

# Essay on Sticks and Stones May Break My Bonbons, But Names Can Never Hurt Me.” In What Ways Do Insult and Violence People’s Lives?

The above saying is one that DOES not apply to most people. Very, very few people can tolerate being called an idiot, a fool, a bastard or some things too crude and obscene to be written down. In fact, violence usually follows insults. Both affect us deeply.

There were occasions when I had used insults and harsh words on another person. What were the consequences? Well once I had to defend myself from the resulting violent attack by the other person; my neighbor It was not actually self-defense on my part. Both of us were sufficiently angry from exchanges of insults that we really wanted to cause grievous harm to each other. Fortunately, we were only kids who did not have the physical strength or presence of mind to inflict any real permanent damage. Only our egos were badly bruised For the most part of one year following our quarrel, we never spoke to each other. We were sorely affected. Even now, after all these years, he still does not get along well with him. Though we may exchange a few polite words whenever we meet, the resentment is still there.

While violence can result in broken bones and cracked skulls, insults hurt the feelings of those involved. Bones and skulls can mend with time leaving perhaps a scar or two, or at worst, a physical disability. However, a wounded heart may never heal or the wound might fester and become worse. Physical injuries are external and can be seen. It is not so with a heart wounded by insults. It is unseen and if unresolved can be very dangerous. Holding a grudge is a very, real human characteristic.

In our society, most of us do not indulge in any physical violence on

purpose Some may even go through life without even physically fighting with another person. It is not so with words. All of us, at one time or another, must have exchanged insults with others. All of us are affected in the same way by these insults.

From what I have observed, it does not take very much to hurt another person using words. One does not even have to use any harsh or obscene words to do so. All one has to do is to just suggest that the other person is inferior and that will hurt him deeply. How do you think people get insulted when being called a “cheapskate”? Why do people not want to be labeled as “average” or ignorant”? These words all imply inferiority. Nobody likes to feel inferior. A person on the receiving end of such insults would probably defend himself by returning the insult or in some cases proceed to inflict physical harm on the offending person.

I suppose people get hurt by words far more often and far more deeply than ‘sticks and stones’. We are so often ‘angry’ or ‘fed up’ or ‘sick and tired’ or ‘sore’ with somebody because of what he has said. Once in a while we can read in the newspaper of somebody publicly apologizing to another person for insulting him. That shows how deeply hurt a person can be to demand a public apology.

It is a rare person who is not affected by what others say. It is an even rarer person who does not say things that will hurt others. To a certain extent we can choose not to be offended by some insults, but it is impossible to make sure what we say does not become insulting person. Like it or not, calling names and exchanging insults will always occur and will always affect us, one way or another.