the same, life would be no fun. Even more importantly, the world couldn't function if everyone were the same. You need people with different abilities and characteristics to do all the different jobs that are required to keep our world running. So feel different, and feel special. Love others for being different from you, and they will love you for being different from them. By the way, did you ever hear the expression, opposites attract? Well, there's a lot of truth to that. In fact, the kids who tease you may be paying attention to you because they are attracted by your being so different from them. It's just that they try to make themselves feel good by making you feel bad. So don't fall into the trap of getting upset, and they won't continue to bother you. Maybe they'll end up being your friends because they find your differences so interesting!

Lesson Eight

HAVE A SENSE OF HUMOR

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This may sound like a strange instruction. What does this mean, have a sense of humor? You may be thinking, "Of course I have a sense of humor!" And you may also be thinking, "What does this have to do with being a teasing victim?"

In a way, this is the most important lesson of all, and when you truly understand it and use it, your life will improve incredibly.

What does a sense of humor have to do with teasing victims? Everything! The reason kids become teasing victims is that, when it comes to themselves, they have no sense of humor!

Do you like to laugh? Do you like jokes and humor and comedy? Of course you do! You probably watch hours of comedy on television every day. You probably like to hear jokes and tell jokes. You probably like to read funny books.

You may also have heard the expression, Laughter is the Best Medicine. And it's true. Laughter makes sick people get better, and it helps people survive the harshest ordeals in life. Without laughter, life would be way too serious and we would all be miserable.

Now I want you to consider what we laugh about. Do we laugh when people look smart? Do we laugh when they are brave or wise? Do we laugh when they are generous or strong? Do we laugh when good things happen to them?

No! We only laugh when they look like idiots! We only laugh when they look clumsy or miserable! You may not have been aware of this till now, but start paying attention to what people laugh at. Start paying attention to the jokes and comedy routines that make you laugh. Try to think of a joke that doesn't put anyone down. You won't be able to do it. You will quickly realize that when you laugh, someone is being made fun of.

Well, that's what a sense of humor is all about. It is about enjoying people looking like idiots. And it's not a bad thing -- it's a good thing! That's why laughing feels so good and helps us heal.

Do you agree now that it's a great thing to be able to laugh at other people? Then let me ask you this. If it's OK for you to laugh at other people, who are other people going to laugh at? Shouldn't it also be OK for them to laugh at you? Of course it is! The only way to have a world in which we can enjoy laughing at others is if they are also allowed to laugh at us when we look like fools! And all of us look like fools sometimes. No one is perfect!. We all have things that others can laugh about!

Think about it this way. What is a healthy person? Is it someone who takes himself so seriously that he goes crazy whenever someone laughs at him? Or is a healthy person someone who knows he's not perfect, can take a joke about himself, and can make a joke about himself?

Of course, the healthy person is the second one, the one who can laugh about himself. When you were being a teasing victim, you had no sense of humor about yourself. You were not being healthy. You were letting yourself suffer instead of laughing and having a good time. You were acting as though everyone had to make believe you were perfect. And that's why it was so easy for people to upset you. All they had to do was point out your imperfections, and you went nuts. And when you went nuts, that's when you really looked like a fool.

Are you thinking that it's hard to have a sense of humor about yourself, and that you can't develop one? Well, it's really not hard at all. The truth is, it's right inside of you. Laughter and humor are basic human traits. People all over the world laugh and tell jokes, and they've been doing it for hundreds of thousands of years. It's programmed right into our genes. That's why kids start laughing when they are babies. Think about yourself. Did your parents or teachers have to teach you what's funny and when to laugh? No! You knew it all by yourself, because Mother Nature makes us that way.

Little children start calling each other bad names when they are only a couple of years old. And they enjoy it! It isn't hurting their feelings. They insult each other and they love it. And that's the way it should stay forever. The right thing is for people to be able to make fun of each other and of themselves. Pay attention to the comedies on television. You will see that the characters are always making fun of

each other, and they don't get mad about it. Life becomes a lot more enjoyable when we laugh at each other. Chances are that if you have a real good friend, you make fun of each other sometimes and you don't get upset about it.

