



Anti-bullying assemblies for secondary schools LOSTPHOBIA: The Virus

Participants: Readers 5 Mimers 2

Props: chairs and covers to represent bed: clipboards, OHP/power point, OHT of LOSTPHOBIA
(optional – see script) Music

*Chairs, covered to represent a bed, are placed in the centre.
Music sets the scene as Mimer 1 enters in pyjamas and lies on bed, back to audience.*

Readers 1&2 enter to opposite sides.

Reader 1

I'm definitely not going to school today
My stomach hurts again.
I know they think I'm faking it
Just pretending I'm in pain.

Reader 2

"Just pull yourself together," Dad is bound to say,
"It's all in the mind, you'll be all right
Get up and face the day!"

Reader 1

But he doesn't see it through my eyes
He thinks it isn't real.
No one can ever understand
The sickness that I feel.
The desperate desire to shut out the world
And stay cocooned in bed
I feel so afraid and desolate
I sometimes wish I was dead.

Reader 2

"Go and tell your teachers.
They'll stop this bullying curse."
Reader 1
Get real! For everybody knows,
That only makes it worse.

Readers 1&2 exit and are replaced by Readers 3,4&5 dressed in white coats, representing SENIOR DOCTOR and two JUNIOR DOCTORS. They stand by the bed, carrying clipboards to hide their words. A few bars of music are played, ideally from the theme of a well-known hospital drama to suggest that the scene has changed to a hospital ward.

Reader 3 Interesting case this. It's quite common, but unfortunately it can often go completely undetected and untreated.

Reader 4 What is it exactly, doctor – I can't read the writing. (*looks at imaginary chart at end of bed.*)

Reader 3 She's got lost.

Reader 4 Lost?

Reader 5 You mean she's lost her memory?

- Reader 3** No,no, no! Lost – it's short for Lostphobia.
- Reader 4** *(trying to write it down)* Sorry, I didn't catch that.
- Reader 3** Lostphobia.
- Reader 5** What are the symptoms?
- Reader 3** Headache, stomach ache, loss of appetite, mood swings, depression. In very serious cases, there are suicidal tendencies but thank goodness these are very rare
- Reader 4** What are the causes?
- Reader 3** It is passed on by the actions of other people.
- Reader 5** A virus you mean?
- Reader 3** No, not a virus- although I suppose it's a bit like a virus. It is something passed on by people's behaviour. Whatever it is, it causes great distress to the people they pass it on to – like this person here.
- Reader 4** It sounds to me as though it is they –the ones who pass it on - who should be getting the treatment and support.
- Reader 5** Yes, I agree. Surely they are the ones who need the cure.
- Reader 3** Absolutely right. If we could get to the bottom of why these carriers pass on their poison to others, we wouldn't be looking at this victim here today.
- Reader 4** What do we know of these carriers? Are there any special characteristics?
- Reader 3** One of the common factors is that they seem to have ability to infect others to become carriers too. The 'virus', as we'll call it, is then passed on by groups and their victims, like our patient here, are not strong enough to resist the poisonous effects.
- Reader 5** Strange name – Lostphobia not an easy name to remember.
- Reader 3** This one is easy to remember.

(If the following could be simultaneously projected on to a screen for everyone to see, so much the better:)

It stands for:
Loathing
Of
School
Through the
Pain and
Hurt
Of
Bullying by
Insults and
Alienation

- Reader 4** *(busily scribbling, but giving up)* Er, yes, whatever. I might just call it bullying for short!

Reader 3 As you rightly said earlier, our next task is to try and find a cure for the *really* sick ones – those who inflict the poison.

Reader 4 You mean the bullies themselves.

Reader 3 Exactly.

*They exit as the hospital music is repeated.
Readers 1&2 enter.*

Reader 1 How *do* we find a cure for the bullies –those carriers of poison? It's such an important question and there is no quick-fix answer. But we have to try.

Reader 2 We *have* to stand up to them. We *have* to find a way of stamping out the poison they are spreading. They must be made aware that their behaviour patterns are inflicting LOSTPHOBIA.

Reader 1 That their actions are causing deep psychological pain.

Reader 2 That it is *they*, as well as the people they infect, who need help.

Reader 1 Help to become healthy people.

Reader 2 They suffer from a condition whose symptoms are often cowardice

Reader 1 And cruelty.

Reader 2 It is something we must keep a constant watch for and prevent it from being passed on.

Readers 3-5 re-enter with Mimer 2 as Bully. Her/his arm is bared ready for an injection. During the following lines, Reader 4 solemnly mimes giving an injection. The bully remains impassive and meek as Reader5 administers a pill and water. The mime should be done simply and with minimum movement, not distracting from the words. Music could be played quietly in the background.

Reader 3 You are sick; you behave with ill will.
It's time you swallowed this bitter pill.
Our diagnosis, we are sure
Is that deep inside, you're insecure.
You're not brave enough to face your fears
You crave to be tough to all your peers.
Can't you see it's *your* weakness you're trying to cover
By taking it out upon another?
Your thinking is twisted and your mind is woolly
If you think it's HEALTHY to be a bully.
Who are the *real* heroes in life's game?
The brave and lonely - or the gangs who bring shame?
Torturers taking pleasure, making victims squirm?
Or the Nelson Mandelas, who suffer but stand firm?

Mimer 2 is led out by Readers 3-5. A few bars of music are played.

Reader 1 *slowly*

Let's resolve to make sure it is those who bully others who need to take a cure.
This doesn't mean giving them a taste of their own medicine – being hateful back. This makes the rest of us the same as they are. Two wrongs don't make a right. We must find an antidote for the person showing cowardice and aggression.

Reader 2 We must inject them with the knowledge and understanding of the serious effect they have on others. We must face them with it.

Reader 1 Stand up to them, not join in with them

Reader 2 Not turn our backs on what they are doing.

Reader 1 We have to show them how unhealthy their actions are and keep on doing so until they realise it is they who need support, treatment and a cure.

Reader 2 When we have achieved that, the symptoms of those with LOSTPHOBIA will disappear.

Readers exit. Music continues as Mimer 1 sits up slowly, gets out of bed, stretches happily, mimes pulling aside the curtains on to a new day, breathes deeply and walks off confidently.