

JAY MCGRAW'S
LIFE STRATEGIES
FOR DEALING WITH
BULLIES



Jay McGraw

Illustrated by Steve Björkman

JOURNAL EXERCISES

Writing out your thoughts in journal form is a great way to organize your ideas and feelings and to better express them. Take some time to write down your thoughts about the various forms of bullying we've talked about. Here are few things to ask yourself that might help you get started:

- Has someone else ever physically picked on me? What did I do about it?
- Have I ever bullied someone in any form before?
- What are some of the most hurtful things someone has said about me? Did I think these things were true? If I did, why did I believe these things? If I didn't, how was I able to keep from believing them?
- Have I ever spread rumors about someone else?
- Has anyone ever cyberbullied me? How did I react? What did I do?
- Does anyone try to keep me out of a group or prevent me from joining in a game or activity? Do I do that to anyone else? If so, why? How does it make me feel when I see that someone isn't allowed to play with me or other kids?



JOURNAL EXERCISES

- What are some of the ways that I have bullied myself? Have I ever believed that insults about me were really true? Have I ever said these things about myself?
- What are some of the negative attitudes I see in bullies around me? Do I have any of these negative attitudes myself? Where do these attitudes come from?
- Have I seen parents do things that I think might lead to bully behavior in kids? What are some of the things they have done that might help turn their kid into a bully?
- Have I ever watched someone get bullied and ignored it? Why didn't I take action? How did that make me feel?
- Have I ever tried to stop a bully from picking on someone else? How did I do it and why? Did I feel better for taking action?

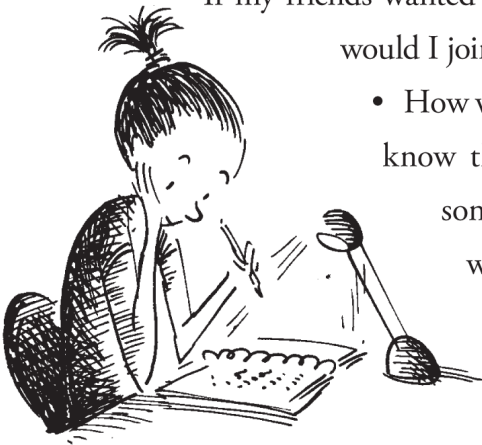


JOURNAL EXERCISES

- How does being bullied make my body feel? How do I try to control the physical effects that bullying can have?
- Have I ever felt “social anxiety”? When and where did it happen? Did a bully have anything to do with the feeling? How did I handle the anxiety?
- How do I cope with the stress of being bullied? Do my ways of handling stress help me or hurt me in the long run?
- What are ways that I break rules by bullying someone or by being bullied? Why are these rules important? Why should I try to obey them?
- When I’m with a group of my friends, do I think for myself or just go along with whatever they want to do?

If my friends wanted to bully another kid, would I join in or watch?

- How would I let my friends know that they were doing something I thought was wrong?



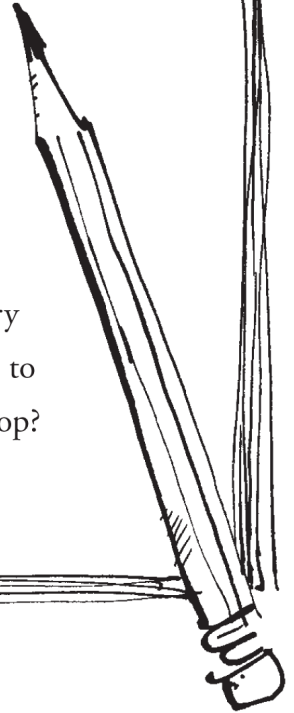
JOURNAL EXERCISES

- Do I bully anyone? Have I ever bullied someone? Who was it? How did it make me feel?
- What were the payoffs for me for bullying someone? Why was I behaving that way?
- Have I ever stopped bullying someone? Why? Have I been able to make up for the payoff that I got from bullying people? If so, how?
- Who are the kids in my school who I think are being or could be bullied? Why do I think this of them? Is it right for me to take advantage of these reasons?
- Have I ever been punished for bullying someone? If so, by whom?
- Have my friends ever joined in the bullying with me? Have I joined another friend who was acting like a bully? Why?
- Do my parents know I'm a bully?



If they did, what
would they say?

Would they try
really hard to
make me stop?



