

Don't Get Hooked

Do you ever walk around with somebody's put-down taking up space in your brain? Do you ever spend time focusing on getting even?



Walking around with your head full of angry thoughts about getting even can drain your energy and make you feel worse. It's like walking around covered with a glob of slime. But you don't have to stay hooked that way. Here are four things to help you unhook and release the angry thoughts and feelings. They will enable you to leave that glob of slime on the ground where it belongs, and walk away with your own power in place:

1. Give yourself 30 minutes to stew. Take some time alone and be as mad as you want for those 30 minutes. On paper, write down what you're mad about. This is just for you, so don't show what you wrote to anyone else. When you're done, tear up the paper and throw it away. Once the feelings are out on paper, they won't clog up your brain as much.

2. Keep repeating your calming statement silently and do something that helps you chill out. If you're at school, wash your face and get a drink. If you're home, try exercising or listening to music. When angry thoughts pop back up, replace them with your calming statement so your mind doesn't get trapped in bad thoughts.

3. Talk to a trusted person. Make this confidential. Do this to get bad feelings out of your system—not to get even or get the person in trouble. It won't help to start gossiping about the person who made you mad—that will only make things worse. Come up with a plan of action. For example, you might plan to talk directly to the person who upset you, or to ignore the person. You might decide to ask for more help from a counselor, a teacher, or another adult for help.

4. Do something constructive (something useful and healthy). Help someone else, or get involved in a project. Helping others is one of the best ways to help yourself feel better. It turns the energy of anger and hurt feelings into something useful. This is a good step to take any time you feel sad, mad, or worried.



Make a conscious choice *not* to get hooked by someone else's negative words. Hold onto your power instead of giving it away. As one student said, "I refuse to let *their* words ruin *my* day."



Don't Get Hooked (continued)

My Tools for Unhooking

My calming statement is: _____

My Peace Shield looks like this: (Draw and describe it here):

Three things on my list of ways to chill out are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Two assertive comebacks I can use are:

1. _____
2. _____

A trusted person I can talk to is:

If that person is not available, another trusted person is:
