



Tips for Dealing with Bad Behaviour

Bad behaviour is always down to that person's own perspective, fears and the struggles they are having. That includes those suffering mental health issues.

1. It helps to start with this premise:

"Don't take anything personally. Nothing others do is because of you..."

Miguel Ruiz

2. If you are on the receiving end of bad behaviour, don't allow yourself to be triggered into making accusations, threats or make any attempt to control them. That will only build resistance to change.
3. Try and catch yourself before you launch into the usual script. Slow down and ask an open question with the intention of finding out what is going on.
4. Wait for an answer. If you can sit with a bit of silence then the other person will most likely fill it.
5. Ask them to tell you more.
6. Keep your tone even but not so even it is unnatural.
7. What is your underlying concern? Explain the effect the behaviour has on you in relation to that concern.
8. If you can, say what you can accept and identify something you cannot accept.

Example: you are about to chastise your teenage son about cleaning his room. You may feel like yelling "I am not your housemaid!" Instead, try offering a compromise on something you *can* live with and draw the line at something you can't. Can you *live with* dirty washing on the floor (it won't last forever) but you simply can't live with festering food on plates piled up under the bed (because you are worried that the dog will eat something that will make him ill). By offering a concession you will prod a deep-seated human need for reciprocity and in giving your concession there is a small win for the teenager.
9. Reflect on the 'scripts' that repeat in your interactions with someone about their behaviour. What purpose do they serve?
10. Identify the triggers and plan to say something different next time those buttons are pressed.