

March Newsletter

Bullying

Bullying in the workplace is very topical at the moment with the media investigating events in the Prime Minister's office in Downing Street.

If you did a poll of your family and friends on the subject of bullying at work you may be surprised how many people would tell that they have felt bullied at some point in their working lives.

It is a subject that often comes up in the therapeutic work carried out by the counsellors and psychotherapists and it is often very hard to address at work.

What is bullying exactly?



The dictionary definition of a bully is 'someone who hurts, persecutes or intimidates a weaker person'. You, or

someone you know, might have experienced being bullied by someone in a position of power, such as a supervisor, manager or boss, who you feel you cannot challenge without losing your position or the regard of others. But of course a bully can also be someone you work with who you find intimidating and who might use subtle tactics to humiliate or put you down. A bully might sound and openly express anger or at the other end of the scale may be cold and calculating in the way he/she undermines you.



Sadly the difficult economic climate that we face at the moment seems to encourage a

more cut-throat approach to work and this can be reflected in the way people relate to each other in the work-place. And if you are worried about redundancy you may find yourself reluctant to 'make a fuss' about bullying behaviour because you want to keep your job.



The experience of being bullied can destroy confidence and self belief and may leave you

feeling alone, ashamed and powerless. If the experience goes on for a long period of time it can cause great difficulty not only at work but in your private life too.



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So what should I do if it's happening to me?



The most important thing is not to suffer in silence but to tell someone you trust what is going on. Ideally your Human Resources Department is the place to take a problem like this, but if you are uncomfortable about doing this then you could contact The Orchard and book some sessions with a counsellor.



During counselling, you would be encouraged to talk about the bullying experience as well as perhaps to learn new communication and assertion skills to help you stand up to someone you experience as frightening or intimidating. In learning new strategies to deal with stressful situations many things can change such as the way you feel about yourself, your body language and the way you express yourself – although subtle, these changes can help you feel more confident and better equipped to deal with someone who might try to push you around.

If you would like further help and would like to talk to a therapist, visit our website

www.orchardleeds.co.uk

or call

0113 281 9493.