

Is Relationship Bullying a Thing?

7 Signs You Are Being Bullied By Your Partner

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It is easy to assume that your partner and the relationship between you two might have a few bumpy rides but will be a breeze all through life. While we hope that it often turns out to be true, a 'few bumpy' rides are just the tip of the iceberg when you are in a toxic relationship with a bully.

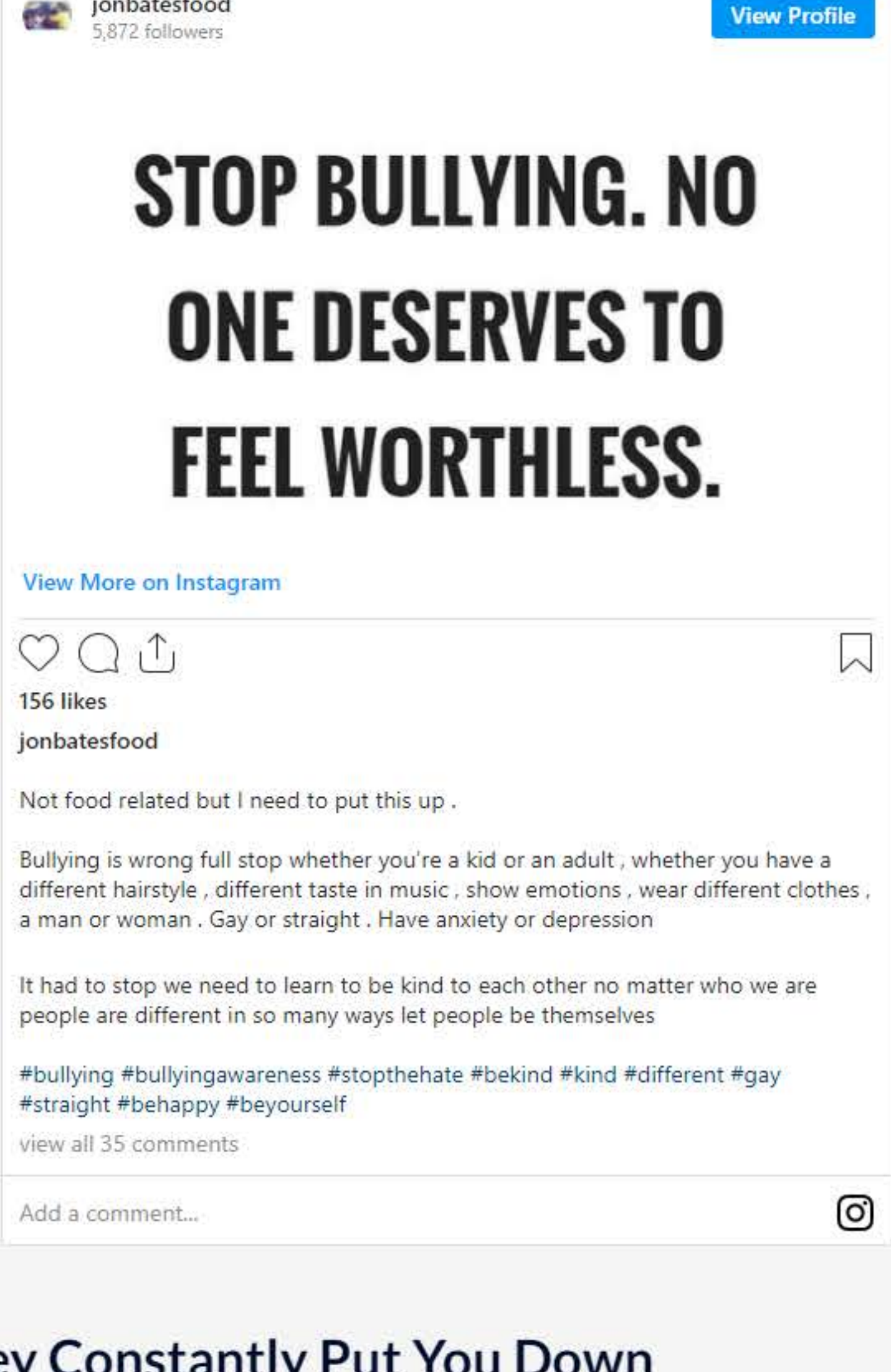


Dr Malini Saba

We spoke to Dr Malini Saba, who is a psychologist and also the chairman and founder of Saba Group and Anannke Foundation to understand more about how to know if your partner is a bully. She started off by saying,

