

Ways to cope with people you don't like - *especially when you have to*

Can't stand your in-laws? Work with someone you despise? People are often forced to deal with others they dislike either in a family- or work-related situation. A University of Missouri–Columbia communication professor looked at what people will do to distance themselves from those they dislike.

- Interact with the person only in a group setting.
- Avoid asking the other person questions.
- Treat the other person as eccentric in some way and merely tolerate his or her behavior.
- Fail to acknowledge the other person's presence.
- Actively reject a person from a conversation.
- Avoid jokes and light-hearted conversation.
- Speed up interactions and get it over with as quickly as possible.

Successful work and social life depends on our ability to maintain relationships, even with people who dislike each other, said Jon Hess, whose study appears in *Human Communication Research*.

