

Responding to Putdowns

“Words Will NEVER Hurt Me” by Sally Ogden

Great Attitudes for Responding in a Powerful Way:

1. Change your perspective. Hear what the person is saying.
2. Release your fear of inadequacy and rejection.
3. Don't defend and prove!
4. Use techniques that make you a poor future target.

Effective Techniques:

1. Use an “I Message”
 - a. Example: “I feel frustrated when **people** call me names and it makes me dread being around them.”
 - b. Never use the word “you”.
 - c. Deliver the message one-on-one, not in a big group.
2. Agree ☺
 - a. “Good point.”
 - b. “True.”
 - c. “You're right.”
 - d. “I know.”
 - e. “Who could argue with that?”
 - f. “Just what I was thinking.”
3. Use a Neutral Response
 - a. “Thanks for telling me.”
 - b. “I'll remember that.”
 - c. “I'm sorry you see it that way.”
 - d. “That's good information.”
 - e. “Thanks for your opinion.”

4. Outcrazy the Crazyies

- a. Example: "That's an ugly shirt."—response, "A dragon slept in my garage."
- b. Example: "You're a loser."—response, "No thanks, I just had a banana."
- c. Example: "You can't do anything right."—response, "Doesn't that just frost 'ya?"

5. Broken Record

- a. "You're ugly." *"It's good to know how you see it."*
- b. "And I hate you." *"It's good to know how you see it."*
- c. "Nobody likes you." *"It's good to know how you see it."*

6. Other Effective Responses

- a. "Nice try."
- b. "Oh, that didn't feel kind. Were you trying to be unkind?"
- c. "Wow, that felt like a putdown. Is that what you intended?"
- d. "Am I overly sensitive, or was that meant to hurt me?"
- e. "I was wondering, are you saying that because I have been unkind at some time to you?"
- f. "Were you trying to hurt me? Well, you succeeded."