Younger bullies are more explicit in their tyrannical acts but as they grow older, their display of abuse becomes more subtle yet deeper. They take a trifecta of emotional, physical and mental assault to quench their thirst for control.

Here are tell-tale signs of a bully that you should always be vigilant of:



1. They Constantly Put You Down

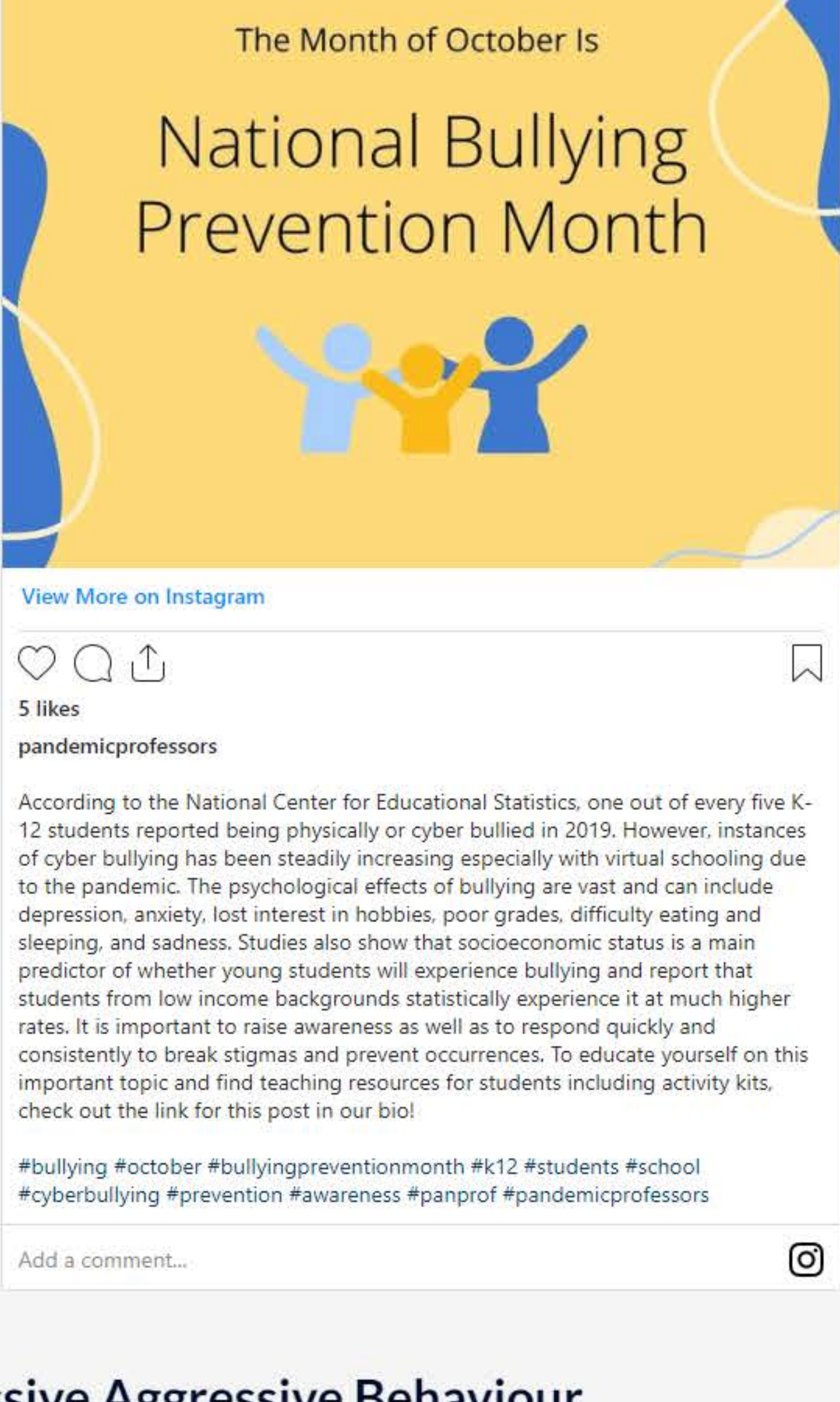
Nothing is ever good enough for them, especially you, your actions and milestones. A bully will go out of his/her way to point out your insecurities and flash them during your happiest moments or in front of your friends and families to show that your achievements and opinions are worthless.

