

Teacher's Kit

by Nōnen Tīti
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Soup and Bread

Mum complaining that she's a fussy eater is like a theme tune that belongs to dinner time, and the teacher complaining about the bullies is everyday classroom routine.

You can get used to those... until Mum decides to make only soup and bread for dinner every day and the new kid in school causes trouble.

For eleven-year-old Vonnie, it all becomes too much, but she's not about to go down without a fight.
Sometimes, you simply have to throw a tantrum to make things better!



Thank you, brave teacher, for choosing *Soup and Bread*

The objective of the book, apart from literacy skills, is to help the reader understand two things:

1. That diversity comprises more than superficial social, cultural, ethnic, gender, religious or orientation preferences. Diversity of how we deal with information (our psychology) is inborn and responsible for all our clashes and misunderstandings, but also for our learning and communication styles. People are not psychological clones of each other, and that is a good thing.

2. The difference between outside traits and this inborn personality. Bullying, even if the reasons are often attributed to observable differences, is a result of relations between individuals, and the expectation that everybody must be like us or be wrong. Such behaviour can only exist where people get together, such as schools. Likewise, eating disorders and other mental health problems often result from ignoring psychological diversity.

Bullying and eating disorders are not easy topics, but if you believe all students to be individuals and your role is help them succeed, then this book will potentially generate respect, tolerance and understanding for all types of students, teachers and parents; if we all get together, it can help the whole community.

Trials in addressing the climate between them, rather than look for causes and solutions in the external traits of individual students, are yielding positive results across Europe.

Contents

Resources	3
Reviews and Bio	4
Soup and Bread Themes	5
For English and Literacy	6
Character List	7
Soup and Bread Plot Summary	8
Follow-up	10
Classroom Discussion Ideas	11
Activities	13
Types and Classroom Diversity	14
Bullying Summary	15

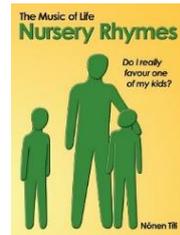


What I offer

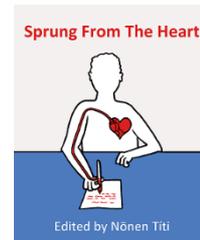
Continuous email support:

Considering the complexity of the issues, and their emotional weight, you have my full support and I will be available by email for additional information, to answer questions and explain anything you need to know about the personality types.

A free eBook copy of *Nursery Rhymes*, which is the descriptive guide for understanding the personality types of children. This will give you an idea of the types of your students.



A free eBook copy of *Sprung from the Heart*, which is a collection of poems written by people from around the world about their personal struggles with the discussed themes (such as bullying, diabetes, anorexia).



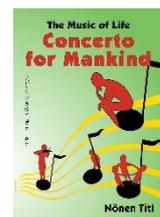
SPRUNG FROM THE HEART
A free not-for-profit eBook anthology of poetry that shares the emotions of people who are struggling to cope with problems such as chronic illness, bullying, eating disorders, anxiety, guilt and fear – emotions that are all too often dismissed.
It's a message from the heart.
Get your free copy from meBooks.co.nz or contact me at nontiti.com
cover by djanko.nl

All other resources in this kit may be copied for classroom use.

Additional resources

For a step-by-step explanation of the psychology, presented as a musical analogy, I recommend ***Concerto for Mankind***

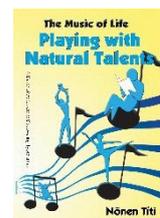
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Playing with Natural Talents is the printed version of the free eBook (*Nursery Rhymes*), and comprises, in addition, three other perspectives to discovering people's types:

1. friends, partner or self
2. parents and guardians (looking back)
3. colleagues and best fit job for talents

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Reviews for Soup and Bread

Jayneen Sanders

20/04/2015

A well-written book for readers approx 10 to 15 around the very important topic of bullying and eating disorders. Very happy to recommend this book.

