

Reader's Question: Won't walking away make me look weak?

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Kidpower is an educational charitable organization that, since 1989, has brought "People Safety" education to over 1.2 million children, teenagers, and adults, including those with special needs, from many different cultures - close to home and around the world. For publications; free articles, podcasts and e-newsletter; and information about our services and locations, please visit www.kidpower.org.

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Reader's Question: I know that you say that it's safer to walk away, but I worry that just leaving will show an attacker that I'm afraid. Won't walking away make me look weak?



Kidpower Answer: There is a self-defense technique that our law enforcement and martial arts experts tell us is the best technique of all time. The official name for this technique is *Target Denial*, which means denying yourself as a target to a person who might be dangerous to you or, in other words, *Don't be there!* Nothing works all the time, but you can remove yourself from harm's way with your body – and with your feelings – most of the time.

The sad reality is that too many people have ended up dead, injured, or in jail because they were afraid of appearing weak.

Of course, *how* you walk away makes a big difference! If you cower, put your head down, and act scared, this will indeed make you look

weak. If you act tough and challenge someone, that is likely to provoke a confrontation even though you might be moving away.

Instead, if you act like a powerful respectful leader, you will look strong even as you are leaving to get to a safer place. You can learn to do this no matter how scared, upset, or angry you feel inside. This is why we have our students practice walking away from someone being insulting or threatening with a calm, aware, and confident attitude.