



# When You Witness Workplace Bullying, Harassment, or Psychological Harm

*A Self-Reflection and Support Guide for Bystanders*

You are not 'just' a bystander. Witnessing bullying, harassment, discrimination, exclusion, intimidation, or other psychologically harmful behaviour can affect your own wellbeing. You may feel conflicted, frightened, frustrated, or unsure what to do. These reactions are common and deserve recognition.

## Self-Assessment

- ☐ I feel upset about what I witnessed.
- ☐ I keep thinking about what happened.
- ☐ I worry I could become the next target.
- ☐ I don't know who I can trust.
- ☐ I have seen similar situations before and nothing changed.
- ☐ I am afraid speaking up could negatively affect my career.
- ☐ I feel guilty for not doing more.
- ☐ I am afraid I will make things worse.
- ☐ I have lost confidence in leadership.
- ☐ I have experienced bullying or harassment myself in the past.
- ☐ My own personal life is already overwhelming.
- ☐ I don't know what the right thing to do is.
- ☐ I have noticed changes in my mood, sleep, or stress.
- ☐ I wish someone would simply ask how I am doing.

If you checked several of these statements, your well-being deserves attention.

## Why Bystanders Often Struggle

- You have seen previous reports go nowhere.
- You fear retaliation or damage to your reputation.
- You have financial or family responsibilities that limit your capacity.
- You have your own history of trauma or workplace bullying.
- You do not know who is safe to talk to.
- You are trying to balance your own values with protecting yourself.

## Caring for Yourself

- Talk with someone you genuinely trust.
- Do not carry this burden alone.
- Maintain healthy boundaries and routines.
- Write factual notes if documenting events.
- Seek professional support if the situation is affecting your mental health.
- Remember that asking for help is a sign of strength.

## If You Choose to Support Someone

Simple statements can make a meaningful difference: "I just wanted to check in." "I believe you."  
"You do not have to go through this alone." "What would be most helpful right now?"

## Self Reflection

- ☐ I feel safe.
- ☐ I am concerned, but coping.
- ☐ I am emotionally affected by what I witnessed.
- ☐ I am afraid to become involved.
- ☐ I feel morally conflicted.
- ☐ I feel psychologically unsafe.
- ☐ I think I need someone to talk to.

**Consider Keeping a Personal Record!** Whether or not you ever decide to make a formal report, consider keeping a factual record of what you witness and how it affects you.

Stress can significantly affect memory, concentration, attention, and recall. It is common to forget dates, conversations, timelines, or important details over time.

Documentation is **not only for investigations or complaints**. It can also help you:

- Clarify what you experienced.
- Recognize patterns over time.
- Preserve details that may otherwise be forgotten.
- Increase your confidence if you later choose to seek advice.
- Reduce self-doubt or second-guessing.
- Support your own wellbeing and decision-making.

If you choose to keep notes, record factual observations rather than assumptions. Include dates, times, locations, who was present, what you directly observed or heard, and how the event affected you. Remember, your notes are first and foremost **for you**. They may help you make sense of your experience, whether you decide to report the situation or not.

Healthy workplaces are built when people feel psychologically safe enough to care for one another. Whether you choose to speak up today, later, or simply focus on your own wellbeing, your experience matters.

## Need Support?

Trauma-informed consulting, education, coaching, and support for psychologically healthy workplaces.

Contact Linda Crockett via email at [LindaCrockettConsulting@gmail.com](mailto:LindaCrockettConsulting@gmail.com)

*No matter what you are going through, with experienced resources, we can help you find a solution.*