*SOUP AND BREAD is a really unusual adventure dealing with more than one major issue for those concerned, and Nōnen Títi has seasoned her well-written story with a great deal of information to help young adults understand their lives. While the author lives in New Zealand, I believe this tale could occur in many places around the world, so perhaps it's true to say that we have too many choices of what to eat, and too many adults unprepared to listen to unhappy young students. The real lesson of SOUP AND BREAD is that we should be prepared to listen and to make changes for the better. Any family with a diabetic adult or child will be especially interested in reading this adventure. **Clare O'Beara on Fresh Fiction***



Nōnen Títi, short bio

I began my career as a nurse in physical and mental healthcare and midwifery. I worked four years as a specialist nurse and head nurse in a summer camp for diabetic children. I trained and worked as a Montessori teacher when my own children were growing up and acquired my BA in philosophy from the University of Otago at a mature age. My specialization is our natural psychological differences, which I

have studied and written about for twenty years. Apart from my non-fiction books on this topic, all my fictional stories are based in these innate human differences. Each character is a unique person and all problems are a result of personality clashes between them.

I live in Wellington, New Zealand.



Soup and Bread Themes

FOOD-related issues: eating disorders (anorexia and obesity), being fussy, metabolic diseases (diabetes mellitus), rules about using words like “fat”, eating chocolate, health food and fast food.

BULLYING: the difference between teasing and bullying, peer pressure, suicide, assertive skills, the difference between bullies, bystanders, joiners and victims.

SCHOOL VALUES: moral judgment, where values come from, school rules, lying, stealing, caring, responsibility, tolerance, equality and so on.

OUTSIDES AND INSIDES: The difference between

1. outside traits, which cannot be changed, but are not part of our inner Self, things like ethnicity, race, gender and diseases.
2. outside observable and measurable things that *can* be learned and changed at will, like actions, words, names, rules, knowledge and behaviour.
3. the inner person and its natural talents, perceptions, feelings and values that cannot be learned, measured or changed.
4. the difference between the concept and the practice of tolerance, the difference between objects and relations, the difference between right or wrong action versus good or bad people, and the danger of moral judgment as a tool for obedience.



Soup and Bread targets the place where bullying occurs – without blaming either teachers or principals – but by acknowledging that it is about group psychology. My point of view character is a bystander (not a bully or a victim), and we follow her as she learns that she is strong enough to make a difference, not only for her immediate friends and relatives, but also in her school.

In doing so, the book addresses the rest of us: the bystanders, those who accept the easy excuses, often to avoid feeling guilty or helpless.

Therefore, this is not strictly a kid’s book, and the feelings and worries of parents and teachers are also addressed. Children age 11 and over have fully developed personalities and can understand these issues, and together we can do something about them. To create a classroom that celebrates true diversity.



For English and Literacy

THE PURPOSE OF FICTION Where non-fiction can give us factual information and knowledge about topics, fiction allows the reader to climb into the head of the characters and allows understanding. Today, most children understand and tolerate people of different sexual orientations; yet this is recent. One of the main reasons that this tolerance came about, is because writers and filmmakers allowed the public to see them as normal people. In this manner, fiction has an important social role to play. Unlike knowledge, understanding cannot be right or wrong.

Schools can present fiction, but there is no correct explanation.

FIRST PERSON PRESENT

The present tense gives the story momentum and is a style I like to use with contemporary stories, so that the characters have to respond to what happens without being able to reflect back.

The first person allows me to focus on feelings and motivations. Other writers naturally paint a story more like a film (omniscient third person narrative). This is a personality type preference in the writer, and for the reader these preferences also exist, which means that some students may have more or less trouble relating.

There is just one point of view character in this story, which means that what she cannot see or hear, is not shown. But where needed, Vonnie overhears things or a message is related to the reader through dialogue, like Ricky saying “If I’m going to be part of this family...”.