Well, if it's so natural for us to laugh at each other, why do we stop doing it? It's because of our education. Our parents and our teachers let us know that teasing is bad and punish us for doing it. Let's say you are little kid and you're playing around with your little sister, and you call each other bad names. When your parents hear this, they get mad at you. They tell you that you are not allowed to say such words to each other because they hurt people's feelings. So what do you think is going to happen next time you call your sister an idiot? Do you think she's going to laugh about it? Of course not! She is going to run to your parents to tell them that you hurt her feelings, and they are going to yell at you and punish you. This is going to make your sister feel great, and every time you call her a name, she is going to take the opportunity to tell on you again and get you in trouble. Is this going to make you love your sister? You bet it won't! It's going to make you hate her. And you are not going to let yourself be a sucker. You are going to start telling on your sister every time she calls you a name.

And there goes your sense of humor down the drain -- instead of laughing whenever you and your sister call each other names, you let yourselves get upset and try to get each other in trouble.

But it doesn't end at home. Next thing you know, you go into the outside world, and meet with friends or cousins. When they call you names, you continue to believe that your feelings should be hurt. Instead of laughing, you get upset and tell their parents. Since most other adults also believe that kids should not be insulting each other, it is not hard to get them to yell at their kids for making fun of you. But your friends and cousins are going to be doing the same thing, trying to get you in trouble for bothering them.

When you go to school, you find that your teachers give you the same message. Kids who call names get yelled at and punished, so teasing must be a terrible thing!

All these adults actually believe that they are helping kids get along and preventing their feelings from being hurt. But without realizing it, they are teaching kids to be hurt by stupid words, which ruins their friendships and destroys their natural sense of humor. It's not your

fault that you ended up a teasing victim. You were just following what you were taught and believing that words should hurt. But it's never too late to change things. You can demand to have your sense of humor back. Refuse to get angry when you are called names. When you realize that your feeling shouldn't be hurt, not only will you stop getting upset by names, you will also discover that its often funny!

I can suggest a simple way for you to practice developing your sense of humor. Get together with a friend, or with a brother or sister, and play this game. In this game, you are to take turns insulting each other, but no one is allowed to get upset no matter what the insult is. Whoever gets mad gets a point. The person with the most points at the end is the loser. Make sure that everyone playing it understands the rules very well so that they don't get upset for nothing. If adults are nearby, make sure to let them know exactly what's going on, and that your feeling aren't really being hurt. You will discover that this game is one of the most fun things you can possibly do. You will be making real, honest-to-goodness humor, and you will all laugh your heads off!

This game will return your natural sense of humor to you. You will no longer be hurt by names, and you will also have learned that deep down, everyone enjoys being made fun of. But you have to be careful with this. You can't just go around making fun of everyone all the time. You have to be sure that you don't really hurt people's feelings, so take care only to make fun of people when you know they can take it as a joke. If you want to make people laugh, the safest way is to make jokes about yourself. Don't worry, it won't make them lose respect for you. They will love you for making them laugh. They will admire you for having the strength to laugh at yourself. And when they see you are able to laugh at yourself, it will be easier for them to laugh at themselves, too. Before you know it, you'll be able to laugh at each other.

Another wonderful thing will happen when you learn to laugh at yourself. You will become free of the need to show that you are perfect. It is very, very hard to always be perfect. It takes a lot of work, and no matter how hard you try, it's impossible to succeed. Whenever you make a mistake, you will feel bad, and others will be happy.

People who go around trying to be perfect are making a big mistake. They think that people will like them better and respect them more if they are perfect. But nothing can be farther from the truth. It is no fun

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being with someone who has to be perfect. If you are too perfect, people around you will feel that they are not good enough, or else they will think you are a snob. Either way, you will be making them feel bad, and nobody likes someone who makes them feel bad. People will actually like you a lot better when you aren't perfect. They will be able to relax and not feel like they have to be in some kind of contest. Show others that you aren't perfect, that you can make jokes about yourself and take jokes about yourself, and they will respect you and like you! And if you can master the art of making fun of others in a way that doesn't hurt their feelings, then you will really be in Paradise!

Lesson Nine

LOSE YOUR FEAR

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Do other people make you feel scared? If they are bigger or stronger or meaner than you are, then it's perfectly natural to be afraid. However, what's natural isn't always what's best. If you are afraid of others, they will feel more powerful than you. They will enjoy this feeling and continue doing to you whatever keeps you feeling scared. Your fear will push you down to the bottom of the social ladder. People won't respect you very much, you won't have many friends, you will feel miserable, and you will look like a loser.

