

Stand up at the water cooler
Men confronting men who cross the line
By Daniel Rosen, LCSW

It is hard to tell your friend that you think his comment was inappropriate. When a man says something demeaning about woman, how can you reply? Often we laugh and shrug it off. I bet every man who supports Stand Up Guys has at one point let something slide.... And then regretted it. There is lots of pressure to join in a laugh or to sympathize with the guy whose girlfriend is "psycho."

So, if you are ready to take the step and confront some of the very inappropriate, critical, sexist or outright abusive things you hear man to man... here are some ideas. And if you have a good comeback or way to deal with it, please let us know by email.

The outright abusive comment. Some of these suggestions are light... because it may not be the time or place to really engage.

"Hey, that is over the line man... take it down a notch."

"Look, we are friends, but some things are just wrong no matter who is listening. "I love Hitler", the n-word and that are just too far."

"Not on the job, my friend, not on the job."

Sometimes you do have time to explain more in depth what you are concerned about.

"You know, I used to think that way too, but I got to tell you, I just can't support that way of thinking. Here is how I changed my mind _____"

"Can I honest here? We are friends, and I got some feedback for you... Are you up to hearing that or should I save it?"

"Just cause I am a guy does not mean I disrespect women. I take offense to that, they same way you should if someone was talking about your mother or your daughter."

Sometimes a comment just turns your stomach or get you fired up, and you wont be able to anything appropriate.... Just walk away. You leave, the message you are sending by leaving sits there for the speaker to deal with.

Dealing with the pornographic or overly sexual comment. The light approach. Over time, people will start to get the message.

"Alright, that's enough for me now."

"Come on I am trying to focus... what about (new topic)."

More direct approaches

"You know, I just can't deal with these kinds of jokes/pictures/comments anymore. I like sex as much as you do, but I don't like making crude/violent/sleazy. I just don't find this stuff funny anymore. Can you respect that?"

"I think the way you talk about sex its no wonder you are having relationship problems. I don't mean to sound harsh, but you got to deal with you sexism man."

"Would you say that if a woman was here? Well, if not, then don't say it at all. You got an honest issue to talk about, I am happy to work with you on it. But not like this."

And lastly, for almost any situation.... You can say.

“Hey, I’m a *Stand Up Guy*, and I want you to be too. Check out this website...”