METAPHOR: Because of the abstract nature of this topic, the book uses a range of metaphors and analogies, like mirrors, soap-bubbles, an invisible wall, eyeglasses, invisible medicine (like insulin) and so on. In addition, I often use music as an analogy to explain where those differences in people come from. But soup and bread are also metaphors; as foods they are a type name – a metaphor to the types of personalities – they are not exactly the same, and as such they can complement each other and form a wholesome meal.

I would invite students to come up with other similes, analogies and metaphors for this book’s abstract concepts. But beware that some types of children naturally understand symbolism, and others do not and might be better off using similes to body functions.

CREATIVE NARRATION

Throughout the story, Vonnie naturally uses empathy (feeling into), even with the cat and the kids in photographs; she imagines what they must feel or think. This empathic tendency fits her personality type, but not every student will be able to do this. Nevertheless, one of the most valuable exercises this story can generate is to allow the students to write a first-person account from the point of view of one of the other characters in relation to the events. Or else, to ask them to write a second person account, like a letter from the victim to the bully, for example. Or maybe they want to write it into a script.

Just be careful not to grade (judge) such insights.



Character List

Yvonne or Vonnie (11), protagonist

Laura (15) her sister

Dad and Mum

Aunt Barbara (Mum's sister)

Francine (14)

Isabel (9)

Oliver (0)

Rinah Timisela (11), Vonnie's best friend

Sitha (5), her sister

Rinah's Mum and Dad

Frank Young (11), the new kid

Bessie (15), his sister

Jamie (9), his brother

Frank's Mum and Dad

Claire Weaver (12), the 'fat' girl

Andrew (8), her brother

Claire's Mum and Dad

Ricky (15), the 'anorexic' girl Vonnie meets at the hospital

Helen (15), who used to be in Bessie's class

At school:

Mrs Applewood, Vonnie's (year six) classroom teacher

Ms Mills, the receptionist

Mrs Baker, the principal

Mr Fisher, the year five teacher

Miss MacDonald, the PE teacher

Becky and Ben, the twins

Alice, Bambi, Manda, Grace and Matt, their friends.

Scrawny Donny, the year five boy, who is also bullied

Mrs Cook, Donny's mum

Manda's mum, who runs the snack store



oup and read – Plot Summary

The protagonist of *Soup and Bread*, Vonnie, is a happy and healthy girl in her last year of primary school. She's fussy about food and she doesn't like the school bullies, but those are not *her* problems, because even if Mum complains at every meal, Vonnie never has to empty her plate and the bullies never pick on her; she's a bystander.

The book covers a four-week period, and can be more or less divided into four parts accordingly. It begins with a prologue, in which the protagonist (who is at that point not yet named) finds herself at the receiving end of the laughter of the bullies during a birthday party. Her response to this situation sets the stage for the personality differences.

Week one introduces the main characters: Vonnie and her normal daily routine, her sister Laura, with whom she gets along well, Mum complaining about the meal routines, and Dad making jokes about that with the girls. Vonnie's best friend, Rinah, whose mother is very strict about eating dinner, used to get bullied for her ethnicity. At school, Ben and Becky, the twins, and their gang of bullies, still attack Claire, who is fat, and Donny, who is slow.

The teacher assigns the class a group project about school values, to be presented at parents' night, three weeks from then, a project none of the girls (Vonnice, Rinah and Claire) want to do, because it means standing up in front of the class.

In the weekend, we meet Isabel and Francine, Vonnie's cousins. Isabel, who plays violin instead of sports at her private school, is a victim of bullying too, and their mother is also into healthy foods, but instead of complain, like Mum does, she has put her girls on a special diet. The girls, however, have found a way around that.

In the second week, Frank, the new kid, joins their project group. Frank is not only a Type 1 diabetic, he is different; when the bullies try to make him pay to be allowed into the playground, he pays them with a punch on the nose instead of money, and he soon begins to accuse Vonnie and Rinah of being bystanders.

At home, Mum is fed up with her family being fussy and decides to make soup and bread for dinner every day. Vonnie tries to cope with all those changes, but feeling hungry, she finds herself tearful and angry, and she sees a solution when Rinah tells her about an uncle who went on hunger strike.