If you want to be happy and successful, it's important to stop being afraid of people. Only then can you really be a winner. This might not sound to you like an easy thing to do. But it really is. I'm going to teach you to use your brain to help you stop being afraid. Like all of my other instructions to you, it will require no effort, only a change of attitude.

Do you know why we get scared of people? It's because Mother Nature made us that way, and she knew what she was doing. The problem is that we were designed to survive out in nature, where our ancestors lived since the beginnings of life on the planet. Now we live in civilization, where the rules of living have drastically changed. What helps us in nature can end up hurting us in civilization.

Out in nature, life is very dangerous. There are no rules against violence, and no one goes to jail for hurting or killing anyone else. Animals eat each other for food. They also fight each other to establish dominance within a group. The fights in nature are serious and can result in death. Animals have to be physically strong in order to survive, and the strongest creatures make it to the top. Mother Nature is not stupid, and she loves her creatures. She wants us all to do the best we can to survive. We wouldn't last very long if we got into fights with creatures that are stronger than us. That's why Mother Nature programmed us to be afraid. Fear prevents us from getting into fights in which we might be hurt or killed.

However, we no longer live out in nature. For the past few thousand years, we have been living in civilization. Our civilized way of life is

guided by laws, and if we break the laws, there are policemen and courts and jails to force us to behave. Out in nature, if you beat up your opponents, you are the winner. But here in civilization, we are not allowed to beat each other up. We are not allowed to use physical strength to solve conflicts. If I punch you and break your nose, you call the police, they arrest me, and I am a big loser. That's why, if you look around you, you'll see that there really is very little fighting going on. You can see an awful lot of fighting on TV, but that's mostly make believe. In real life, people might feel like pounding their fists against our faces when they are mad at us, but they don't do it because it's against the law. The laws of civilization are like an invisible shield protecting us from people who would like to hurt us.

So here, in civilization, we really have little reason to be afraid of other people. There is little they can do to actually hurt us because they don't want to get into trouble. Though we no longer live like tribes out in nature, people still have the need to be dominant over others and to move up the social ladder. So how do we do this without physical fighting? We do it by playing a game. The game is called Let's Scare People. If I threaten you and you get scared, I feel powerful and I am the winner. In this way, I can defeat you without even lifting a finger to hit you. This is also one of those games that people get trapped into playing without even knowing it. We think that when people threaten us, it's for real and they actually may hurt us. If we don't know they're playing a game with us, it is very hard to win. Our natural reaction of getting scared, which helps us in the lawless conditions of nature, becomes a weapon to be used against us. Even though we aren't in real danger, we get scared and automatically lose the game.

There are two general ways that people can make us scared. One way is to make us believe they are dangerous and can hurt our bodies or our possessions. This way is the most obvious one.

But there is another way of scaring us that is less obvious but much more common. We become scared not of how others will hurt us, but of what others will think about us. We want them to approve of us, and we feel that we can't be happy unless they do. The origin of this fear is also in nature. When we were living in tribes in the jungle, there was no welfare and no homeless shelters. We all had to cooperate to survive. What the group thought of us was important. If the tribe didn't approve of us, they would either beat us up or abandon us, and we wouldn't survive for long.

However, in civilization, there is no such danger. No matter what our friends think of us, we are going to have food to eat, a bed to sleep in, schools to go to, and hospitals to take care of us when we are sick. So our basic survival doesn't depend on what anyone thinks of us. Our bodies, though, don't know this, and react as though we're still in the lawless jungle. In civilization, if we worry about what others think of us, we are giving them power over us for nothing. Think of it this way: If I care about what you think of me, but you don't care what I think of you, who is in a stronger position? You are, of course! I will be trying to act and dress in a way I think will get your approval, while you are doing absolutely nothing for me. In other words, you become my boss! I become the big loser, and losers don't get respect.

Think about the really famous, successful, or powerful people in the world. Do they care what you think about them? Do they dedicate their lives to getting your approval? No! They do whatever they want, and don't give a hoot about what you personally think of them. They will only do what it takes to get you to continue buying their products or services or, if they're politicians, to vote for them. The more unconventional or outrageous their actions are, the more we are impressed by them, the more we try to be like them, and the more willing we are to spend our money on them.

