

HOW TO RESIST PEER PRESSURE



WHY WOULD YOU WANT TO AVOID PEER PRESSURE?

Sometimes, it's hard to say 'no' to your friends. You might be afraid of being excluded or teased, so it may be easier to go along with what others want you to do. But if they are pressuring you to do something you're uncomfortable with, or that you may regret later, then it's important to stand your ground for your own sake. Learning to resist peer pressure helps you maintain your integrity and self-worth.

WHAT?

Strengthen your self-belief by learning strategies to say 'no' to things your peers are pressuring you to do.

IT'S OKAY TO...

- > not know what you want to do
- > get knocked into the pit
- > move faster or go slower
- > fail (as long as you tried)

WHAT YOU NEED

- > Access to the internet

WHAT TO DO

- 01 Stand by your beliefs.** Your beliefs are no less important than those of your friends. It's important to protect your own values, because at the end of the day, they're yours. You'll feel better for it, too! Don't back down on questions of ethics and values, and you'll realise the true meaning of integrity and self-respect.
- 02 Practise your 'no'.** It can be hard to say 'no'. Especially if it feels like everyone is telling you to say 'yes'. It helps to practise saying 'no' out loud. You can say 'no' in a firm but polite way, so it doesn't feel confrontational. Also practise giving reasons for your answer. You can do this alone or with someone you trust. The more you practise, the more confident you'll become when you do have to say 'No. I'm sorry, but no.'
- 03 What are the consequences?** If someone is pressuring you, think about the result of your actions if you go through with something you don't want to do or know isn't right. Will you feel guilty afterwards? Will you be in trouble? Could someone get hurt? The consequences could be serious and long-lasting. It's not worth compromising your morals just to gain short-term approval.

WHAT TO DO CONT:

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Talk about it. If you feel pressured, try talking with the person, or people, who are making you feel this way. Tell them you're not comfortable with it. Be decisive in your language and tone, and confident in your body language. Or you could speak with someone you trust, who isn't putting pressure on you, and ask them to support you.

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Find like-minded friends. True friends respect you for who you are and don't try to change you or make you do things you that are against your beliefs. Surround yourself with people who share your values and won't put pressure on you to change them. Choosing healthy relationships is important for your self-respect and happiness at any stage of life.

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It won't last forever. There might be a fallout if you resist peer pressure. If this happens, it can feel awful and may be difficult to be sure that you did the right thing. If you're treated badly because you said 'no', it's a clear sign that it's time to find friends who will care for you and not exclude you, just because you disagreed with them. Remember, everything passes and better times are always around the corner.

- Kids Helpline has advice for negative peer pressure, bullying, respect and mental health: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens>
- Headspace also helps young people deal with issues such as depression and bullying: <https://headspace.org.au/headspace/>

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GOT IT?

- You did it! You've comfortably and confidently resisted pressure others are placing on you. You've said 'no' and moved forward, without guilt. Congrats!



TRY THIS

If you feel like you've nailed it but you want to level up, try this:

- If you don't like the pressure a group is placing on you, ask another group if you can spend time with them.
- Support a friend who is trying to resist peer pressure, showing them what true friendship is.
- Use these techniques for other difficult conversations in your life, such as asking for a promotion or pay rise.

SO WHAT?

- Ultimately, standing up for your own values and ethics means respecting yourself.
- Standing up for yourself and surrounding yourself with true friends enhances your self-esteem and confidence. You'll be happier – and enjoy your life a lot more!
- Your communication skills will increase, benefiting you not only at school, but when you're in a team, a job interview or meeting new people.

WHAT ACTION WILL YOU TAKE?

- Stand in front of a mirror and practise saying 'no' to someone in your life.
- Choose a person you trust and tell them how you're feeling.
- Write down the possible short- and long-term consequences if you don't resist peer pressure.



IF YOU LIKED THIS ONE YOU MIGHT WANT TO TRY...

- > How to Say No
- > How to Consider Ethics in Decision Making
- > How to Make a Decision
- > How to Find a Mentor
- > How to Ask for a Raise