CHAPTER ONE
Introduction

Welcome! You made an excellent and possibly life-changing decision to download this book “Verbal Self-Defense 101”, an introduction to the art and science of verbal self-defense.

I’m the author of the online courses Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent, a comprehensive course on verbal self-defense, and Verbal Domination, a comprehensive course on dominating and winning verbal confrontations.

I’m dating myself, but do you remember the movie “The Karate Kid”? Mr. Miyagi was sternly against using karate to attack another person first and he would only allow Daniel-san to fight in self-defense. But Sensei Kreese, who was Daniel-san and Mr. Miyagi’s nemesis, was all about “The Way of the Fist”. “Attack first! Strike hard!”, he would yell during karate practice. Well, think of Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent as Mr. Miyagi and Verbal Domination course as Sensei Kreese.

Anyhow, THIS book is about the Mr. Miyagi school of thought, which is verbal self-defense. There is a time and place where attacking someone else verbally could be called for, but in this book, our sole focus will be on learning how to SKILLFULLY defend ourselves from verbal attacks and insults with social intelligence and wit.

You probably found this book because at some point in your life, maybe even recently, you were verbally bullied, attacked, or insulted, and didn’t know how to handle it, and you don’t ever want that to happen again. Trust me, I’ve been there before myself and I am honored to be your guide as you learn how to master this area in your life.

While this book is not a comprehensive course in verbal self-defense, I promise you that in the short time it will take you to read this book (probably no more than 15-30 minutes), you will be able to skillfully defend yourself from the ten most common verbal attacks and insults.

So, let’s get started!
My Backstory

I’d like to start by sharing part of my backstory, the part that relates to why I was compelled to write this book and share the hard lessons I’ve learned in my life.

From the time I started school as a young boy at age 5 through high school, because of my non-Western name (Min), my geekiness at the time, and because I stuck out like a sore thumb, I was subjected to frequent verbal bullying, attacks and insults. I grew up in a town where I was one of the few Asian Americans kids in town. We’re talking about less than ten in a town of about 20,000 people, and it was a different time and place than now.

My hometown was a predominantly white, middle to upper-middle class neighborhood in the San Francisco Bay Area, and while there were a lot of decent people who lived there, the douchebaggery was particularly strong in some of the kids I went to school with.

Those kids (mostly classmates who by junior year in high school were driving BMWs that mommy and daddy bought but destined for a life flipping burgers) used all of their underdeveloped brain cells to give me unflattering nicknames and make derogatory racial slurs. Most of the time, I stayed quiet and passive and internalized my hurt because I didn’t know how to deal with their verbal bullying, and I didn’t have the confidence to stand up for myself.

Kids Being Kids

Except for one afternoon when I was 16. That afternoon, I was practicing tennis with my buddy Jack (one of the only other Asian American kids in town), and a group of high school guys sped by in a convertible German car (yep, a BMW) and yelled out “Chinks! Go back to China!”, the irony being that both of us were born in the U.S.

This group of guys parked their car just down the street from the tennis courts where we were playing at. So, when they were out of sight, Jack and I ran over to their BMW, and Jack brought out a pocket knife he had in his tennis bag; who knows why he had a knife in his bag. We took turns slashing all four of the tires on the BMW with Jack’s knife.
It was harder work than we thought with Jack's faux Swiss Army knife! But after struggling with the tires for some time, we finished the job and drove home, laughing the entire time and thinking how cool it was what we did to those guys.

I clearly had no skill in responding to verbal attacks and insults back then, but what I had even less of was judgment! Turns out those guys knew Jack (and Jack ratted me out in no time whatsoever), so later that evening, my parents got a call from the local police department. Luckily, the police decided not to make a record of the incident, but we had to, quite unhappily I should say, compensate the driver for the slashed tires. I can't even remember how many extra chores I had to do over the next few months to pay back my folks!

When looking back at that silly incident and all the things I went through in my childhood, I'm sure I wasn't the only one who was subjected to constant verbal bullying and attacks. I'm sure many others in my town also got the same treatment, but most likely in a different way. My tormenters (who have now grown up and are hopefully different) were mostly just kids being kids, and so when I look back at it, I laugh about it more than anything.

These days, I don't see Jack often because he lives out of the country, but when we see each other every once in a long while, we both reminisce about that day and have a good chuckle.