If we really want to be more happy and successful, we have to stop being afraid of other people. We have to stop being scared that they will hurt us or think badly about us. How can we lose these fears? By using our brains to help us win the games people play with us. We have to tell ourselves that we are no longer living in the jungle, and the rules of life have changed. When our body tells us, "Oh, no, they're so big and strong! I'm afraid they are going to hurt me," we have to catch ourselves and realize that this fear makes us automatically lose. But we don't want to lose. We want to win. So we need to tell ourselves something like this: "They are bigger and stronger than me, but they can't hurt me. I'm not strong enough to beat them up by myself, but that's OK because I don't have to. There is an invisible shield protecting me, and if they go through this shield, the law is going to punish them and I am going to win. So they can act as scary as they want, and it doesn't bother me in the least!"

To help yourself with this, I want you to picture in your mind a big bully trying to scare a little kid who couldn't care less. The bully is making all kinds of threatening gestures with his hands and face, and is telling the kid he's going to beat him up. But the little kid just stands there yawning and looking bored. Can you see how stupid the bully

looks? Can you see that the bully is the big loser here? Well, that's how people are going to look when they try to scare you and you don't do anything to stop them. And the wonderful thing is that the smaller and weaker you really are, the more ridiculous they are going to look when they try to scare you.

The other thing you have to do is stop being scared about what people think about you. To win the game, tell yourself something like this: "People can think anything they want about me, and it's perfectly OK. I don't mind if they think I'm ugly or stupid or fat or nerdy or gay. This is my life, and I'm going to live it according to my own beliefs and desires." You will discover that the less you care about what other people think of you, the more powerful you become, and this takes absolutely no extra effort!

There's another thing you should remember. It's not enough just to stop being scared of people who threaten you. It is also essential not to get mad at them, either! If you get mad, things will get worse, and you may end up in a fight. So be perfectly calm. Tell yourself that people have every right in the world to try to scare you, and you are not going to take this right away from them. Since they're not doing anything wrong, you have no reason to be mad at them. With this attitude, you will discover that people like you and respect you, and that you have no enemies, no matter how small or weak you may be. In fact, if you have no fear and anger, they may even admire you and want to act as your protectors, especially if you are small and weak!

I would like to remind you of the warning I gave you at the beginning of Lesson Five, about bullies. Don't forget that even though most people will not try to hurt you, you have to be realistic. There are kids in the world who truly are dangerous. They do go around hurting others, and they aren't afraid of getting in trouble, either. With such people, your natural fear is a healthy thing. Be afraid of them, and stay far away from them. If you must be near them, make sure you have people around you who can protect you. Otherwise, just remember that the simple way to win is to refuse to be scared.

Lesson Ten

DEALING WITH BROTHERS AND SISTERS

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If your family is like most families in the world, you and your siblings (a fancy word for brothers and sisters, in case you never heard it) tease each other just about every day. If you want them to stop teasing you, the lessons I've taught you will work with them, too.

So why am I giving you a special lesson about brothers and sisters? Because there is one major difference: your parents. They make matters a little more complicated. In the outside world, when you stop other kids from teasing you, you are a complete winner with nothing to lose. However, at home, if you get your sibling to stop teasing you, you may be losing something very important to you -- your parents' special protection!

If teasing is a problem in your home, this is what's happening. Your brother (or sister, of course) calls you a name. Then you get upset and tell your parents. Since your parents probably believe it's their job to make their kids get along, they are going to yell at your brother or maybe punish him. When your parents do this, it makes you real happy. You got your brother punished, and your parents, who are the most important people in the world to both of you, are on your side against him.

Now, if your brother stops bothering you, you will no longer be able to get your parents to defeat him for you! You will be giving up your great advantage over him! Many kids I've known actually preferred to continue being a teasing victim at home rather than give up the pleasure of keeping their parents mad at their siblings.

So if your parents are helping you against your siblings, you need to make a decision. What's more important to you: ending the teasing, or continuing to get your siblings punished? If you really hate your siblings, you may not want to stop getting them punished for teasing you. I can't force you to listen to me.

However, I hope that you will decide to have the teasing stop, even though it means you won't get your siblings in trouble any more. In the long run, you will be far happier. No matter how much you may

hate your siblings, they really are much more important than your friends and classmates. While friends and schoolmates may come and go, your brothers and sisters will always be your family. When you have your own children, your brothers and sisters will be their aunts and uncles. Your siblings' children will be cousins to your children. In times of hardship, your brothers and sisters are more likely to want to help you than anyone else in the world -- if you stop being their enemy, that is. So it's really the best thing for you and your siblings to get along well rather than to continue fighting. Your parents will also be a lot happier when you get along.