2. They Are Always Dissatisfied With You

Be it physically or emotionally, your bully of a partner will always point out he/she are the only one investing themselves in the relationship while are a mere spectator on the bleachers. They are never happy about the little things or the big things, and will always find faults in every situation. And they will ensure that you are made aware of that disappointment, time and again.

3. They Cannot Tolerate People With Opinions

People with strong opinions often fare down at the bottom of the list because their threshold to listen to what others have to say is pretty weak. For someone who likes the sound of their own voice and has no will to listen to others, people with opinions and ideas are on the bad side. Since they are bullies, their arrogance does not allow them the scope to be labelled wrong.



4. Passive Aggressive Behaviour

Sometimes bullying is not loud, it slithers subtly in the form of passive-aggressive behaviour where your partner, instead of diving into clear communication, choose to respond with a 'nothing', 'its fine', or 'doesn't matter', to name a few. They do not leave a lot of space to allow healthy communication and even conflict to resolve the matter at hand. Some might even push this issue under the rug with this passive aggression, only to bring it up later to inflict emotional and mental pain. These type of bullies are likely to gaslight you and penalise you for 'even suggesting such a thing'.

5. They Think 'Its Funny'

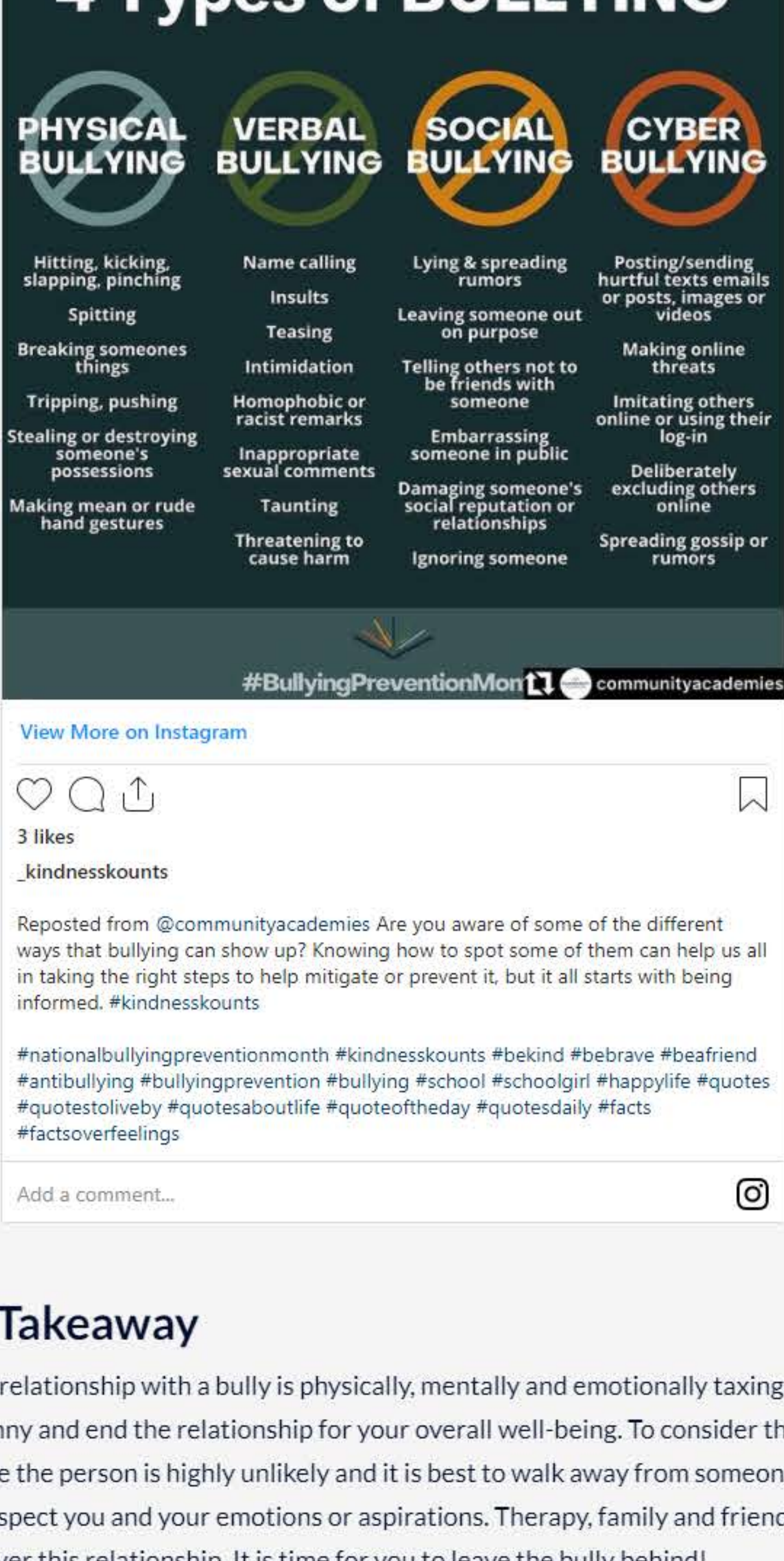
