



The ultimate insult?

Belle Miller

When you read the words 'ultimate insult', does your mind take you straight to what someone has said about you that hurt? What if you are the one throwing the ultimate insult? But to yourself. Doubt and disliking what you have and pining for what you don't. Telling yourself you're ugly or not good enough is bullying and insulting yourself that is a constant torment. Nowadays you hear so much about bullying, the signs that you should intervene and the short and the long-term effects it has on an individual's life. All of this is bad enough but you hardly hear about self-abuse and the long and short-term effects it can have.

Why would you ever insult yourself? People may ask you. If we knew why and how to stop, we would, but you can't just tell yourself to stop because you feel everything still and any time the slightest thing goes wrong, the self-bullying will come back worse. If someone jokingly insulted you, it would be laughed off no matter if it hurt or not. We might say we have been 'picked on'. When does picking on someone become bullying? When it's every day and uncontrollable.

Making someone feel insecure and uncomfortable with their life or whatever the issue is not okay and a line should be drawn and action taken. But where can the line be drawn when it comes to your own self-bullying and everyday insults? We question bullies. Why did you bully and abuse this person every day? And most of the time the bully's answer is that they are insecure and battling their own issues. And self-bullying is no different – you are battling your own insecurities in your head.

'I never realised I was a bully until I realised how I spoke to myself. I owed myself an apology' (quoted from Google). We are told as children to treat others as we want to be treated ourselves and this should imply that we should treat ourselves how we treat other people – with respect and kindness.

We have unnormalised bullying; we encourage talking about it and we deal with the bullies. But we need to promote awareness that self-abuse and self-insults are equally bad and we should speak up about it. Just because you don't overhear and witness the bullying, doesn't mean it isn't happening. Words can be said without a noise and esteem can drop without being visible.