So I hope you have decided to make your brothers and sisters stop teasing you. Just like with other kids, it's very easy. Just let them tease you all they want. Don't get mad at them, and don't tell on them no matter how terrible their insults are.

As I said earlier, your parents may complicate things. If they hear your siblings making fun of you, they may get mad and want to yell at them and punish them. Do not let them do this! Tell your parents that there is no problem, that it was just a joke and you're not upset, and that you can deal with your brother or sister on your own. Make it a rule to defend your siblings from your parents. Your siblings will be grateful to you when you prevent them from getting in trouble, and the truth is, your parents, too, will be overjoyed when they see the loyalty you have towards your brothers and sisters. Do not underestimate the importance of this. There is nothing that makes parents happier than seeing their children stick up for each other, even if it is against them.

When you stop telling on your siblings, they are going to stop telling on you, too. But it won't happen right away, because it will take them some time to realize that you have changed for good. So be prepared that for a few days, they will continue telling on you. That's perfectly OK. Let them tell on you.

Now I'm going to tell you something that you may not like to hear, but believe me, it is the absolutely best thing to do. Even if your siblings are lying about what you did, and make up a story about how you hurt them, do nothing, and don't get mad. And if your parents believe the story and yell at you or punish you or send you to your room, don't get mad at them, either. Don't argue about it, don't yell at them for blaming you unjustly, and don't try to get your punishment taken away. Just take the punishment like a hero! Now, this may sound crazy to you. How can you let your brother or sister get away with lying about you and getting you punished? You can do it because it's going to make you the real winner! First of all, your siblings are going

to be totally blown away by this. They'll be amazed that you can be so nice to them, and that you are so tough that you can gracefully accept punishment for something you didn't even do! But they will also feel guilty for what they did! They're not crazy. They know that they lied, and that you didn't really deserve what they did to you. This is great! Let them feel guilty! This makes it a great victory for you. And most importantly, they probably won't want to do it again!

Not only your siblings, but your parents, too, will like you better for behaving this way. Your parents will be surprised that you aren't arguing with them about the punishment, and that you aren't even mad. Your mature behavior will impress them. After a short while, they will start thinking that maybe you didn't really deserve the punishment. Don't be surprised if they come along and let you off punishment. (By the way, it is a good idea not to get mad at your parents no matter what they punish you for). You know what else will happen? After a few incidents, your parents will no longer believe your siblings when they tattle on you. They will see that you're the mature one, and that your siblings are the babies, so their support will automatically go to you! By not doing anything at all, you will end up being the kid who gets the respect at home!

There's one last thing I would like you to know about brothers and sisters. Parents don't always understand this, because the adult world has become so afraid of physical and verbal violence. But the truth is that playfighting and teasing are tremendously fun activities. Unfortunately, these things stop being fun when parents step in to punish kids for fighting and name-calling. Playfighting and teasing, when they are done in fun, do not hurt. When you playfight, you are trying not to hurt each other, and when your partner lets out a scream of pain, you stop, because you don't want him hurt. And when you call each other names, it is simple fun, and no one's feelings are getting hurt. When you have this kind of fun with your siblings, it doesn't make you hate each other, it makes you love each other. So feel free to engage in playfighting and teasing, but make sure to let your parents know it is only a game, and that they have nothing to worry about.

Well, that's it. I wish you a lot of luck, and hope that your days of being ridiculed are soon over. I would also like to hear from you after you follow this advice. Click on Izzy@Bullies2Buddies.com to tell me your own personal experience. If it's a story that can be of help to other kids and you would like them to read it, give me permission to post it for everyone to see. And if you are having a hard time following

the instructions, let me know what the problem is and I will do my best to write you back and help you.

Bonus Lesson
HAVE MORE FRIENDS

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How can I be telling you that you can have more friends? And do you really want to have more friends? It could be that you are so tired of the way kids treat you that you've decided that you don't even care for friends -- they're not worth the effort.