After learning more about diabetes at school and visiting Frank in the hospital during the weekend – where she meets a number of other children with serious health problems, including Ricky, who is anorexic – Vonnie begins to realize that she has a “lucky body” and that things cannot always be seen from the outside.

During the third week, Vonnie becomes angry and controversial; she takes her mother's money because “it serves her right”. But the next day, she discovers she lost it. It is Frank's mum who helps her get it back, but now Vonnie has to deal with feeling guilty, while Rinah is jealous of her visiting Frank. Vonnie also starts to realize that Rinah is judgmental and that the school is taking the side of the bullies by not stepping in, exactly what she does herself, and Frank says bystanders are just as bad

as bullies. She is torn between all those feelings, and just when Mum is willing to make her what she likes to eat again, Vonnie's stomach begins to get upset.

She skips school and takes Claire out for a day of shopping with Mum's money. But when they go to the hospital – believing that if Ricky can meet Claire, she will understand that she is really skinny – they run into Frank's mum and then the whole story about the money comes out anyway.

Vonnie does not get in trouble at home, because Dad says it was the soup and bread that was the problem, and he makes some new rules for the whole family about dinner times. Yet this does not relieve Vonnie's guilt and her stomach ache only gets worse, and so do her moods until she finds herself yelling at the teacher and calling the bullies out in class, after which the principal gets involved.

To prevent the bullies coming after her when school is out, as they did Rinah, or during PE, where Claire was attacked, Vonnie refuses when the teacher tries to force her to participate, until she is sent to the principal's office once more, where she overhears that Donny is in trouble for carrying a knife.

That evening, Mum threatens to take Vonnie to a doctor for her sore stomach, but Vonnie fears they will send her to a mental doctor (as Ricky's parents did). Just when she has decided to run away, Frank's parents visit her home and offer to take her on a weekend to the seaside, together with Frank and his brother, and Rinah and Claire, so they can work on their project together.

The climax covers that weekend and the Monday after. As it happens, Frank's parents have a different agenda than just a fun weekend out. Not only have they invited Ricky as well, but theirs is to be a "virtual" weekend, where they all have to interact as if online, so that no physical features or behaviours can be judged. But that is not all. The children meet Frank's sister who was bullied so badly, she ended up mentally handicapped because of it, as well as Helen, who was a bystander during that event and now feels terribly guilty.

During a very emotional exchange between all of them, Vonnie begins to understand that not everybody is the same on the inside and it is their relations and different personalities (not any of the outside traits that she used to blame) that are the cause. And when, on the way home, she suddenly remembers that she promised Isabel to convince her mother not to send her to school on Monday, for that same reason, and it turns out that Isabel has made a suicide attempt, Vonnie can't take it anymore.

The story ends when they do their performance about inside values at school. Mrs Applewood is not impressed that the kids are telling her the workbook is wrong, and like many people, she has trouble accepting what cannot be seen. But the principal is a different personality and after a major shouting session during parents night, not just from Vonnie, but from many of the parents – some of whom were also bullied when young and some of whom are very shocked at discovering that it is their children who are the bullies – she suddenly clicks, and then, like Vonnie, she immediately takes action. Once she understands, she can address the climate at school, and they can all work together: teachers, parents and children alike.

In the end, Isabel wakes up from her coma, and the story ends with a party at Vonnie's house for all of them.



Follow-up

I have included only suggestions for activities and discussion topics, because as their teacher you are the best person to turn the topics into activities for your students, depending on their age and your own comfort level with the topic.

The thing to keep in mind is that the book is about people being different on the inside: having different personalities, which means there are no right or wrong answers.

In some cases, it might be better to simply ask the students to think about it than to share it; some (especially victims) might prefer to write and not talk about it, and introverts naturally keep things private.

Therefore, my preference would be to ask them come up with solutions and new ideas, and allow them to identify with some of the characters. To discuss the topics in as non-judgmental as possible a way. The book itself should make an impact on their beliefs and emotions.

