

# FACTSHEET

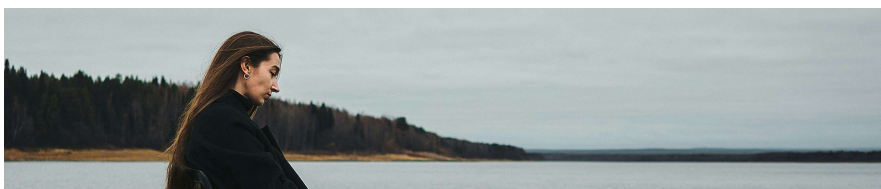
## Relational Aggression

How gossip and rumours can damage social relationships



Relational Aggression is behaviour often seen in women who seek to destroy a person's relationships through rumours, gossip and the social manipulation of groups

Women are less likely to use physical aggression than men, this means they often resort to non-physical covert tactics like *Relational Aggression*. Women who use aggression at work are 71% more likely to target another woman than a man (Workplace Bullying Institute Survey, 2007). In social circles female friendships rather than male friends are more commonly riddled with relational aggression. Being socially isolated or ridiculed is one of the most painful things that can happen in female friendships. Studies show that men are less bothered by this behaviour as women place much more weight on the friendships, they hold which influence feelings of belonging and value.



### Taking Action

#### In the Workplace:

- Relational Aggression in the workplace is never acceptable and is considered a form of bullying.
- In the first instance, you should (if possible) approach the person and let them know their behaviour has upset you and why. Keep it about how 'you' are impacted and don't assume the behaviour is deliberate as this can put the person on edge.
- Always keep notes on the behaviour and how it has impacted on you in case you decide to make a complaint to your management as they will always ask for specifics.

#### In your Intimate and Social Relationship:

- Workplaces have processes and procedures for dealing with bad behaviour, yet in the social world the same protections do not apply.
- Always set clear boundaries and be willing to address behaviour that impacts on your well-being and sense of self.
- Be assertive with the person so they know you are not a "push over" and speak to someone if you need further support. This can be a friend or professional.

"Don't let negative and toxic people rent space in your head. Raise the rent and kick them out"

*Robert Tew*

### Things to Consider

#### In the Workplace:

- Be sure to ask for independent advice as sometimes we can presume something is aggressive when it may be a personal interpretation.
- Follow workplace processes and procedures. The bully will know these and will know how to protect themselves and they will lie to do it.

#### In your Intimate and Social Relationship:

- Remember: You're in control of your response and behaviour as others are responsible for theirs.
- You have the choice to walk away.
- Don't let others walk all over you, show your worth with your feet by leaving the relationship or disengaging with the person.
- You have the control to make the change.

*Are you needing assistance with a toxic female issue?*

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