

Support vs. Spite: Unlocking the Secrets to Uplifting Humanity

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Objective: The purpose of this learning objective is to help the youth understand their emotions better when tough situations arise. Through responsible choices and supportive behaviors, youth have the ability to uplift themselves, their peers and humanity at large.

Introduction

Life is a series of choices. Every day, how you see the world around you and the way you interact with it has an ability to dramatically affect the trajectory of your life. The more you aim to stay positive and choose support and understanding over spite, the more likely you are to have a beautiful and meaningful existence.

What Causes Spite?

Spite is the emotion that makes humans want to cause harm to themselves and others. It's the "desire to hurt, offend or annoy someone," according to *Dictionary.com*. It's also the concept of hurting someone because you have been hurt. Pain and hurt are a gigantic part of the human existence and it takes daily measures of mindfulness to stop the cycle of pain and hurt. The most common cause of spite is being hurt by something out of your control and then returning the hurt in order to defend yourself. It can be someone attacking you on social media. They themselves could be having a tough day and decide that attacking you is the best way to feel good in the short term. They then project their bad day onto you and it's a choice if you want to project your bad day onto someone else through spiteful behavior. It's a vicious cycle and it's something that can be stopped through the power of positive emotions.

According to a report by *CBS*¹, they found that people with more spiteful tendencies were more likely to also show hints of callousness, poor self-esteem, aggression and guilt-free shame. Conversely, those who were less likely to be spiteful were also more likely to feel guilt, had higher self-esteem, and were more agreeable and conscientious.

How Do You Manage Spite?

Spitefulness can be attributed to low self-esteem, aggressive tendencies and the inability to feel guilt or empathize. In order to manage spite, we must first get to the root of why spite is a reaction. As the youth, you have the ability to transform the history books by creating a whole new culture based on support and collaboration. Managing spite will help you get there. It's okay to feel spite. It's not okay to react with spite and harm others. The intention behind your actions is important to understand. If your intention is to hurt someone, then it's best not to do it. If your intention is to uplift someone, then it's a good choice. Sometimes, we are given situations that are beyond our control. How you manage that situation is how you manage the story that is your life. The key to managing your reaction is to first recognize and accept that you are feeling spiteful. It's natural to want to defend yourself and have a knee jerk reaction to return harmful behavior when something hurtful or harmful happens to you. However, it's a choice to react on that. It's also important to note there is a fine line between being spiteful to hurt someone and staying strong in your values in order to teach a lesson. Protesting and articulating through conversation about something you don't believe in can also be considered harmful or spiteful to the other party. They could choose to get offended by your truth. The difference is always the intention. If your intention is to stay strong in order to teach someone a valuable lesson and to help someone grow, then it's not spiteful.

1. <https://www.medicaldaily.com/spitefulness-scale-what-traits-make-person-more-likely-engage-destructive-behavior-279150>