JOURNAL EXERCISES

Have I ever felt challenged by a bully? What were some of the ways the bully tried to hurt me? How did I feel? How did I respond?

- What are some reasons I have to feel good about myself, no matter what some bully may say?
- Who are some friends I have made recently? How did they become my friends and why?
- In what ways do I play the role of a bully victim? When was the last time I did this? Why did I do it? What payoff did I get?
- Have I ever really tried to stop someone from bullying me? What strategies did I try? Did any of them work? Why or why not?
- What other strategies for dealing with a bully can I try that I haven't tried yet? Why haven't I given these a try?



JOURNAL EXERCISES

Who do I know who is being bullied? Who are some people that I know who would stand up for that person with me?

- What can I do to convince others to stand up against the bullies too?
- Do I care if a stranger is being bullied? Why should I care?
- What will I do the next time I see a kid being bullied?
- What can I do to get my schoolmates to sign an anti-bullying pledge?
- What can my friends and I do to help our school come up with and enforce an anti-bullying policy?



JOURNAL EXERCISES

- What took me so long to talk to my parents about my bully problem?
- Do I really believe that my parents can help me? What do I want them to do?
- What do I know about bullies that I can teach my parents?
- Do I trust that my parents will do the right thing to solve my problem? Why or why not?
- Why should my parents step in to help me?



JOURNAL EXERCISES

- Is my school safe for me and other kids? What has happened at school that might make me think it's not as safe as it should be? What more would I like to see the school staff do to keep us safe from bullies?
- Who are the adults at my school who I trust? Who I can talk to about bullying in my life or bullying that I have witnessed?
- Do I need them to talk to my parents for me as well?
- Why haven't I talked to the school staff before now? Am I over those fears or do I need to get some of my friends to go and talk to the school staff with me?
- Are there some places around my school that my school staff should pay attention to in order to cut down on the bullying in our school?



JOURNAL EXERCISES

- Why is it important to forgive a bully? Do I think I could do it? Why or why not?
- Who have I bullied that I need to apologize to and ask to forgive me?
- Is it important that someone who bullied me apologize for it? Can I forgive the bully (or the bystanders) even if they do not apologize?
- How can I benefit from forgiving a bully?
- What are some ways that I can hurt myself by not forgiving a bully?
- What's wrong with getting revenge instead of forgiving the bully?



THE ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE FOR STUDENTS

We, the students of _____,
agree to join together to stamp out bullying at our school.



We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, or nationality.

Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name-calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as “kids being kids,” “just teasing,” or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

By signing this pledge, we the students agree to:

1. Value student differences and treat others with respect.
2. Not become involved in bullying incidents or be a bully.
3. Be aware of the school’s policies and support system with regard to bullying.

4. Report honestly and immediately all incidents of bullying to a faculty member.
5. Be alert in places around the school where there is less adult supervision, such as bathrooms, corridors, and stairwells.
6. Support students who have been or are subjected to bullying.
7. Talk to teachers and parents about concerns and issues regarding bullying.
8. Work with other students and faculty to help the school deal with bullying effectively.
9. Encourage teachers to discuss bullying issues in the classroom.
10. Provide a good role model for younger students and support them if bullying occurs.
11. Participate fully and contribute to assemblies dealing with bullying.

I acknowledge that whether I am being a bully or see someone being bullied, if I don't report or stop the bullying, I am just as guilty.

Signed by: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE FOR PARENTS

This anti-bullying parents' pledge is a promise parents can make to remind them to help children fight bullying without violence.

We, the parents of _____, agree to join together to stamp out bullying at our school.

We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, or nationality.

Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name-calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as “kids being kids,” “just teasing,” or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

By signing this pledge, we the parents agree to:

1. Keep ourselves and our children informed and aware of school bullying policies.
2. Work in partnership with the school to encourage positive behavior, valuing differences, and promoting sensitivity to others.

3. Discuss regularly with our children their feelings about schoolwork, friendships, and relationships.
4. Inform faculty of changes in our children's behavior or circumstances at home that may change a child's behavior at school.
5. Alert faculty if any bullying has occurred.

Signed by: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE FOR SCHOOLS

We, the faculty of _____,
agree to join together to stamp out bullying at our school.

We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally and feel safe, secure, and accepted regardless of color, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion, or nationality.

Bullying can be pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name-calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as “kids being kids,” “just teasing,” or any other rationalization. The victim is never responsible for being a target of bullying.