**Socially-Based Verbal Attacks/Insults**

Ultimately, racial slurs and stupid nicknames hurled by similarly stupid kids I didn't know (or barely even knew) are so inane, they aren't actually the types of verbal attacks/insults that can really sting.

However, there is a type of verbal attack/insult that is in a way much more insidious and potentially much more hurtful. By this, I mean those verbal attacks or insults that come up regularly within social contexts.
In social contexts, verbal attacks/insults are usually less aggressive, less blatant, and less downright insulting. However, they usually have much more impact than verbal attacks or insults from random people. You can ignore kids being kids or strangers, but you cannot ignore the people closest to you, such as your friends, family, family friends, work, business, and professional colleagues.

With these people, you will face all types of subtler verbal attacks and insults. These attacks are less in your face, but over time they can create self-doubt and undermine your self-confidence if you are unable to skillfully defend yourself and stay confident in the face of such attacks and insults. In addition, if you are unable to defend yourself skillfully and in a socially intelligent manner, you can erode important relationships in your life.

These are the types of verbal attacks and insults that this book seeks to address and to train you to be skillful with.

The Realization

After graduating from college, I went to law school and became a corporate lawyer. During law school and during my career in the law, I have met and interacted with many downright smart and nasty people, all who have helped me (in a somewhat perverse way) develop a thicker skin and develop the material in this book and for my courses. In my life, I have also met many well-meaning people, and every type of person in between, who have also contributed plenty to the material in this book and for my courses. And through it all, one thing I've learned is for certain:

Life is full of conflict between people, even friends, family, and loved ones. These conflicts may not be large in scale (although they can be) but people will always test you in various ways, and they do it verbally.

They usually do this to see what you're made out of, to see if you will stand up for yourself, and also to see how well you can stand up for yourself. It is human instinct to push people's buttons and boundaries. Sometimes, they may do it maliciously and sometimes, people do it because they're bored or have nothing else better to say.
The reasons why people do this are varied, but one thing is clear, you must develop ways to defend yourself from socially-based verbal attacks and insults, and you must do it skillfully and in a socially appropriate manner.

I am sure that you found this book and are reading it now because you have had (or still have) challenges similar to those I have faced in my life. I salute you for finding this book and most of all, for taking concrete ACTION to improve your verbal and social skills.

Because of my background, writing this book and developing my courses “Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent” and “Verbal Domination” has been a labor of love for me. I actually thank all the people who have tested me often in my life because without them, I would most likely not have written this book or developed a thick skin, and I certainly would not have had the material to do it.

During my youth, there were no resources like this available to me. I was young and clueless, and as a child of immigrants, I didn’t have anybody in my life to teach me how to skillfully deal with these attacks and insults, nor someone to help me build the mental strength and confidence I needed to effectively deal with these challenges. I wish I had the type of guidance I am about to provide you with, so I thank you for this opportunity.

I sincerely hope my labor of love will help you crush the challenges you face in your life. Thank you again for your support!
CHAPTER TWO
The Top 10 Most Common Verbal Attacks and Insults

Enough about me, let's get on to what matters to YOU.

This chapter lists what, in my experience and in surveying some of my good friends, are the TEN most common types of verbal attacks and insults. It's amazing how uncreative most people are, isn't it? The good thing about this fact of life, is that it allows us to prepare for people’s old, predictable tricks.

For each type of verbal attack or insult, I’m going to give you what I think is the best way to respond, and at least one alternate way to respond. I couldn’t help myself when I was writing this, so some verbal attack patterns will have more than one alternate response; some have up to five.

Some responses will feel more natural to you than others, so I urge you to try each of them out and decide which of them work best for you.

Once you have decided which response you like for each type of verbal attack or insult, just memorize that response and start using it in your daily life. Now that you will have developed some awareness of verbal attacks and insults, you'll be amazed at how often they actually occur, and you will be even more amazed at how easily you can swat back these attacks with the correct “ammunition”. Over time, you may find that others around you may not be as emboldened to attack or test you. Just when it was getting fun!

One last note: Remember a lot of these attacks/insults may be actually said in words that are not the exact words I wrote, but with similar words and meaning, so you need to pick up on the meaning/general pattern, and choose the appropriate responses.

