

# **[Advice] How to respond when my boyfriend's coworkers disrespect me to his face and he tells me about it?**

January 16, 2020 | 11 upvotes | by [amadexodus](#)

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My boyfriend works a physically demanding job in lumber, and his coworkers happen to be rough, gruff, and sometimes very crude. One of his coworkers follows him on a social media platform, so that coworker has seen a picture of me/my face. Today, when he stepped out to call me for 20 minutes while he was on break, he told me that his coworkers said something a little rude to him regarding me (what he called "0") and then something very inappropriate (what he called "100"). He wouldn't tell me what the second thing was, and I didn't ask or push him. I also didn't "shoot the messenger."

I could care less what these men say about me when I'm not around as I've never met them. It did make me a little sad that my boyfriend's coworkers said inappropriate things about me just to disrespect him because I love and respect him as a man above all else. I said just as much to him, minus the "I love you" since it's still a new relationship and we're not saying that yet.

**How do I remain a safe place for him to share these shitty moments with me? What are some things I could say/do better in the future if this happens again?**

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## Comments

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offcalkimpossible • 6 points • 16 January, 2020 05:15 PM

I think one of the best things to do is one, not to let it bother you. These people don't know you, so nothing they say has any meaning or value. Two, the only reason behind them doing it is childish. Two, turn it into a joke. "He said you were ugly." "Well Atleast I'm better looking than him." And say it in a completely non serious manner, even though I'm sure you are. If you can laugh or cry, always choose to laugh. And hopefully your boyfriend told his coworker piss off.

jessica\_3112 • 7 points • 16 January, 2020 06:32 PM\*

I went through something similar with my bf and he also didn't tell me what his friends said exactly. From what I understood, the main problem was that his friends didn't respect him so they didn't respect me either. For this to stop, your boyfriend has to stand up to those men and earn their respect (this stuff shouldn't happen if he already does that). As for what you can do, simply be non judgemental and don't take the critic seriously. He'll learn with time that he can tell you stuff. This is what my bf and I did and it worked ☐

ProgmusicHans • 9 points • 16 January, 2020 09:45 PM

Your problem isn't about his co-workers talking shit about you, you don't really care what unknown faces say, it's about the fact that they talk shit about you TO HIM! This shows you, that he isn't respected or feared by his peers. This lack of respect is concerning you, because it shows his social status isn't as high as you thought. By telling him "I love and respect you as a man above all else" you were trying to reassure yourself, that you are respecting and loving him as much as ever.

**" What are some things I could say/do better in the future if this happens again?"**

You have to motivate him to stand up against people disrespecting you and thereby him and/or him in general or you will indeed lose love and respect for him.

[deleted] 17 January, 2020 12:08 AM

[deleted]

ProgmusicHans • 3 points • 17 January, 2020 12:21 AM

Is it in his best interest? Depends on him. They fuck with him, because they can. They will never respect him until he is standing up for himself. He doesn't have to get in someone's face, but he has to establish himself. If he is lacking self-worth and isn't motivated or ambitious enough to change his status in his peer group, he shouldn't try to change the dynamic half-arsed.

ny-lady[☐] • 1 point • 17 January, 2020 03:14 AM

Motive him to get a better job with better people. Bottom line he works with toxic people and hard labor, this job will age him fast.

Respectable people dont act the way they are to him. Even if he 'stands up' to it, why should he even have to? He works with A holes who lack respect for human beings and want to put down people projecting their own garbage.

iMakeGreatDeals • 2 points • 17 January, 2020 02:06 AM

Your concerns, and your goals, and your hopes and dreams, are a million times greater than this small event. It is

like a giant tree looking down at a weed. You have better things to wonder about. Your boyfriend needs to gain the strength and charisma to thrive in a male group (characterised by banter, teasing, apparent cruelty, etc). You can help him become stronger, but really it's on him. Just don't make him weaker. He needs to learn to fight back, as do we all. Think of this: as iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens another man.

HB3234 • 2 points • 18 January, 2020 07:39 PM

U/progmusichans hit the nail on the head. The level of respect that his peers show YOU is directly related to the level of respect they feel for HIM.

But here is my big question: why did he tell you this at all? Was he hoping for comfort from you, in the same breath as delivering things which you would not want to hear about yourself? It is inappropriate for him to relay insults to you for no reason except that they were said! You didnt shoot the messenger but why on earth did he think it was wise to make himself the messenger?

This is an early relationship. You're still vetting. Is he acting like a protector right now?

aussiedollface2 • 2 points • 19 January, 2020 01:24 AM

Why did he pass this info onto you!?! I'm sorry but that's what I'm most concerned about. xo

[deleted] 19 January, 2020 01:38 AM

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Zegiknie • 1 point • 19 January, 2020 12:12 PM

The concern is not in that he is being mean to you, but he is showing vulnerability. He told you about how he 'lost' a social interaction, not how he handled it/fixed it. It's not a problem per se, but it could potentially be, and put you in a mommy role.

As for how you can support him - pack delicious lunches, show up after work looking classy and beautiful and ignore his coworkers.

If they get into your face, treat them overly polite in a patronizing way, then act like you're trying to keep a straight face but want to laugh at them while making eye contact with your boyfriend. Use all your body language to convey they are pitiable. And that yours is a king.

If someone makes a seriously lewd comment in your presence, pretend to think they are on some kind of social thing for people who aren't right in the head. If you have a balloon, offer it with your most sincere smile.

Hehe.

szsunshine • 1 point • 17 January, 2020 01:34 AM

I have been in your shoes, only it was my H's FAMILY that was disrespecting me to his face.

In my situation, my H is 100x more HV than the family members (there was more than one!) who disrespected me. And I'm 1000x more HV. I agree that the reason that they are disrespecting you is a sign of disrespect aimed at HIM. However, that does not mean that your H is low value. Or that their disrespect is a sign of anything other than the LV of the co-workers talking sh\*t.

Eventually my H cut this family member out of his life. But I had to wait many years due to family circumstances.

I agree to not let your bf know the comments bother you. Humor (like a previous poster suggested "I'm a lot prettier than HIM!") or some other comment like "haters be hating" are probably your best bet.

Is this line of work a good fit for your bf? If the men are like this your bf may not be meant for this industry. Or, if there is more than one group, he needs to align himself with a group that is more respectful of women. don't brush it off as "the type of men in jobs requiring physical labor...." - I used to work in construction, literally on a yard (in the business office which was a trailer), and the men were respectful and polite.

ArtBetween • 1 point • 25 January, 2020 01:46 PM\*

It's called harassment and he needs to know he's protected by the state. Give him credit for drawing attention to this and not retreating into silence. We should avoid victim blaming and instead encourage him to continue building his voice, so that he may take appropriate steps in discussing this with his supervisor or company HR. Knowing what rights he has is how he'll grow into a solid professional rather than falling into the loop that his coworkers failed to grow out of. No one is telling him this and he needs to know.

redknobmirror • 1 point • 27 January, 2020 02:58 PM

They are messing with him to try to figure out what kind of man he is. The comment isn't about you, if you were a super model they would have made fun of him for something else. Once again the comment has nothing to do with you. His coworkers are testing him to see if he's a bro or not a bro. I still understand how that would be frustrating / hurt tho.