

Sample Approaches to Common (Verbal/Relational) Bullying Scenarios – NY Times Article

- **Name Calling:**

- *“You are so fat! I don’t even know how you can walk.”*
- The Reflexive Response - *“I am not fat!”* or *“Shut up!”*
- **Better Approach -**
- *“You are so lucky you’re so skinny because people are mean to fat people,”* or *“I like my body, but if you don’t that’s O.K. with me.”*

- **Exclusion:**

- *“I’m having a party and you’re not invited.”*
- The Reflexive Response - *“That’s so mean,”* or *“I don’t want to come to your stupid party anyway.”*
- **Better Approach -**
- *“If I’m not invited, I won’t come. I hope you have a great party.”*

- **Fielding a Rumor:**

- *“I heard from Tessa you cheated on the test.”*
- The Reflexive Response - *“I didn’t. Tessa is a liar!”* – (*“No, she’s not!”*) - *“She is! I didn’t cheat!”* - (*“Everyone knows it’s true.”*) - *“It’s not true!”*
- **Better Approach -**
- *“Really? Do you believe it?”* – (*“No.”*) - *“Good.”*
- (Or, if the answer is *“Yes”*):
- *“O.K. If you want to believe it, how can I stop you?”* – (*“You can’t. So I’m going to tell everyone you cheated. And you can’t stop me.”*) - *“That’s right. I can’t.”*

This approach was used by a suicidal girl in Texas, and it saved her life:

“When next someone says that you are ugly, please tell them (with a smile) that you are as beautiful as they are. And if they don’t believe you, they should look in the mirror.” - Nkem Denchukwu