

## Stop the Cyber Bully

There is a classic old story (Don Quixote) about a man who believes that windmills are his enemy. So whenever he sees a windmill, he takes out his sword and fights with the rotating blades. Naturally, he can't win the battle; you can't fight against something powered by the wind. Don Quixote needs to put his sword down and walk away.

And so it is with cyberspace. When negative stories or pictures of you are posted on the net, getting hurt or angry will not stop the problem. Your hurt feelings only give the bully, the "enemy," more energy and incentive to keep it up. The more you react, the more fun it is to hurt you. A bully stated "I bully people because it's easy." The best reaction is to walk away.

Find a hobby, something you really enjoy to help your mind grow in a healthy way. Take up martial arts, boys and girls benefit from this ancient discipline. It is a healthy way to develop self assurance and poise. Also, dance classes will develop a healthier body and mind for boys and girls. If you have a good attitude toward yourself, others will see you in a better way. And, most important, always speak well of yourself and others.

Try to keep only healthy, happy thoughts in your mind. You will attract better friends and create a better environment for yourself.

## How to Choose Good Friends

There is an old saying "The best way to have a friend is to be a friend." That means you never say negative things about a friend and you try to listen carefully to what they are saying so you can understand how they feel. You should be helpful if they ask you for advice and never criticize them. However, if they are behaving badly, you might suggest, kindly, they could act in a better way.

That's how you treat someone, but, now, how do you expect a friend to treat you? It is very important to have friends, but you want *good friends*; don't put up with bad behavior because you are lonely and want anyone, to like you. That is unhealthy.

A good friend *never* makes fun of you, even joking. A good friend never asks you to do something that you know is wrong; when you say, "No. I don't want to do that." Your friend respects you and doesn't insist you do it for him, or her, if you want to stay their friend. This is not a healthy relationship. If someone says, "You'd do that for me if you really liked me." Say, "I like you and I'm not doing that." Then walk away.

A good friend always treats you with respect especially in front of others. A good friend never tells you bad things that others say about you; he would say "Shut up and don't talk about my friend that way".

The best friend you can possibly have is yourself. If you treat yourself with respect and expect others to also, you will attract good people to be a part of your life.

For more in depth information check out the textbooks at my website.

### One minute Downloads for adults with voice problems:

#### The 10 Most Frequently Asked Questions About Your Voice Problems

1. Why do I get a sore throat after I talk awhile?  
Tension in the throat and shoulder areas can cause your throat to get sore. You must relax the chin, lips, neck and shoulder muscles to give more flexibility to your voice when you speak.
2. How can I keep from getting interrupted?  
When you speak on the “exhale” of breath, you create an “energy field” that is difficult to break. When you speak, keep the vocal energy flowing at an even pace and with adequate volume. Don’t stop talking if someone butts in. This will decrease the chances of interruption.
3. What can I do to increase volume?  
Breathe deeper and speak on the exhale of breath. Let the sounds flow from the diaphragm, not the chest.
4. Why does my voice “fade out” after I talk awhile?  
Possibly it’s nerves, but more likely you are not breathing correctly. You need to breathe deeply from the diaphragm and then keep the breath flowing until you have finished a phrase. If you feel your voice “fading” breathe again and use that energy to support the sounds.
5. What can I do about “stage fright”?  
Practice, practice, practice. When you rehearse a speech, create an audience of dolls, dogs, cats, friends, magazine covers. When you “perform” *feel good, feel happy*. This feeling good has a strong impact on your performance when you face the audience. Remember, the audience is friendly; they are on your side!
6. How can I get my ideas across at meetings?  
Don’t smile; speak in *facts*. Breathe deeply before you talk. Speak with adequate volume and flow of energy. Keep your talk to a minimum; don’t drone on and on; people will surely drop out mentally or interrupt you if you bore them. Keep your voice “alive” with energy as you talk.
7. When I talk, why don’t people take me seriously?

Sometimes people talk in a “whine,” low volume, too many complaints or the sounds are too “nice”. Breathe deeply and speak on the exhale of air. Speak in a lower-pitched voice for credibility and adequate volume. Don’t smile; that decreases your chances of being taken seriously.

8. I don’t like the way my voice sounds; how can I change it?

This is a common complaint, and, usually, the voice is just fine! But, to find a voice you like better, practice reading fairy tales into a recording machine. Play all the parts in the story; be the witch, be the hero, be the big bear and speak in “their” voices. Then, play the stories back and see how many voices you actually have to choose from. Have fun with your voice; enjoy yourself!

9. I don’t like how I sound on my message machine; can I improve that?

When you speak on a machine, the fidelity is very poor. So don’t judge your voice by the quality of the machine. However, you can improve on the sound by *slowing down*, open your mouth wider to allow the sounds to flow freely and speak in a lower pitch. This technique will give a pleasant, yet, professional sound.

10. As a woman, how can I be a manager and not sound “bossy”?

First, keep in mind that some people will perceive a woman supervisor as “bossy” no matter what she does. Don’t smile as that will distort your voice. Look pleasant; when possible use the inclusive term “we”. Try to speak in a lower pitch and speak in *facts*, not opinions. Stand your ground, but be sure you are standing on *facts* when you are the manager.

For in depth information on the sound of your voice, review my textbooks at this site.

### General Vocal Complaints of Men

These are complaints that my male students have told me they are concerned about.

1. I talk too fast.

Yes, all too often men do talk too fast. This is for two reasons:

A. Men have an incredible amount of energy – most of the time they cannot sit or stand still. They talk fast because their engines are racing; they have to get somewhere in a big hurry.

However, men of consequence do not talk fast. Listen to men in public service, the top dogs in the corporations, none of them talk fast; they don’t need to. Talking fast can be a sign of hysteria, of anxiety or desperation. To be more effective, slow down, talk on the exhale of breath and use energy to hold attention and respect when you talk.

- B. The second reason men talk too fast is because they are highly competitive. If you are really good, why “compete”? See paragraph 2 above and relax to be more effective.
2. The second complaint is “I talk in a monotone”. No, this is not true. However, all too often, men do speak in a flat, uninteresting style. It seems that culturally some men believe that if they speak with “animation” they will sound effeminate. No, you won’t; you will sound interesting. Try speaking with more “music” in your voice and people will attend to you more.

For more in depth information check out the textbooks at the website.

### General Vocal Complaints of Women

1. People think I am a little girl when I speak.  
Yes, this happens often. You need to lower your pitch and speak in “statements”, not “questions” to be taken seriously.
2. I get interrupted a lot.  
This happens when you don’t speak on the exhale of breath. You need to breathe deeply, speak with volume and talk through interruptions.
3. People say I sound angry when I talk.  
Ask a good friend if you talk too loudly, or, better yet, ask someone who doesn’t know you very well, they will tell you the truth. You may need to turn down the volume. Also, tape yourself talking on the phone and when you playback, listen to how you’re coming across. You can modify some negative sounds.
4. If I lower my pitch will I sound like a man?  
No. It is *very* rare that a woman sounds like a man. With a lower pitched voice, you will sound more credible and competent as well as pleasant in your interaction.

For more in depth information, check out the textbooks at my website.