THE COVER: The soap bubbles on the cover each show the reflection of something people can see; like mirrors, the bubbles reflect the outside, while what is on the inside cannot be shown, because it represents the abstract feelings and interpretations of individual people, and those are different for all. I use “soap-bubble words” for abstract words that are often believed to have an objective meaning, but are differently understood by different personalities (regardless of any teaching of concepts), because their inner *experiences* are different. Thus, as the bubble pops, there is nothing concrete left.

SCHOOLS AND VALUES: The children in the story have to do a presentation project, in which they incorporate the “values” they have learned that year. You need to be aware that some personalities (whether children, teachers or parents) internalize their values from the environment, but others have their own values deep inside them; “they are born with them”, regardless of the beliefs of the environment.

Those of you who ‘teach’ values (whether teacher or parent) may feel uncomfortable if children have different inner values than what feels right inside you. It is impossible for all people to have the same values, yet it is human to feel uncomfortable when somebody does not agree with our innermost motivations. Just be aware that children also have inner values, and telling them theirs are wrong makes them equally uncomfortable.

Schools cannot have values; they can have norms and rules. Children can be expected to obey the rules, but they cannot be expected to adopt the values. This is the key difference between outer behaviour (right and wrong action) and inner person (good or bad), which is today so often confused.

Vonnie’s parents are an example of conflicting values in adults.

ACROSS BOUNDARIES: Psychological types are neither caused nor influenced by ethnic or cultural differences and not by gender, hormones, brains or genes. Environments can not change a type, but they can cause a person to feel unhappy with their inborn self. To emphasize that, I have made sure that if one ethnicity or gender is represented in the victims, it also is in the bullies, and so for adults.



Classroom Discussion Ideas

What values do you have? What are values and how do they differ from norms?
Does your school have values? Do you use them in class? How did you get your values?

In between the prologue and the first chapter, there is a little four-line saying that compares the words *assault*, *abuse*, *delinquency* and (hints at, but does not say) *bullying*. The first three words are all related to crimes; they are illegal and not acceptable in society, but bullying is often accepted as just something kids do. What do you think about this and why do you think this saying is in the book?

At the start, the teacher asks Becky to practice *consideration* in her choice of words, so as not to hurt Claire's feelings, but Vonnie gives a slightly different explanation to what "consideration" means. Who do you agree with? Do you think it is okay to talk about "fat"?

During the first weekend, when Vonnie's cousins visit, Francine says about her mum that, "She wants to do what is right, but she doesn't know whose right to choose".
What does she mean by that? Do you agree with her? Is there more than one right?

The definition of "tolerance" is important in this book. The workbook defines tolerance as allowing people to have different tastes and not making negative judgments about that. Do you agree that is all tolerance is about?

Is tolerance accepting that other people's beliefs are *equally* correct even if you cannot understand them or that you have to make concessions for other people's beliefs, even if *they* are wrong?
The school claims to be a zero-tolerance school. What does the school not tolerate?
But if all kids are expected to be the same on the inside, this could be interpreted as the school having zero tolerance for inborn differences. Do you agree?

Isabel feels she is not allowed to lie, even if it can save her from being harmed, but Vonnie has no such problem. And unlike Rinah, Vonnie believes that rules have to make sense before you are obliged to follow them.

Do you believe children should follow rules when they are "crap"? Which other characters are like Vonnie and which are more like Isabel or Rinah?

Mum and the teachers believe that Vonnie must be dieting, because that is what they mostly hear about today. Can you understand that they worry about that? Do you think there is a difference between dieting and hunger strike?

Rinah's mum and Frank's mum have strong beliefs about the power of the body over the mind. Do you agree that diets and hunger strikes come from wilful conscious behaviour, but the unconscious mind can cause behaviour that nobody wills, including the person behaving like that?

Mrs Young tells the principal that she told her sons to hit back if they are being bullied, at which the principal says she does not condone violence.