Whether or not you think you want more friends, the truth is that deep down all of us would like to have lots of friends. Human beings are social animals. Our ancestors, going back millions and millions of years, have always survived because we have had others to cooperate with. No human being can survive for long without the help of others, and no human being can be happy for long without having friends. Our lives seem meaningless when we are lonely, and as much as we might love our televisions and computers, only real live people can truly bring us happiness. So you do want friends, whether you admit it or not.

But if you are a teasing victim, you don't have a whole load of friends. That's because other kids see you as a loser and don't want to be seen having anything to do with you. The friends you do have probably aren't too popular either, and may be teasing victims just like you. Some of your friends may also be a lot younger than you, because younger kids don't look down at you the way kids your age do. They don't realize that among your own age group, you are considered a loser. They are glad to have a big friend, and they are able to appreciate you just the way you are. You make them feel good, and they make you feel good.

I have great news for you. When you follow the advice I give you in this website, you are going to automatically have more friends. Maybe not a whole lot more, but you will definitely have more than you have now. Teasing victims are at the bottom of the social totem pole, but as soon as you stop being a teasing victim, you immediately start moving up. That's because kids who are now too embarrassed to talk to you will not have to be embarrassed any longer. They'll stop avoiding you.

Then they'll start seeing you as the person you are, not as the kid who everybody laughs at. The change won't happen overnight, but it will probably start in a few days and slowly increase. Don't worry, you won't have to work hard. In fact, you won't really have to do a thing.

If you haven't read the instructions on [how to stop being teased and bullied without really trying](#), you should do it now. You will see that the instructions are incredibly easy. In fact, there is nothing easier in the world. So hurry up. Read them and follow them, and you will see how quickly your social life improves and you start being happier.

The Next Steps to Having More Friends

By this time, you should have read the instructions on how to stop being a teasing victim. If you have recently begun following them, you probably have noticed that things are getting better already. Maybe no one even teases you any more. But what if you still don't have a lot of friends, and would like more? What if you want to be part of a group, but you are shy or scared to try to join? What should you do that doesn't require much effort? Read this section carefully! It is just what you need!

You are shy because you have been rejected for so long. You may have come to believe that other kids couldn't possibly want to be your friends. But if you stay away from them, then you'll never have many friends. You need to be near kids in order to become friends with them. Fortunately, it is easier to make friends than you may think.

Step Number One: Do Not Try to Convince Kids to Be Your Friends

A big mistake many kids make is to try to convince others to be their friends. This is a terrible idea, and just wastes your energy.

A true friend is not a boss. A real friend should see you more or less as his equal. You want friends who do as much for you as you do for them. But if you are going to try to **make** kids be your friends, that means that you will be ready to work hard to make them like you. **It won't work!** Instead, they will feel like they are your boss, and can get you to do things for them so that they will let you be with them. You will become a servant, and servants don't get respect. It's the boss who gets the respect. And they will also be willing to dump you as a friend in the blink of an eye.

Therefore, if you've been thinking, ***"Oh, no! I don't have enough friends! What can I do to make kids like me?"***, you must throw this thinking into the garbage can. This kind of thinking will give people power over you. They will look down on you, and they will never be your equals in friendship. Immediately replace this attitude with, ***"If no one wants to be my friend, that's perfectly OK."*** Does it scare you to think like this? Are you afraid you'll end up with no friends at all? Don't worry. This attitude won't make you have less friends. Just the opposite. It will bring you **more** friends, and they will be **better** friends.

How does this work? When you have the attitude that it's OK if no one wants to be your friend, it will also mean that no one can be your boss. No one can have power over you, and they can't look down at you. You will truly be independent, your own person. People will automatically see you as more confident and attractive. They will respect you more, and will try harder to make you like them. And the wonderful thing about it is that it requires no effort. Just relax. Be more carefree and comfortable about life, and the friends will come to you. As long as they feel that it really, honestly, will not make you depressed if they stop being your friend, they will not be quick to dump you. Have fun with friends, let them have fun with you, and your social life will be smooth and satisfying.

Step Number Two: Learn from the Baboons how to be Accepted by a Group

Nobody has a zillion friends. People form groups of friends, sometimes called cliques, and our ancestors have been doing this since the beginning of time. Long before there were towns and cities, human beings and their predecessors were living in small groups called tribes, and these groups usually had between fifty and one hundred members. And this is also true for the apes and a lot of other social animals, especially mammals. So if you live in a tribe, your group of friends are going to be the other kids in this tribe (who are really your siblings and cousins). Therefore, you may have a group of maybe six, or eight, or ten good friends that are around your age. This is the natural condition, and it makes us feel good.

