

BUDDHIST COUNSELLING FOR BULLIED CHILDREN

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When we consider Buddhist counselling, there are many teachings of the Buddha which could be applied in addressing this issue of bullying. The methods, which the Buddha used when dealing with Akkosa, Alavaka, and Suciloma, the three demons who tried to bully the Buddha, could be applied when doing counselling for bullied children. No one is really separate from the others. Reminding ourselves that we are all interconnected assists us in cultivating empathy, wisdom and compassion. These three methods could be followed in doing counselling for bullied children. In addition, the qualities such as approaching our difficulties with courage (*utthana viriya*), patiently waiting until we see a clear pattern emerging before we jump in with knee-jerk reactions and emotional responses (*khanti*), being happy with who we are and all that surrounds us (*santutṭita*), mindfulness (*samma sati*), loving-kindness (*metta*), compassion (*karuna*), appreciative joy (*mudita*) and equanimity (*upekkha*) can be applied in addressing bullying. One could cultivate these qualities within themselves and then extend it to all sentient beings, especially to bullies. On the other hand, physical and mental withdrawal and practicing enough *Vipassana* meditation could also be helpful. A counsellor can use these Buddhist counselling techniques when doing counselling for both the bullied children and those who bully others.

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