

Truly Difficult People



Do you know someone who always makes you feel angry, frustrated and stressed? There are some people who are just truly difficult people and can really affect how we relate to others or how much we enjoy our personal or work lives.

When dealing with this type of person, you need to be able to step back and ask yourself a few questions. First of all, is it the situation that the person is in that is causing them to behave this way? Secondly, what could be going on for this person that is making them so miserable? Has this person acted differently in similar situations? If the behavior is not normal for the person then there may be an underlying problem that you are not aware of.

So now you have to ask yourself if you are reacting out of proportion to what the situation warrants? Do you have something going on that *you* need to deal with? Am I the owner of the problem with the other individual?

Many times, by initiating a conversation with the difficult person you can get things on the right track again. The key is to be open and honest about your feelings and concerns and be willing to work on improving the relationship.

However, there will be people that you meet who are just difficult people. In this case you need to come up with a plan of how to cope. Your goal should be to minimize the impact this person has on you and to restore your balance of power in the relationship.

Here are some suggestions on how to cope with your “difficult person”:

- Step back and look at the situation, you may get a better perspective on things.
- Try to label the difficult behavior so that you can better understand it (eg. hostile, aggressive, unresponsive, negative etc.).
- Try to understand the person as much as you can.
- Be aware of your part in the relationship as you do have control over this.
- Practice your feedback for the person on a friend first so that you know what to say and how to say it best prior.

- Timing is everything when you are confronting your difficult person.
- Do your homework before confronting the person. Use techniques that have proven effective for the specific type of behavior that you have identified.
- Monitor the progress of your relationship.

Sometimes there is nothing you can do to produce the desired results but you won't know this until you try. If there is no success then you have one more decision to make. Do you want to accept the relationship the way it is or do you have to distance yourself and make change? These can be very difficult decisions to make but need to be done for your own health and well-being.