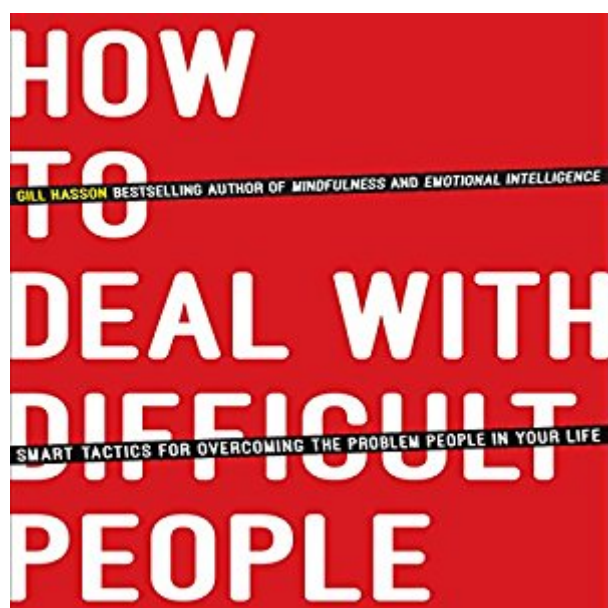


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# How To Deal With Difficult People: Smart Tactics For Overcoming The Problem People In Your Life



## Synopsis

Don't let problem people get to you! Whether it's a manager who keeps moving the goal posts, an uncooperative colleague, negative friend, or critical family member, some people are just plain hard to get along with. Often, your immediate response is to shrink or sulk, become defensive or attack. But there are smarter moves to make when dealing with difficult people. This book explains how to cope with a range of situations with difficult people and to focus on what you can change. This book will help you to: Understand what makes difficult people tick and how best to handle them Learn ways to confidently stand up to others and resist the urge to attack back Develop strategies to calmly navigate emotionally-charged situations Deal with all kinds of difficult people - hostile, manipulative and the impossible Know when to choose your battles, and when to walk away Why let someone else's bad attitude ruin your day? How to Deal With Difficult People arms you with all the tools and tactics you need to handle all kinds of people - to make your life less stressful and a great deal easier.

## Book Information

Audible Audio Edition

Listening Length: 4 hours and 21 minutes

Program Type: Audiobook

Version: Unabridged

Publisher: Audible Studios

Audible.com Release Date: August 31, 2015

Whispersync for Voice: Ready

Language: English

ASIN: B0145EYHPK

Best Sellers Rank: #22 in Books > Business & Money > Human Resources > Conflict Resolution & Mediation #125 in Books > Self-Help > Communication & Social Skills #193 in Books > Audible Audiobooks > Business & Investing > Leadership & Management

## Customer Reviews

Great book. More thorough than others. It actually has suggestions on how to practice dealing with difficult people. Easy read. Well written. And up to date.

Read this book if you're having problems with difficult people in your life!

Kind of wordy but it's ok.

In *How to Deal with Difficult People* Gill Hasson presents various approaches to this problem. She begins by saying that difficult people are everywhere. A difficult person is someone who upsets you in any way. Difficult behavior occurs on a continuum. You can't change someone's behavior, what you can do is change how you respond to it. The book is divided into three parts. Part one provides the basics of how to deal with difficult people. Two types are those who are openly hostile and aggressive and those who are passively aggressive. How you respond depends on who it is, why they are being difficult, when they are being difficult, why they are being difficult and how you are feeling. You can respond by being resigned, indirectly confrontational and directly confrontational. Your expectations affect the situation and they are dependent on your values which may be different from the values of the other person. You should keep a "beginner's mind" (do not judge the person from past experiences). You need to know how to listen. Active listening involves repeating, summarizing and paraphrasing. Non-verbal communication is also important. The basic approaches for dealing with difficult people include: 1. Be assertive "identify and explain the problem" 2. Say how you feel "use 'I' not 'you'". 3. Acknowledge your part in the situation. 4. Say what you will and won't do. 5. Stand your ground. 6. Negotiate and compromise. 7. Identify solutions and consequences. 8. Keep calm and rehearse what you will say and do. Part two covers what to do with specific kinds of difficult people including those who are directly hostile, indirectly hostile and passive. Specific examples are given. Part three covers dealing with "impossible" people and the advice there is to avoid them or minimize contact as much as possible. This book is quite useful, as all of us have to face problems with various people in our life.

Some people know exactly how to be difficult; they're the people who bring you down with their negativity, criticism or anger, they refuse to cooperate, they're irritating, frustrating and often infuriating, and if you respond to someone else's difficult behaviour with anger and blame, withdrawal or compliance, you may end up feeling guilty, stressed or depressed, according to Gill Hasson in this book. After discussing the differences between openly hostile behaviour, disguised hostility and passive behaviour, the author goes on to discuss ways of communicating with difficult people, including: Active listening, which minimises the likelihood of communication breakdown Minimal encouragers, being sounds and body language which should be used calmly and in a neutral way Questions about feelings, with the aim of developing some

degree of empathy. Controlled use of body language. Using an appropriate degree of assertiveness. All of these actions require you to be able to control your own emotional response, something which is very difficult to do in a situation of open conflict. Moreover, as the author indicates numerous times, you need to be able to develop a high level of self-awareness, so that you can form an objective understanding of the extent to which you might be contributing to the conflict. The book seems to concentrate on how to deal with difficult relational situations when they arise, rather than preventing such situations in the first place by investing in relationship building. Nonetheless, in my opinion this reasonably short book provides a number of useful suggestions for dealing with the sorts of situations that everyone encounters but most people dread.

The positive: this book contains a succinct outline of active listening techniques, which can be useful as a last line of defense. The negative: After reading *How to Win Friends & Influence People*, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons in Personal Change* and *Games People Play: The Psychology of Human Relationships*, this book has very little to offer. Most of it consists of generic self-help text ("Make sure you aren't the problem." and "Act confidently!"), what Covey would call the "personality ethic." There is also a lack of references to active research on psychology or social dynamics, which makes the book feel even more like a collection of "you can do it" statements and less like a genuine effort to help people. Advising a person to go against the wishes of difficult (often controlling) people without having a firm grasp of oneself (which *7 Habits* aims to develop) or a clear idea on how interaction SHOULD operate (as *How to Win Friends* educates) is TERRIBLE advice. Yet one of the earliest passages in the book is a story of a daughter who, fed up with being treated as the Scapegoat for her family decides to disobey her parent's wishes. It was partially successful for her (which is great), but could very easily have gone cataclysmically bad (the parents could have been abusive narcissists, or be entrenched players of any number of psychological games.) Almost all of the "techniques" recommended amount to kindergarten-esque "tell the bully he is hurting you, and he will stop" nonsense. A difficult person is, usually, some type of monster (sociopath, narcissist or malevolent psychopath), someone who is traumatized in some way, or a person who has an incomplete social character. Unfortunately you will not learn how to identify those in this book, nor will you learn how to have a successful interaction with one.

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