

# INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT 19 (p. 1 of 2)

(Interpersonal Effectiveness Worksheet 13; p. 193)

## Recovering from Invalidation

### NOTICE THAT INVALIDATION CAN BE HELPFUL AND PAINFUL AT THE SAME TIME

#### Remember: Invalidation Is Helpful When

1. It corrects important mistakes (your facts are wrong).
2. It stimulates intellectual and personal growth by listening to other views.
3. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Invalidation Is Painful When

1. You are being ignored.
2. You are not being repeatedly misunderstood.
3. You are being misread.
4. You are being misinterpreted.
5. Important facts in your life are ignored or denied.
6. You are receiving unequal treatment.
7. You are being disbelieved when being truthful.
8. Your private experiences are trivialized or denied.
9. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Be Nondefensive and Check the Facts**

- Check ALL the facts to see if your responses are valid or invalid. Check them out with someone you can trust to validate the valid.
- Acknowledge when your responses don't make sense and are not valid.
- Work to change invalid thinking, comments, or actions. (Also, stop blaming. It rarely helps a situation.)
- Drop judgmental self-statements. (Practice opposite action.)
- Remind yourself that all behavior is caused and that you are doing your best.
- Be compassionate toward yourself. Practice self-soothing.
- Admit that it hurts to be invalidated by others, even if they are right.
- Acknowledge when your reactions make sense and are valid in a situation.
- Remember that being invalidated, even when your response is actually valid, is rarely a complete catastrophe.
- Describe your experiences and actions in a supportive environment.
- Grieve traumatic invalidation and the harm it created.
- Practice radical acceptance of the invalidating person.

**Validate Yourself Exactly the Way You Would  
Validate Someone Else**