Here we go, here are the ten most common verbal attacks and insults:
1. “You’re X” / “You’re so X” / “You’re a X” / “That’s so X”

In my opinion, this is THE most common verbal attack pattern in the history of mankind. In this attack pattern, “X” could be almost any noun or adjective, such as loser, hack, idiot, crazy, bitch, ugly, weird, moron, etc.

Example: “You’re a loser.”

Best Way to Respond: “You would know all about that from your years of staring into the mirror.”

NOTE: There are some times when this response does not work. Such as when it is not plausible that the other person is also what he/she said you are. For example, if he/she calls you old and he/she is quite young, then this response does not work.

Alternate Way to Respond: “And you’re ugly. I can work on myself, but no matter what, you’ll still be ugly.”

Keep in mind that the alternate response is a little nastier than the best way to respond and is also a little tougher to implement.

2. “Why do you do X?” / “Why are you doing X?”

Best Way to Respond: “Why do you like to run your mouth off?”

When you use this response, you want to do it a joking manner. Don’t be too serious when you respond. This response makes use of “parallelism”, which is a technique taught in my courses as a very effective tactic to respond with.
“Parallelism” means using the same structure or some appropriate piece of what the other person said. In this case, the attack is in the form of a question, so you just go back in the form of another question.

Alternate Way to Respond: “I’m just warming up, just you wait.”

3. “Nice X”

In this attack pattern, X is usually a part of your body or some piece of clothing on your body, with the word “Nice” being said sarcastically. The suggested responses below have a bit of a rougher edge to them, but anybody who would make fun of any part of your body or your clothes deserves at least as harsh of a response.

Example: “Nice zit.”

Best Way to Respond: Say “Oh, you mean this?” while pointing at the zit with your middle finger.”

Alternate Way to Respond: Point to your leg with your index finger “Here?”, then to your head with your ring finger “Here?”, then point to the zit with your middle finger extended while saying “Oh you mean here.” (I actually like this one the most, but it takes more confidence to pull this one off)

Another Alternate Way to Respond: “Thanks, but its really not as nice as your skin tight jeans.”

You can use any part of the other person’s body or some piece of clothing on their body that is a little (or a lot) off.

Note: I should mention that before you respond to this attack, you need to make sure that this original attack is actually said sarcastically by the other person. If not, then the other person may actually be paying you a genuine compliment and it should go without saying that in such a case, responding in this fashion is not called for.
4. “X called, they want their Y back” / “X called, he/she wants his Y back”

In this attack pattern, “X” could be a person, thing, time period, or any noun (as long as it is well known) and “Y” is usually a negative trait of yours. This is a very common (and completely played out) insult but sadly, people are just not very creative. I heard a bunch of people using it last month when I was out in the East Coast. Again, responding to this attack pattern calls for a “parallelism”, one of the most important techniques taught in my course “Verbal Domination”.

Example: “Adrian Brody called, he wants his look back.” (implying you are ugly)

Best Way to Respond: “John Belushi called, he wants this joke back.” (implying this joke is beating a dead horse)

Alternate Way to Respond: “Hey, if you’re gonna be a smartass, you have to be smart. Otherwise, you’re just an ass.”

The alternate response is a little nastier but also slightly easier to pull off because it merely requires memorization, so use your discretion.

5. “Why do you like X?” / “I don’t like X.”

This is a common attack/insult used by people who are very opinionated. We all have a few of those people in our lives, and they sure can get annoying. Most of the time, these people probably don’t even mean to attack you personally, but they just can’t help themselves with their unwanted opinions.

Of course, we need to let people express their opinions. So, respond this way only if the opinions get out of hand or it feels like you are being targeted specifically.
Example: “Why do you like that restaurant? I totally can’t stand that place.”

Best Way to Respond: “And why do you like being opinionated instead of informed?”

Alternate Way to Respond: “Um okay. It’s a little hilarious that people always have something to say, but nothing to contribute.”

Another Alternate Way to Respond: “You’re entitled to your opinion…oh wait…I meant…INCORRECT opinion.”

This alternate response is a little more provocative because you are taking on the other person’s opinion straight on which is generally unwise, so be careful with this response unless you truly have a counteropinion.

Another Alternate Way to Respond: “Remember that time when you actually had nothing to say? Me neither.”

Last Way to Respond (used if you don’t know the other person well): “If I knew who you were, that might mean something.”

6. “What? You don’t know X?” / “How can you not know X?”