In the dictionary, there are a whole series of meanings for “condone”, such as *to reluctantly accept, to overlook, make allowances for, take no heed of, disregard, deliberately ignore, turn a blind eye to*. Mrs Baker and Mrs Young each interpret a different meaning. Which do you think they interpret and why?

When discussing how the kids reacted differently to seeing Bessie, Mrs Young explains that Rinah can’t help feeling uncomfortable. What does she mean when she says “some people are born with strict rules about right and wrong”?

What does it mean, “like an inside skin colour”?

What do you think Sunday Sickness is?

Frank is “shocky” a few times. What experience with medical emergencies do you have?

What do you think about keeping secrets when it is important? When somebody is being hurt or abused in another way, should they keep it a secret? What if the abuser tells them to keep it a secret under threat (which is often the case, both in sexual abuse and bullies)? But Isabel relied on Vonnie as a friend. Is Vonnie more of a friend when she does not keep the secret or when she keeps it? Is that tattling?

Vonnie says that she can “see” Mum frowning on the inside, and that she can understand Claire when Claire shrugs, because “Rinah often talks like that”. What does she mean by that? What is body language? What is empathy? Is it the same as sympathy?

Vonnie asks Donny, “Does it not make you angry? Anger is directly related to our inborn sense of justice; this sense is not explainable; no person can define justice, yet we all feel it when an injustice is done. Anger and revenge are, therefore, a natural response to feeling unjustly treated, although some children turn that anger to themselves, which is where we get eating disorders and suicide. What makes you angry? Can you see the different responses in the characters?”

The definition of bullying (in the workbook) says it is forcing somebody to do what they do not want or what makes them uncomfortable.

The counsellor forces Claire to role-play being bullied? Is she bullying Claire in doing so?

The PE teacher forces the children to run, even if it causes them to be miserable and even if it gives Claire an asthma attack. Do you agree that Miss MacDonald is a “bully with the best of intentions”?

Can you be a bully without knowing that you are?

Do we measure bullying by the standards of the bully or those of the victim?

During the weekend, Ricky promises that she will eat, but what happens when the table is set?

How does Ricky respond?

Can you understand that an anorexic person responds to eating the way a person who is scared of spiders would to seeing a spider. Seeing food causes a panic attack in Ricky. It is like a phobia and she cannot help this.

If you do something wrong (behaviour), does that make you a bad person? If not, is it fair to assign people personality disorders if you don’t like the way they behave?

How did the book affect you? Did it change your mind about issues? Did the character learn something? Did you?



Activities

A VIRTUAL DAY

Like the story kids go on a virtual weekend, try to go one day without any judgments in class. Then discuss how hard that is, and how easily people make judgments without being aware of it. What about a tone of voice or a look?

NEW VALUES BOOK

Rewrite the values of Mrs Applewood's workbook into definitions that make sense to *you*; rewrite the value meanings for your own type. Remember that values cannot be right or wrong.

WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Get blank cards. Ask each student to create one scenario they have faced or would like an answer to, on one side of the card, and write WHAT WOULD YOU DO? on the back, so you create a card set with as many scenarios as you have students (or more, if you wish) and ask them to discuss or write about it, draw cards randomly for group discussions or for acting out (for those who want to).

GET THE PARENTS INVOLVED

Ask the students to prepare a similar presentation on what is important to them for a parents' night. How would they explain this abstract concept? Would they like for their parents to understand them better?

CONFLICT RESOLUTION TEAM:

With older students, you could organize a student conflict resolution team or tribunal and let them deal with bullying.

Many conflicts come from people misunderstanding each other due to their personality. Learning about the natural way different types talk, can also help.

MAKING POST CARDS: The story kids make cards (like this one) to send to people, including parents, schools and teachers. Let your students create their own cards.



nonentiti.com 

Judgment Hurts

If you receive this card, you may have (unintentionally) hurt somebody with unasked advice or moral judgment. Please respect other people's values.



