

How to Talk People Out of Fighting With You

Someone may try to attack you no matter what you do. This will help to defend.

Steps

Pay attention to what they're really saying and doing. This is not a time for denial. "This can't be happening" is a good way to get yourself beaten to a pulp, it's the reaction they're looking for. If you know the person, you probably understand the motive behind what they're doing.

2 Don't show fear or vulnerability. People are less likely to attack confident others, bullies go after people who are already fearful. If you tend toward fearfulness or insecurity, face that as its own problem and work on building your inner strength. Learn to set your fears or grief aside in a crisis and become calm - not angry, calm. This puts you in control of the situation. It will also help, if you try to build your strength. Remember that bullies look for victims, *not* opponents.

If you're facing a crazy person, especially someone who's been in and out of therapy, you can sometimes talk them down by staying calm and listening to what they have to say - and responding like a therapist.

Keep it focused on their feelings and let them vent their feelings. Try to sound as if you do care about their mental health and want to help them deal with their problems. Don't say anything defensive to any accusations they make. Turn it back toward them with questions like "How did that make you feel?" It will trigger a habit of their dumping their feelings and you may spend half an hour being yelled at and bawled on, but this is a lot better than getting attacked by a crazy person. Try to steer the conversation toward other things that bug them besides whatever it is about you, to keep the role of "helpful peer, crying shoulder."

- Once that "therapy mode" is established, you can start to introduce doubt into their accusations toward you with questions like "Did you consider whether someone was lying about me to you?"
- Be careful with this because if you do it even once in a situation where you'll run into the crazy person again, they may attach to you and try to get you to do it again. Learn to set boundaries and suggest counseling to them if they keep seeking you out. They not only need it, they're ready for it if they're doing this.

Make them think you're not worth it by saying something like, "Look, we already know that you would obviously win..." etc. That's one type of submissive response - and it can backfire. You have many options. Understand your opponent's motives and know which one to deliver. Some bullies just want that immediate verbal submission to the threat, will shove you a bit and move on - you know this by watching them. Others, that's what eggs them on. It's vital to understand the difference.

5 Answer anything they say politely without insults. This breaks the script of a typical fight. It also sets up a fear factor of its own. Remember the "little old Japanese guy" in any karate movie. He's always very polite no matter how many insults including racist insults the bully is shouting - if you respond like that, without a raised voice or any insulting words, it sounds as if you have some hidden defense you know is unbeatable. Showing them that you have inner strength, will often put them off.

Try not to anger them to come at you. Put simply: do not provoke them. Do not start insulting them by group (stupid jocks, dumb whatever, racist comments, sexist comments, the list goes on.). If they are bullies, just looking for anyone who seems vulnerable, try to avoid their usual paths and hangouts. Stay out of their way.

If it's a personal fight over something that has happened - they are jealous because someone they are attracted to, likes you more, or something you own that they wish they had, or if they feel betrayed, or if you did betray them in some way like gossip, then try conflict resolution. Remember that if a friend suddenly

1 of 2 1/9/2017 10:12 AM

turns on you for no reason you can think of, the likeliest thing is that someone lied to them and the best way to solve it is to compare notes about who told you what. You would not believe how many pointless fights start because someone else was jealous of a friendship or just malicious.

- Make sure you know what they want to do with you.
- **9 Don't escalate it by getting back at them.** Don't ever escalate a conflict with someone in a long term situation like school, work, family, or roommate. That's a road to blowing up your life and costs far more than the moment's satisfaction of revenge.
- **10 Do not attack first.** Only fight back if they attack first; try to avoid getting to that point. If you fight back after they attack, then you can claim self defense. Remember that for it to be considered self-defense, you need to only do enough fighting for them to be unable to harm you. It is not legal to harm someone any further, after they are already away from your danger zone.
- Take physical threats seriously. Use minimal force, and escape the situation. Use all authorities and resources available to deal with the situation if you're physically threatened police, school authorities, workplace authorities, help lines, you name it. You should be able to live without the fear of being physically attacked. If you are living with people who hit you, move out. If you're underage and it's family, there are resources, use help lines.

Can you ans	swer these readers' questions?	
	On How to Join the Kenyan Armed Forces , a reader asks: Can a US citizen join the Kenyan Armed Forces?	
	Your answer Reply	
	On How to Email Inmates in Prison , a reader asks: How to let an inmate know that I want to email him	
	Your answer	
	On How to Get a Real Estate License In Virginia , a reader asks:	
	Do I have to be a resident of Virginia to obtain a real estate license in Virginia?	
	Your answer	

Tips

• Try not to anger them too much.

Warnings

- Once again, fight as a last resort.
- Be careful in what you say if there are a lot of attackers.

2 of 2