

Bullying what to do - Information sheet B1

10 tips for managing and supporting yourself in a bullying situation:

1. **Do not blame yourself.** Individuals who become targets of bullying often blame themselves. They may think they are weak or something is wrong with them. Evidence shows this is actually the contrary. Targets of bullying can be popular and competent individuals. They become targets of bullying because the bully feels threatened by them.
2. **Follow procedures.** If the bullying is taking place in an organisation follow their procedures. Usually this starts with speaking to your line manager through to making a formal complaint to your HR department. This can feel daunting and overwhelming, therefore only focus on each step at a time. You are in control of how far the process goes. If you are being bullied in your personal life, inform others. Let people know this is happening to you. If it is serious harassment inform the police.
3. **Keep a diary.** Start to log all events however small they may seem. Bullying is evidenced by patterns and threads of behaviour. If one incident is investigated out of context it can be minimised. Record facts, such as: times, dates, witnesses and events.
4. **Ask for help.** Reach out and ask for the right support. Support can include: union reps, HR, legal advice, CAB, GP and counselling. There is also a great amount of information you can download from the internet, see www.bullying.co.uk.
5. **Take care of yourself.** Being a target of bullying is very stressful. Therefore readdress your life balance. Are you exercising enough? Make sure you are eating a healthy diet. Reduce caffeine, alcohol and nicotine intake as these will increase your stress levels. Regular sleep is important, although your sleep can be severely impacted. If this is the case visit your GP. Try to avoid playing out destructive behaviours as this will play into you not feeling good enough.
6. **Avoid the bully whenever possible** This may be difficult, but try to avoid the bully especially being on your own with them.
7. **Become aware of the symptoms of bullying.** Symptoms that a target of bullying can experience include: lack of concentration, difficulty sleeping, feeling weak and powerless, emotional outbursts, headaches, digestive problems, feeling on edge, difficulty relaxing, feeling withdrawn and isolated, high blood pressure and anxiety.
8. **Speak out.** It takes a lot of courage to speak out, but it is the only way you will get the necessary support and help that you need.
9. **Put everything in writing.** It is vital to put every response in writing. This will enable you to build up a record of information. Include others in your emails, ie. Union reps or colleagues. Create a folder and keep all important documents. This will be necessary, particularly if the case goes to court.
10. **Know when to walk away.** Unfortunately the majority of bullying cases in the work place result in the target of bullying leaving. Keep monitoring your own health and know when enough is enough.