

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION: smart rules for dealing with toxic people**

We communicate and interact with different people all our lives because it is our nature to be social. But getting to know someone does not fill you with strength, new knowledge and pleasant memories. Then, we become participants or observers of various conflict situations. Today, we often hear such words as "toxic relationship," "toxic environment," and "toxic friends or relatives". Toxic people usually poison the lives of their loved ones, friends, and colleagues.

In fact, such people are best avoided and deleted from the list of close friends. However, there are situations when communication cannot be avoided.

Communicating with selfish, manipulative, and judgmental people is very difficult, although many of us do it with our hearts fixed because these people are close to us. Some of them can radiate charisma, be incredibly interesting interlocutors, and be the true soul of the company. But one of their remarks in our direction and the mood deteriorates at the same moment.

Many times, I have encountered such people, and every time, I am convinced that constant communication with toxic people can worsen your inner state, shake your self-esteem or throw you into a complete moral imbalance. Such communication also causes conflicts between you and your environment, destroys faith in yourself, your beliefs, and your goals, negatively affects your emotional state, and causes a feeling of devastation and inability to do anything. The main problem of toxic people is that they do not understand how negatively their words and actions affect others. Or worse, they are well aware of everything but will not change their behaviour.

Immediately excluding such relatives or friends from their lives is not necessary. First, establish communication. After all, if this is a person dear to you, then you need to understand the essence of the problem and do everything to avoid conflict. For myself, I brought out specific rules for healthy conflict resolution with toxic people:

1. Do not expect changes from such a person. It is much easier to interact with her when there is a clear understanding that a toxic interlocutor is unlikely ever to behave differently. Toxic people are skilled manipulators, so follow the direction of the conversation so as not to fall into the trap. It is not as difficult as it seems. You can deftly change the topic of conversation to cool the interlocutor.
2. Toxic people love to trap others in a funnel of negative emotions. If you get into this, you will become a victim of provocations and will respond negatively to the negative. So, you will lose your balance. Do not lose control of your emotions.

3. The precise wording of their position often scares toxic people. Openly say what exactly does not suit you.
4. Draw clear boundaries because a toxic person's favourite activity is violating the personal space of others. Mark the limits of what is permissible.
5. Speed up the duration of communication if you do not have the opportunity to completely abandon it.

Understanding this, you will first help yourself not become a victim of provocations and distance yourself from such a person with a sense of inner peace and not anger, hatred and irritation.

It can be challenging to cut off or even slightly reduce communication with toxic people with whom we are physically or emotionally connected. In friendly and family relationships, it is difficult to identify toxic traits of a friend or family member, understand that you deserve better, cut off all ties and move on.

I believe that the above methods will help to maintain mental balance, regardless of whether it will be possible to establish communication with a toxic person or not. We cannot control other people's thoughts, feelings and actions, but we can control OURS. Allow yourself to designate clear boundaries with people you consider close. They should be the cause of your smiles, not tears.