By signing this pledge, we the school and faculty agree to:

1. Develop a clear school policy on bullying and display it prominently in classrooms and around the school.
2. Train faculty in appropriate handling of incidents.
3. Develop or adopt a curriculum that educates students about bullying.
4. Teach students about less obvious forms of bullying, like gossiping and exclusion.
5. Discuss proactive anti-bullying measures (such as having lunch with a student who has been excluded in the past).

6. Establish support systems for pupils involved in incidents, such as peer counseling and mediation.
7. Establish a system to inform and support parents when incidents of bullying occur.
8. Offer counseling to students who bully.
9. Ensure an atmosphere where students feel safe reporting incidents of bullying and confident they will be dealt with and not ignored.
10. Report all incidents of bullying immediately to the principal.
11. When an incident is reported, all students involved will be given the opportunity to give their version of the incident.
12. Put in place sanctions for bullying such as verbal warnings, removal from a classroom or school grounds, a verbal or written apology to the victim, a parent-teacher meeting, and detention or expulsion for repeat offenders.
13. Monitor cases of persistent bullying and be fully informed of all incidents and their progress.

Signed by: _____

Print name: _____

Date: _____

ARE YOU A BULLY?

A Quiz

Take this short quiz to find out whether you have any attitudes that might make you likely to bully another person.

1. You see a friend pushing around another student. What do you do?

- a. Join your friend in shoving the student. (5 points)*
- b. Watch. (3 points)*
- c. Walk away. (2 points)*
- d. Ask another friend or helper to help you find a better solution with him or her. (1 point)*

2. A group of popular students invites you to start hanging out with them. One day, while with your new friends, you see an old friend who's not as popular. One of the popular students dares you to ignore your friend when she tries to come up and say hello. How do you react?

- a. Ignore your friend and then laugh at her when she walks away. (5 points)*
- b. Ignore your friend for now and apologize to her later. (3 points)*
- c. Say hi to your friend. (2 points)*

d. Say hi to your friend and invite her to sit with you to demonstrate your independence from bullying. (1 point)

3. You watch while a child takes another child's jacket. How do you handle this?

a. Ask the bully to return the jacket. (5 points)

b. Keep walking as if nothing happened. (4 points)

c. Don't say anything but let a trusted adult or teacher know what happened. (3 points)

d. Make a joke about the jacket being taken. (2 points)

e. Call it as it is, and point out the dishonesty and bullying behavior as inappropriate. (1 point)

4. You and some friends are misbehaving in class and are asked to leave by the teacher. One of your buddies suggests that you and your friends return after school and break the windows of the teacher's classroom. How do you respond?

a. Help your friends break the windows. (5 points)

b. Refuse to help. (3 points)

c. Refuse to help, and let an adult know what happened. (2 points)

d. Refuse to help and urge them not to break the windows either. (1 point)

5. You overhear some people saying mean things about a girl you know. What do you do?

a. Come up with mean things of your own to say. (5 points)

b. Ignore them. (3 points)

c. Warn the girl that people are talking about her. (2 points)

d. Tell them to quit talking about the girl. (1 point)

6. A well-liked guy in school asks you to help him cheat on an English test if you want him to still be your friend. How do you respond?

a. Help him cheat. (5 points)

b. Encourage him to do his best on the test without cheating. (4 points)

c. Refuse to be a part. (3 points)

d. Refuse to help and request that the teacher help your friend learn the materials better. (1 point)

7. You're typing to friends in a chat room one evening when you notice the screen name of a student from school whom you don't like. What do you do?

a. Start calling him mean names and posting ugly pictures of him. (5 points)

b. Start to e-mail him, but then decide against causing trouble. (4 points)

c. Leave it alone and don't respond. (3 points)

d. Leave him alone and continue chatting with people you do like. (1 point)

8. You walk past the computer lab and notice that the door is unlocked and nobody's in the classroom. Inside is a new laptop. What do you do?

a. Take the laptop. (5 points)

b. Walk away. (4 points)

c. Shut and lock the door and walk away. (2 points)

d. Shut the door and go tell a teacher that the lab was unlocked. (1 point)

Scoring Scale

25 points to 40 points—You just might be a bully.

15 points to 24 points—You might not be a bully, but you're not likely to stop one either.

8 points to 14 points—You probably aren't going to be picking on anyone anytime soon.