Life for human beings began changing tremendously a few thousand years ago, when we started forming towns and cities with hundreds, thousands, and even millions of members. Suddenly there are a lot more kids around. It's impossible for them to all be our friends, so we form small groups of friends, just like when we lived in tribes in

nature. When we lived in a tribe, though, it was simple to be part of a group of friends because they were always around you.

In modern life, though, it becomes more difficult to be part of a group of friends. If you go to a big school in a large town or in a city, you have to find a group to belong to among all the kids around you, and you must become accepted. It can be scary, because you are afraid they won't want you. But I'd like to make it easier for you.

First of all, you have to decide which group you really want to belong to. If you're into science and computers, you may not feel comfortable with a group that is always looking to party and to shop in the mall. So look at the group that has interests similar to yours. They don't have to be exactly like you. In fact, it can be boring to have friends who are just like us. Variety makes life interesting, and there is no reason that you can't be part of a group of kids in which you are unique or special. In fact, for a group to be truly successful and fun, the members have to have individual differences. So don't be put off by a group whose members aren't your mirror images. The most important thing is to find a group of people that you think you like.

There's something else that's important to understand. It's not only you who needs friends. Other kids need friends, too. You are just as important to them as they are to you. Do not try to fit an image of what you think they want you to be. You don't have to act exactly like them to be accepted. Simply being you is the best and easiest way to be friend material.

Now, let me teach you about baboons. Baboons are apes that live in the plains of Africa, and in many ways, they are like human beings. Like our ancestors, they live in tribes. But they are also extremely strong and dangerous. A human being would stand no chance in a fight with a baboon, and if they fight with each other, they can be deadly.

Male baboons don't live forever in the same tribe. When a male baboon grows up, he leaves the safety of his own tribe and looks for another tribe to join, and he'll probably live there for the rest of his life. But the young male baboon can't just walk into the middle of a strange tribe and say, "Hey, I'm here to join. Where do I sign up?" He is a stranger to them, and they don't need him. They've been getting along fine before he came along. They would see him as a dangerous enemy if he suddenly intruded into their tightly knit tribal group, and

they would tear him to pieces. In order to accept him, they must first trust him and then get to like him.

So you know what the baboon does? It's really quite amazing. He sits himself down far away from the tribe, but in a place where they can easily see him. Since he is far away and not acting in a threatening manner, they are not very scared of him. And then he just sits and waits. He waits days, weeks, and sometimes even months. His patience is really amazing. Can you imagine sitting for months near a group of people and having no real contact with them?! But that's exactly what the baboon does. Little by little, he sits closer. They start getting used to him being there, and they lose fear of him. Then the children, who are by nature curious and adventurous, start going near him. They play with him, and he plays with them. Then some of the young women get curious, too, because they are as interested in meeting new guys as he is interested in meeting new girls. And eventually, he is inside the group. They have gotten used to him, they have gotten to like him, and he belongs.

You, too, can learn from the baboons. It will work the same way. Find the group you like, but don't work hard. Do not try to force your way in, because they may push you out. Just hang out near them, and relax. If one of them notices you and starts up a conversation, then that's wonderful, and you'll probably be inside quicker. But if they don't, don't despair. Look around and find a group member who interests you and looks friendly, and start talking to him. What if you can't think of anything? The easiest way to start a conversation is to pay him a compliment. Make it genuine. Think of something you believe the person would really enjoy being complimented about. He will probably be so grateful to you for noticing that he will tell you all about it, and before you realize it, you'll have a new friend. That friend will be your key into the group.

The important thing is to have patience. Remember the baboon sitting quietly in the distance, and try to be like him. The kids will end up accepting your presence and will even forget that you were once not part of them. And the good thing is that people are quicker to accept others than baboons are. It won't take months to belong. Members of the group will gradually start talking to you, and things will move quicker and quicker. It will probably be a matter of days, or a couple of weeks at the most, till you are considered to be part of the group. Just remember to be calm and to be yourself. Tell yourself, "I don't care if they don't accept me," and they will end up accepting you more quickly. You'll know how successful you are by how much fun you're having. If you are enjoying being with them, you can be sure they are enjoying being with you in return.