

## Toxic behaviour

A toxic person is anyone whose behaviour adds negativity and upset to your life. Many times, people who are toxic are dealing with their own stresses and traumas. To do this, they act in ways that do not present them in the best light and usually upset others along the way.

People often engage in toxic behaviours when they are coping with some underlying problem, such as a history of trauma, unhealthy familial relationships, or addiction.

Toxicity in people is not considered a mental disorder, but there could be underlying mental problems that cause someone to act in toxic ways, including a personality disorder.

Here are some warning signs to watch out for if you think you're dealing with a toxic person:

- You feel like you're being manipulated into something you don't want to do.
- You're constantly confused by the person's behaviour.
- You feel like you deserve an apology that never comes.
- You always have to defend yourself to this person.
- You never feel fully comfortable around them.
- You continually feel bad about yourself in their presence.

If you have experienced these feelings around someone, they may be toxic. If you constantly have such emotions, you may want to change the relationship or stop the relationship entirely.

People in relationships who are struggling with toxic arguments often have a number of harmful habits. They might yell, use personal attacks, stonewall, fail to express their feelings with words, or one of many other pitfalls. These behaviours can turn benign disagreements into intense arguments.

The **Fair Fighting Rules** handout describes the "rules of engagement" when it comes to disagreements. Instead of telling you that you can't argue, fair fighting rules tell you how to do it safely and productively.

Use this handout to learn about the boundaries, warning signs, and techniques for handling disagreements.

### Resources:

*Fair Fighting Rules*

*Eliminating Toxic Influences*

*Warning signs of a Toxic relationship*

Toxic People: 12 things they do and how to deal with them

<https://www.heysigmund.com/toxic-people/>

You may have toxic behaviours that you're not aware of

<https://blogs.webmd.com/mental-health/20190402/you-may-have-toxic-behaviors-youre-not-aware-of>

Do's and Don'ts for dealing with toxic behaviour

<https://www.healthline.com/health/how-to-deal-with-toxic-people>

How to identify toxic behaviours early on in any relationship – family, friendship or romantic

<https://www.stylist.co.uk/relationships/toxic-relationships-warning-signs/462846>