If you often hear them say, "Come on, I am just joking", or "lighten up!" and even "can't even take a joke, can you?" then you are dealing with a partner who likes to belittle their partners and cover it up with a joke. Emotional bullies are not very explicit in their insults but never miss an opportunity to make their bullies seem like someone who is overreacting or plain stupid. This behaviour often crops up when you are the center of attention or have been a recipient of a well-deserved award. These emotional bullies will dilute your moment by a hurtful comment, wrapped in the pretense of a joke.

6. You Change Yourself For Them

You are often confused about the right things to say around them, arranging your schedule for them or simply trying to do the right things, just to fit their preferable list. Healthy relationships are not abetting to only one person's demands and preferences but both of them coming in halfway to aid each other. Your partner is a bully if you are forced to change yourself in order to appease them.

7. They Do Not Understand Their Actions - Even If You Tell Them

Sometimes it helps to tell the other person what they are doing wrong. Giving them perspective helps people understand their shortcomings. However, this does not work on your bully of a partner. They tend to believe that they are on the right path and you are too immature to handle them (which you are not supposed to, you are not their parent). Or they might implement those changes for a few months and then fall back into their old patterns, thus, pulling you back into square one.



Final Takeaway

Being in a relationship with a bully is physically, mentally and emotionally taxing. Call out their tyranny and end the relationship for your overall well-being. To consider that you can change the person is highly unlikely and it is best to walk away from someone who doesn't respect you and your emotions or aspirations. Therapy, family and friends can help you tide over this relationship. It is time for you to leave the bully behind!

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