



Peer Pressure

Communities in
Transition

BY

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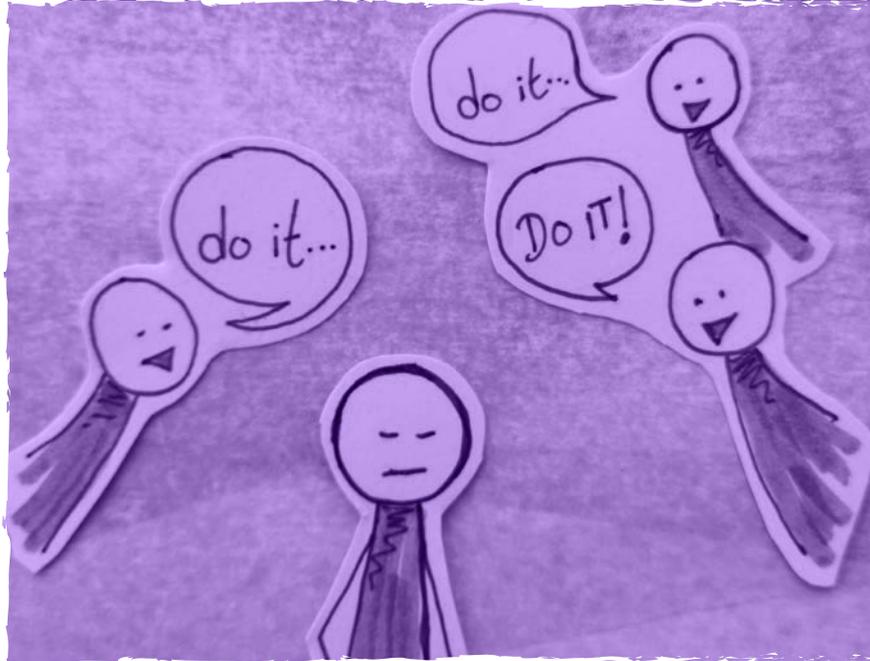
Are you feeling under pressure from others to do things you don't want to do?

Do you feel a constant need to fit in with the "in crowd"?

Do you feel that you have lost a certain sense of belonging and identity?

Are you often afraid of being left out?

If this sound like you. Then hopefully this factsheet will help.



Understanding Peer Pressure

Sometimes we can all be influenced to do things by our peers that are positive actions and sometimes we can feel pressured to do things that could potentially cause harm to you or someone else.

For example:

Positive Peer Support & Advice Groups

Doing better at school

Becoming a member of a group, for example a parent-teacher group, sports club, youth club or community centre

Helping others – volunteering for good causes

Being involved in health promotion activities

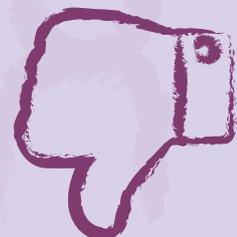
Negative Peer Pressure

Making wrong choices

Misusing substances

Harmful and/or risk taking behaviours, for example, stealing from family and friends, anti-social behaviours.

Online bullying



You may find yourself asking how you have become manipulated in this way. Here are some possible reasons:

- Fear of Rejection** – If you don't do what has been asked or suggested, you may be rejected, which can have an impact on our self-worth and confidence
- Bullying** – If you don't do what is being asked of you, peers could start calling you names, throwing insults, mocking you and making you feel that you are not a part of the wider group. In order to make their behaviour stop, you may start doing things that deep down you know aren't right just to conform.
- Convincing** – They convince you that acting or behaving in this way will be better for you, and that in some way you will benefit from this negative behaviour.
- Fear** – Sometimes we carry out actions driven by fear of consequences. Some of the threats to you might be fear of attack, or being intimidated or harassed.
- Past experiences** – Has something happened in your past that has led to you engaging in pressure from others? Have you been bullied before? Has someone criticised you before? Have others put you down? These can influence the way we engage with people in our lives.

How to stand up to negative peer pressure

Saying No – Learning to say no and standing by that no. Be mindful of name calling, "coward", "chicken" for example to make you carry out the negative action. There are different ways to say no, for example "Not this time", "that's not for me" or "I will give that a miss thanks".

Avoid answering their suggestions/questions – changing the subject to something else, this can help with you not engaging in challenging questions or behaviours.

Make an excuse to leave – for example "I have to go home". You will be in control of your behaviour and not engage in unhelpful actions.

Try to be responsible for your own behaviour – If it doesn't feel right to you then make a decision not to get involved, find an excuse to get out of the way.

Surround yourself with people who are good for your wellbeing – It may be difficult to try and make new friends, however it is important for you to surround yourself with people who are good for you, who will help influence you to make positive choices and better informed decisions.

Trying making the right decisions – Before you leave the house ask yourself if you are making the right choices. Ask yourself if it feels safe to go to certain places and if it is safe to be around some people. If you can do this before you leave the house this can act as a safety measure to stop you getting involved in risk-taking behaviours and can help with refusing peer pressure.

List of reminders to help avoid Peer Pressure

- Assertiveness classes or training
- Be around others who let you be yourself
- Avoid being easily manipulated
- Volunteer and meet like-minded people
- Set your own agenda & priorities for each day
- Download useful apps from Playstore to your phone
- Seek advice from positive peer support groups
- Take your time and make informed decisions
- Don't allow others to rush you into things

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