This is something a know-it-all would say. We all have a few of these people in our lives too. Just like an opinionated person, this type of person may even be well-meaning, but can’t help himself/herself. People like this love to think of themselves as the arbiter of all knowledge and everybody else (including you) are just plain ignorant and/or out of the loop.

Example: “How can you not know Donald Trump’s stance on immigration? And you call yourself an educated voter?”

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Best Way to Respond: “Let me ask you this. Since you know everything, do you know you’re kind of annoying?”

Alternate Way to Respond: “Its strange. Since you seem to know it all, I don’t understand why you don’t know when to be quiet.”

Another Alternate Way to Respond: “Yeah, that’s because I don’t spend my free time surfing crappy Internet sites on politics / reading Trivial Pursuit cards / [insert any lame, time wasting thing].”

7. “Shut up!” / Any Swear Word

This type of verbal attack/insult needs to be (and can be) responded to with using more aggression than most of the other attacks/insults in the book. Anybody coming at you with this type of attack/insult is not looking to maintain a relationship with you, so your best response is just to shut him/her down completely.

Best Way to Respond: “Have a nice day…somewhere else.”

Alternate Way to Respond: “You know, I was going to give you a nasty look for that, but I see you already have one.”

Another Alternate Way to Respond: “I was going to insult you back, but it looks like nature already did.”

8. Nicknames/Play on Words

When I was younger, a lot of my peers would make fun of me by giving me unflattering nicknames. Their nicknames were never that creative, so in my opinion, the most appropriate response to this type of attack/insult is to attack their lack of creativity with some sarcasm.
Best Way to Respond: “Wow, your mind is so open. So open that intelligent thought just passes right through it.”

Alternate Way to Respond: “Wow, that so creative. You’re only the 9th person that’s said that today.”

Another Alternate Way to Respond: “Hey you know what’s funny? Not you!”

9. “What’s wrong with you?”

There is no good way to directly respond to this type of negativity, so your best bet is to make an indirect response to throw the other person off balance. “Indirectness” is a key ingredient to skillful verbal self-defense and even going on the offensive.

Best Way to Respond: “I’m not sure, but my psychotherapist is pretty happy about the money he/she makes from me every month.”

Alternate Way to Respond: “A lot. How much time do you have? You have an hour or two?”

10. Mocking Voice / Sounds

When someone uses a mocking voice or sounds in an attempt to clown you, such as mocking the way you said something (like stuttering), this is how you should respond.

Example: “Uh uh uh…” (mocking you)

Best Way to Respond: “Are you choking on something? Do you need the Heimlich maneuver? I can help you, but I’ll need to go fetch a ten-foot pole first to use on you.”
Alternate Way: “Wow, that’s some incredibly poor beatboxing. You need to work on it some more before you ever do that again in public.”
CHAPTER THREE
Non-Verbal Communication

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention non-verbal communications before concluding this book. While the responses here are very effective in crushing the most common verbal attacks/insults, they must be delivered in an appropriate manner or else they will fall short.

By “appropriate manner”, I mean a confident, non-reaction seeking, and almost dismissive manner. Depending on who you are with a circumstances, a completely dismissive manner might even be appropriate.

Non-verbal communications, i.e. your tone of voice, body language, eye contact, confidence cues, and other non-verbal elements also convey information to the other person separately from the CONTENT (the words) of any communication. Think of CONTENT and NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION as two different channels of communications, each just as important as the other.

Chapter 1 was about CONTENT. This Chapter 2 is about the other just as important channel, NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS.

The non-verbal communications you give off when you are defending yourself from verbal attacks need to give off the confident, non-reaction seeking, and almost dismissive vibe that I talked about above. If you don’t give off that vibe, nothing you say will be very effective.

Its a bit ironic because the tactics in this book will help give you more confidence in social interactions, but without confidence it and of itself, using these tactics will not be very effective. Its almost like a feedback loop. You need the tactics to be confident, but you also need to be confident to use the tactics. This CONFIDENT vibe is essential and it must be developed if you don’t already have it. The good thing is I believe strongly that confidence is a muscle that can be trained.
How you develop this attitude is beyond the scope of this book, but you will learn about this in further depth in my Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent course.
CHAPTER FOUR
Social Intelligence: Proportionality

Okay, I admit I may have had a little too much fun with some of the responses in the previous chapter, but I did that on purpose. Some of the responses could be construed as a little too edgy for some situations, especially social situations, which brings me to the point of this Chapter 3.