Types and classroom diversity

Very basically, each person is born with different information filters (functions) that are responsible for their natural talents, learning styles, topic of interest, non-verbal language, natural empathy and manner of reasoning. These natural filters (used from birth or even before) result in different types of people (attitudes), which I briefly describe here. Additional information can be found in the provided eBook (*Nursery Rhymes*) or in the other resources, and I am happy to explain by email.

Extraverted (E) types participate in the world; they relate directly to the object, get their energy from people and things, and consequently socialize easier and like to work together.

Introverted (I) types observe the world; they relate subjectively, get their energy from being alone, and consequently get tired from being at school and like to learn alone.

Judicious (J) types naturally direct others to get what they want or need; they can be judgmental.

Persuasive (P) types naturally inform others of their needs; they can be manipulative.

Both experience each other's values and natural responses as an insult, yet both are equally valuable to society.

EJ: These children tend to have plenty of friends, internalize the rules of their environment, are obedient, chatty, naturally polite and conscientious. They tend to be in school committees, and may come across as the ideal students. However, they expect the world to be as they see it and dismiss other views. This makes them prone to following bullies in order to belong to the in-group. Many teachers are of this type.

EP: These children internalize reality, but not moral values. They react to their environment, consider rules a challenge, may be somewhat impulsive and often can't sit still (which does *not* make them ADHD). Some communicate mostly in body language, while others are linguistically smart enough to outtalk anybody. Some are prone to being bullies, others to being victims. They may thus be difficult students to keep in check, but they are also non-judgmental and natural stage performers or actors. Yet, many have an underlying insecurity that does not surface, but is very real.

IJ: These children tend to be quiet, obedient, and at first glance may appear as the perfect student, but they are also highly sensitive, often to noise and electronics, and their natural need for perfectionism can cause them all kinds of stress, which may express physically. They are the most likely to end up on the receiving end of bullying, often because they cannot hide their feelings and insecurities, although some of them may adopt an almost arrogant attitude to hide behind.

IP: These children are usually easy-going, as long as they are not pushed; they can be insubordinate, but quietly so, and are either very good with their body and non-verbal (causing them labels like ADD) or very intellectual and introspective (causing labels like autism). They are neither; they are simply introverts. They tend to be self-motivated learners and will do fine if you give them space.



Bullying Summary

- that bullying is based in natural (instinctive) tendencies, but it is NOT okay
- that bullying is not a problem of individual kids; it's an aspect of group behaviour
- that no external features, race, religion, behaviours or physical traits and hormonal imbalances are either the reason or an acceptable excuse
- that most labels of "disorders" put on children today are easy excuses for a complex problem
- that other problems (such as eating 'disorders') are rooted in the same core differences and therefore immediately related, but not the cause
- yet anorexia, bulimia and obesity, as well as other self-harm strategies can be the *result* of bullying
- that most parents will not know that their child is being bullied until it is too late
- that nobody is to blame, but that we can nonetheless change our collective attitude and reduce the problem
- that "values education" and advice such as "get tough" or lessons to that effect have made the problem worse, because it introduces double bind situations that leave the victim no way out
- that trying to deal with the symptoms is missing the bigger picture and the underlying causes
- that most schools are bystanders, and in some cases even accommodators, and that "good advice" is covert bullying
- that teaching the right and wrong of behaviour is ineffective unless accompanied by actions that demonstrate it
- that teaching adults to deal with the problem can only work if they also have an understanding of the psychology that lies at the core of interpersonal relationships

In light of that, the book asks

- schools to take responsibility (not blame) and not point the finger at brain chemistry, disorders or other easy excuses that make the child feel 'faulty'; we need to attack the behaviour instead of the person and work together as a community
- children and parents to stand up for their rights, to get honest about the real issues and not accept blame or being dismissed for not being experts
- bystanders to get actively involved and collectively stand up for the victims
- those types of personalities that naturally end up on the receiving end of bullying to connect together and support each other

