

Unfortunately, we are regularly faced with difficult people. The way we handle them can affect our job and our health.

When dealing with difficult people, begin by asking yourself:

1. Can I change the situation?
2. Do I have to put up with it?

When you ask these questions in a rational frame of mind, you will be able to formulate a workable approach that is consistent and effective.

1. Can I change the situation?

No one changes unless he/she wants to. Difficult people rarely want to.

Your best chance of creating change occurs if the following things are present.

You have a personal connection with the person.

You have earned his/her respect.

You've discreetly tested the waters and found him/her a bit open to change.

You've received signals that he/she wants to change.

• You aren't afraid or intimidated
• The two of you are fairly equal in power. If the difficult person is in a dominant position, such as being your boss, your status is to imbalanced.

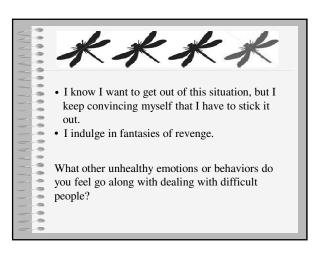
Remember - Difficult people aren't going to change just to make you feel better. The worst chance of getting someone else to change occurs when you're so angry, frustrated, and fed up that you lose your composure and demand change.

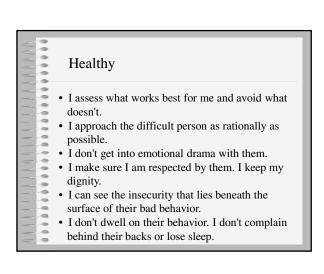
2. Do I have to put up with it?

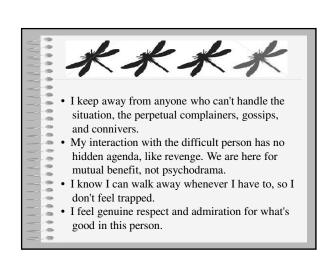
When you can't change a situation, only two options remain, either put up with it or seek assistance. Most of us aren't very effective in getting someone else to change, so we adapt in various ways. We become experts at putting up with things. The real question is whether you are coping in a healthy or unhealthy way.

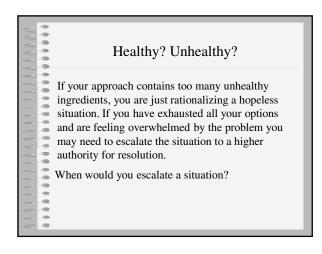
Look at the following lists and honestly ask yourself how well you are putting up with your difficult person.

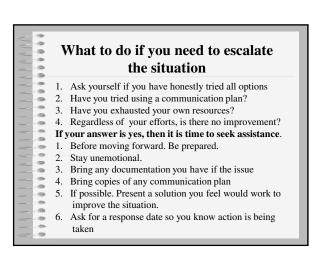
Unhealthy: • I keep quiet and let them have their way. It isn't worth the fight. • I complain behind their backs. • I shut down emotionally. • I don't say what I really mean half the time, for fear of getting into trouble or losing control. • I subtly signal my disapproval. • I engage in endless arguments that no one wins. • I have symptoms of stress (headache, knots in the stomach, insomnia, depression, and anxiety)











Part 2 - 10 Tips for Dealing with Difficult People Some people are just plain hard to get along with. But you don't have to let them get under your skin. Unfortunately, we are faced everyday with difficult people -- be they co-workers, bosses, partners or client. The way we handle them can affect our job and even our health. There are ways to help you cope with these problematic relationships.

