



TIPS FOR HEALING FROM BULLYING:

Breathe. Breathing is often overlooked during anxious situations. We begin to pant or stop our breathing altogether. Take deep breaths (at least four or five of them) and re-center and ground yourself. This will calm you while sending needed oxygen into your bloodstream and harnessing your adrenaline so that you can think and react more clearly. Get in the habit of doing this when waking up and going to sleep along with several times during the day.

Do not isolate yourself. It is tempting to withdraw and not share what's happening to you. Now more than ever, you need people around you. Talk to family members. Find support. Join a support group. Find friends that like activities that you like (book reading clubs, outdoor hiking groups, church, gym, other hobby groups, etc.). Make sure to surround yourself with people who help build your self-esteem.

Realize that you are in control of you. Bullies like to take control by manipulating and scaring you. You can lessen their impact by taking control of you, your actions, your thoughts, and your responses to them. When you take control of you, you fan the flames of inner strength and resilience.

Make a plan. Find action steps to take to deal with the bullying. Document what is happening and write down what you can do to stop it. Enlist help from loved ones and/or a professional to assist you in figuring out your options.

Find additional strength in things that matter to you. Think about things, people, places, and dreams you love. Cultivate those parts of yourself as that is what makes you unique and special. Feeding your passion takes power away from bullies.

Learn something new. Take a class at the community center or community college in something new, like pottery, writing, computers, art, yoga, foreign language, cooking, etc.

Nurture yourself. Remind yourself of your strengths and gifts. Write them down. Do things that you love to do and tell yourself positive things. (Get rid of the negative self-talk.)

Have faith and believe in the power of transformation. Yours and the world's transformation, that is. Give yourself self-love and find the strength to make a difference.

Keep healthy boundaries. Beware of people that make you feel guilty, less than them, or continually make it about them and ignore your feelings.

Advocate on others' behalf. This helps build your strength and makes you feel empowered (and not alone) along with developing your empathy and compassion for others (because the worst way a bully can control you is if they turn you into them).

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