In my “Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent” course, I talk about the concept of “proportionality”. Keep in mind that in general, especially in social contexts and definitely in business contexts, you need to respond back to any verbal attack or insult with proportionality. There are exceptions, but this is the general rule.

“Proportionality” means not responding back with more aggression than the amount of aggression originally received. If you respond disproportionately to an attack or insult, you will risk damaging the relationship between you and the other person, or at the very least, you may be perceived as socially inept.

Of course, if you do not know the other person, then these risks are obviously low. You may not care whether you damage the relationship or not in such a case. But even then, please always keep in mind your safety, your reputation, and other relevant factors in deciding how you want to respond.

The point is: In any given situation, ALWAYS keep the concept of “proportionality” in mind.
CHAPTER FIVE
Conclusion

Well here we are at the end of this book. I hope you learned a lot of new “tricks” you can use in your day to day interactions with other people. I can’t wait to hear about the surprise on other people’s faces when you hit ‘em back with the things you learned in this book.

Honestly, I believe there is so much value in this short book that you could memorize these responses and get quite far in life crushing virtually every verbal challenge that comes your way.

This short book covers close to 60-70% of the types of verbal attacks or insults you will face in your life (unless the people in your life are truly twisted or if they have tried my Verbal Domination course and are misusing it, in which case I’m sorry!). This book is a collection of great responses, but at the end of the day, it is a somewhat random collection.

For the remaining 30-40% of the types of verbal attacks or insults that you may face in life, it is impossible to take inventory of them and prepare by memorizing lines.

The reality is: Many verbal attacks and insults come in ways that are UNEXPECTED, not necessarily because other people are creative (they usually aren’t), but because the English language is infinitely flexible and variable.

Ultimately, what you really need is a FRAMEWORK and an comprehensive arsenal of TACTICS that can be used to crush any type of verbal attack or insult, especially those random and more obscure attacks and insults that come out of nowhere. And as you have learned, you also need CONFIDENCE, which is the foundation of everything we want to do. All of the responses in this book are based off of the framework and tactics I teach in my online courses Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent and Verbal Domination.
LIFE IS A BATTLE OF WITS. DON'T BE UNARMED. TO LEARN THE VERBAL SELF-DEFENSE FRAMEWORK, THE 13 MOST EFFECTIVE VERBAL SELF-DEFENSE TACTICS, MINDSETS FOR VERBAL SELF-DEFENSE, NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATIONS AND ALWAYS BE AT EASE IN SOCIAL AND BUSINESS SITUATIONS, NEVER FEEL BULLIED AGAIN, GAIN THE RESPECT OF EVERYONE IN YOUR SOCIAL CIRCLE, PURCHASE "VERBAL SELF-DEFENSE FOR THE SOCIALLY INTELLIGENT" COURSE AT:

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NEXT STEPS:

I hope you got more value from this book than what you paid for it (hopefully a lot more). If this is the case, please do the following:

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CHAPTER SIX
About the Author

Min Liu is the author of the book you are reading and the online courses Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent and Verbal Domination.

Based in San Francisco, CA, his mission is to help people not only improve, but become exceptional at social intelligence and verbal skills. Everything he knows about these things, he knows from his many different lives as an instructor at UC Berkeley, a nightclub promoter, a corporate and securities lawyer, and now, an author.

He's passionate about sharing what he has learned from his transformation from a shy, socially awkward kid into someone who has the ability to use verbal and social skills to get and achieve what he wants in life. He believes everybody has the innate ability to make such a transformation by exercising “muscles” that have not been used very much, and by sharpening the skills they already have.

He gets especially aroused these days by basketball, kickboxing, meditation, songwriting, reading books on psychology and inspirational people, people who are value givers, and most of all, constantly breaking out of his comfort zone and helping others break out of theirs. On the other hand, he absolutely cannot stand mediocrity, unoriginal and lazy thinking, and he really can't stand wearing sweaters.

He's always quite busy creating value these days, but media, speaking, or other inquiries can be sent to:

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Verbal Self-Defense for the Socially Intelligent
(www.artofverbalwar.com/selfdefense)

A comprehensive online course on neutralizing ANY verbal attack or insult with WIT and SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Verbal Domination
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