



# Harassment

“In a Nutshell”

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Harassment behaviour is a very common part of human life. Studies show it occurs all over the world in all kinds of group situations. The harasser is a person who intends to make another person feel powerless, worthless and afraid by emotionally, verbally or physically abusing them repeatedly. Experts say harassment has three main features:

1. Deliberate aggression
2. Unequal power
3. Pain and distress

The experience of being harassed can be very traumatic. The numbers of people, who have suicidal thoughts, engage in self-harm, or attempt suicide because of harassment is significant. The thought that someone dislikes you enough to want to hurt you can be devastating. You might wonder what you have done to deserve that kind of treatment, you might start to question yourself and your value as a person - you might even begin to believe that you *are* worthless. If someone is making you feel worthless, powerless or afraid, then tell someone who can help and put a stop to it.

## Why do people harass others?

Just what makes a person harass another and how are they so different from their victims? Experts have identified a number of characteristics:

- An inflated sense of self-worth - they feel like their needs are more important than anyone else's.
- Inadequacy - a feeling they hide by forcing others to feel inadequate too.
- Often they were once a victim of harassment too.
- They often come from a family where violence and manipulation is a normal part of communication.

There is no excuse for intentionally hurting another person. If you are being harassed by someone, it's noble to accept that this person is probably flawed and unhappy - but that should not make you feel guilty for taking action against them. Some people come from difficult backgrounds and still manage to feel love and compassion for others.

You may never know why your harasser wants to hurt you or why you have been made into a victim. All you can know is that this person's behaviour is unjust and they need to be stopped before they cause considerable damage.

