



21: The Power of Being Bully-Proof

13-16
ADULT

*A Lesson on Boundaries, Self-Worth, and Building a Competitive Advantage
by Standing Strong and Staying Respectful*



Introduction for the Facilitator

Bullying doesn't stop after high school. In adult settings, it can appear as manipulation, intimidation, exclusion, passive aggression, or abuse of power. Knowing how to recognize it—and respond without losing your integrity—is a vital **professional skill**.

This lesson equips students and adult learners with strategies to become **bully-proof**: to protect their energy, identity, and momentum in the face of mistreatment. It's not about fighting back with force, but responding with boundaries, clarity, and confidence.

Being bully-proof builds a learner's **personal competitive advantage** by strengthening self-respect, emotional intelligence, and the ability to lead with calm authority.

Adult learners in college and workforce development environments can use these bully-proof strategies in many different settings. This lesson includes:

- A relatable Scenario to show that being bully-proof is possible for anyone
- 8 Guided Group Discussion Questions with follow-up questions
- 8 Journal Prompts to strategize productive responses to bullying
- 8 personal Skill-Building Strategies
- A printable Action Planner for reflection and application



Scenario: “Just Joking” Isn’t Funny

Anika, 23, is in a skilled trades program. One of her classmates regularly makes jokes at her expense during lab time—commenting on her appearance and questioning her ability to do “physical work.” When she asks him to stop, he laughs it off: “Relax. I’m just joking.”

Anika documents the comments, then respectfully brings the issue to her instructor with specific examples and impact. The instructor facilitates a direct conversation and reminds the group of program expectations.

Anika doesn’t escalate, but she doesn’t ignore it either. Her calm, confident action sets the tone for the whole class.



Guided Group Discussion Questions

1. **What does bullying look like in adult or professional spaces?**
Follow-up: How is it different than conflict or disagreement?
2. **Why do some people stay silent when they feel bullied or disrespected?**
Follow-up: What makes it hard to speak up?
3. **What’s the difference between assertive and aggressive responses?**
Follow-up: Why does that difference matter?
4. **How can being bully-proof strengthen your personal competitive advantage?**
Follow-up: What do employers and peers notice about how someone handles pressure?
5. **What are signs that behavior has crossed the line from tough feedback into bullying?**
Follow-up: How can we tell the difference?
6. **What does it mean to be a bystander, and how can we shift into being an ally?**
Follow-up: What words or actions help in that role?
7. **What role do power, fear, and silence play in bullying dynamics?**
Follow-up: How do we disrupt that cycle?
8. **What’s one strategy that could help you stay calm, clear, and in control when facing difficult people?**
Follow-up: How can you practice that before it happens?



Journal Prompts

1. **Describe a time you felt disrespected. What did you wish you had said or done?**
2. **What does “being bully-proof” mean to you?**
3. **What helps you stay grounded when someone tries to provoke or undermine you?**
4. **What kind of person do you want to be known as when things get tense?**
5. **What are your personal boundaries? How do you protect them?**
6. **When have you stood up for someone else, and what was the result?**
7. **What fears or doubts come up when facing dominant or disrespectful personalities?**
8. **How can being bully-proof help you reach your personal or career goals?**



Skill-Building Strategies

1. **Anchor Phrase Practice:** Choose a calm statement like, “That’s not okay with me,” or “Please don’t speak to me like that.” Practice saying it with confidence.
2. **Document the Pattern:** If bullying is ongoing, keep a simple log with dates, quotes, and settings.
3. **Power Posture:** Practice standing or sitting with calm confidence. Shoulders back, eyes up, breathing steady.
4. **Bystander to Ally:** Practice what you’d say if you saw someone being bullied. “That’s not right,” or “Let’s refocus.”
5. **Support Network:** Identify 2–3 people (mentor, instructor, peer) you can talk to if something feels off.
6. **Reset Routine:** After a tough moment, use a routine to release stress (walk, journal, music, breathwork).
7. **Role Play Boundaries:** Practice boundary-setting with a peer: “I don’t find that funny,” or “That’s not part of my job.”
8. **Know the Policy:** Review your program, college, or workplace policy on harassment and bullying. Know your rights and supports.



21: THE POWER OF BEING BULLY-PROOF

Your Action Plan for Strength and Competitive Advantage

Action Planner

Reflect and Prepare

Name: _____

What Does It Mean to Be Bully-Proof?

Being bully-proof means knowing your worth, setting boundaries, and handling mistreatment with confidence and calm. It protects your peace, focus, and personal competitive advantage.

Why This Matters to Me

Why is being bully-proof important in your program, job, or life?

My Reactions and Boundaries

What I usually feel when disrespected: _____

What I wish I did more of: _____

One boundary I want to protect: _____

Belief Shift

Circle or write a belief that strengthens your confidence:

"I deserve respect in every space I'm in."

"Speaking up can be calm and powerful."

"Silence doesn't protect me—boundaries do."

"Being kind doesn't mean being passive."

Other: _____



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Your Action Plan for Strength and Competitive Advantage

Action Planner

Bully-Proof Practice + Progress

Name: _____

My 28-Day Confidence Goal

What mindset, script, or skill will you build this month?

Where or when will you practice it? _____

How will you reflect or track your growth?

☐ Journal ☐ Role play ☐ Support check-in ☐ Weekly log

Restart Plan

When I feel small, disrespected, or unsure, I will:

☐ Use my anchor phrase: "I can handle this."

☐ Ask a trusted peer or mentor for support

☐ Re-center with breathing or grounding

☐ Other: _____

Weekly Reflection Prompts

1. When did I speak up or set a boundary this week?

2. How did I respond to tension or disrespect?

3. What supported me and what drained me?

4. What will I build or practice for next week?

28-Day Bully-Proof Tracker

Focus skill or boundary: _____

Week 1 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 1 go? Circle one word:

☒ Calm ☒ Shaken ☒ Clear
☒ Passive ☒ Assertive ☒ Empowered

Week 3 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 3 go? Circle one word:

☒ Calm ☒ Shaken ☒ Clear
☒ Passive ☒ Assertive ☒ Empowered

Week 2 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 2 go? Circle one word:

☒ Calm ☒ Shaken ☒ Clear
☒ Passive ☒ Assertive ☒ Empowered

Week 4 ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

How did week 4 go? Circle one word:

☒ Calm ☒ Shaken ☒ Clear
☒ Passive ☒ Assertive ☒ Empowered