



9 Types of People you want to Avoid

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As we grow into adulthood we tend to believe the world is full of people who are similar to those we have encountered thus far in our lives. And that is because the way we see the world is largely determined by what we have experienced and been exposed to in our lives. If the people you have met and interacted with tend to have been caring and considerate (and we hope this is the case for most people), we tend to think that is how all people are, and we expect the same into the future. If we have met people who are mean and unkind, then unfortunately we also tend to expect new people we meet to be like that. And our thoughts and feelings and behaviour towards new people will be influenced by our past experiences. As we get older so we have more diverse experiences. We also come across a variety of different types of people, and we learn, sometimes in a difficult and painful way, that our early experiences were limited. There is a lot more diversity in the world, and part of growing up and doing life successfully means learning to be more discerning and recognising the enormous variety amongst people that does exist in the world.

This means learning to recognise that people vary a great deal in personality, motives, behaviour, and values. You get people who are the kindest most generous people on earth, and on the other extreme you get people, that some would actually use the term evil to describe. These people you want to avoid. And below I describe some of the signs that indicate the people you do not want to get involved with in any way, shape, or form. They are people who will hurt you, damage your self-esteem and confidence, and possibly even wreck your future.

When you meet new people look out for:

1. **Those who enjoy hurting others emotionally.** Whatever might be said about empathy, you want someone who is empathic. It means they will be aware of words and behaviour that may hurt you. Being around someone who doesn't care about how you feel is horrible. Being around someone who is careless with their actions and does things that hurt you even when you have asked them to stop it, can break you. And being around people who get a kick out of your being hurt, is soul-destroying. If you know someone like this, stay away as much as you can.
2. The **people who manipulate others to get what they want.** Manipulation can vary from the very subtle, such as compliments, to the direct and obvious, such as threats. You, as much as anyone else is allowed to have your needs and wants considered. Your needs and wants are

not always secondary to another person. If someone is manipulating you to get what they want (which means you don't want it otherwise they would not need to manipulate you to get it), stay away.

3. **People who never feel guilt or remorse.** We are all human beings and as such none of us is perfect. We make mistakes. We say and do things that hurt other people unintentionally. We cannot mindread and we don't know everything about a person. Instead of acknowledging that we have unintentionally hurt someone, some people have no capacity to feel any remorse and always see themselves as right. If you know someone who does not have the capacity to feel remorse, to feel guilty and make amends, then stay away from them. Such people can break you in the long run.
4. The **pathological liars.** These are people who lie easily and often, can be quite good at it, and easily fool others. They lie about what they have done. They lie about their behaviour. They even lie about you to others and can spread terrible stories about you when they are angry with you or want to paint you in a bad light in front of others.
5. **Those who cause harm and then play the victim.** There are some people who can never admit they are in the wrong. No matter how harmful their words or behaviour is to another, they will always be in the right. And they will turn the tables and tell everyone else how they are the victim. When they have hurt you or damaged you or your property in some way, they will make out it was all your fault and they are the ones who were hurt by you.
6. The **people who create chaos in the lives of others** – at work, in their families, in their neighbourhood – and then blame everyone else for this. Nothing they do is ever wrong. Everyone else is always to blame for their behaviour. Such people do not take accountability for anything.
7. People who **only support something if they benefit.** While we do tell people to focus on their needs and values, in order to have relationships of any sort, we need to have some concern for the well-being of others. If you are a good friend you will support your friend in their endeavours they care about, even if you don't really like that activity. The same with family. We cannot only spend our time doing everything that we want and offer no support and encouragement to those around us. If a person never supports you in matters important to you then you want to be careful. That is very selfish behaviour, and self-care and selfish are not the same. People do need to do what matters to them, and they do need to engage in self-care, but being extremely selfish is not a quality you want in your close friends and family.
8. **People who disrespect boundaries repeatedly.** We all have personal boundaries (or we should have) to protect our space, time, resources, and energy. If you have told someone what your boundary is, and they repeatedly violate it, then that person is sending a clear message that they don't care about you. They are in fact telling you that you are there for them to use as they feel they want to. They are telling you that their needs are of great importance and yours don't count at all.
9. **Those who cannot apologise.** For me this is a big red flag. And it goes back to an earlier point. We all do things, even to people we love very much, that will be hurtful. The ability to apologise is extremely important in maintaining relationships. An apology does not mean you are less of a person. Someone who apologises still recognises that they are a worthwhile and valuable person, and as worthwhile and valuable as anyone else, but they will own their mistakes and hurt they may have caused and try and rectify it. Being appropriately apologetic does not mean you think less of yourself. In fact, the ability to apologise is one of the signs of someone who has a healthy high self-esteem.

A number of these points overlap to some extent. Think about people you have encountered in your life. Think about if they engage or did engage in the past in any of these actions. You do need to be discerning in your life. Some people are very quick to say you must not judge others, however, while you don't necessarily want to be the judge and jury for the people you meet in life, you cannot just openly accept any type of behaviour. This is true whether it is a romantic partner, a business partner, a colleague, or even a long-term client. People can mess up the lives of others, and some of them do. When the "very wrong" people come into your life and stay there for a long time, it can take time and effort and even professional help to recover.

It takes time to get to know people. Some of the most awful people are very charming when you meet them. They are exceptionally good at putting on a front. Take your time before deciding who someone is. Look at patterns and the long-term behaviour. And remember that ultimately actions tell you who someone is far more than words ever will.