

UNDERSTANDING HARDSHIPS

Hard is Hard. It's a simple yet profound statement that acknowledges the validity of everyone's challenges, regardless of their nature or magnitude. What might be easy for one person could be incredibly challenging for another, and it's important to recognise and respect that. Whether it's a mental, emotional, physical, or any other kind of challenge someone is facing, understanding that their experience is valid can go a long way in offering support and empathy.

Try not to compare. Comparing hardships can lead to invalidating someone else's challenges or diminishing their experience, which isn't fair or helpful. Each person's challenges are unique to their circumstances, capabilities, and resources, so it's not helpful to measure them against others'. Instead, it's more meaningful to offer empathy, support, and understanding without judgment. Everyone deserves validation and compassion in their challenges, regardless of how they may compare to others'.

People may invalidate others for various reasons, often unintentionally

- 1. Lack of Understanding:** Sometimes, people invalidate others simply because they don't understand or relate to the other person's experiences. This lack of understanding can lead to dismissive or invalidating responses.
- 2. Defensiveness:** In some cases, individuals might invalidate others as a defensive mechanism. They may feel threatened by the other person's experiences or perspectives, leading them to downplay or ignore them.
- 3. Belief in Hierarchies of Suffering:** Some people subscribe to the belief that certain types of hardships are more legitimate or significant than others. This belief can lead to invalidation of experiences that don't fit into their perceived hierarchy of suffering.
- 4. Projection:** Sometimes, people invalidate others because they are projecting their own insecurities or unresolved issues onto them. This projection can manifest as minimizing or dismissing the other person's experiences.
- 5. Lack of Empathy:** Empathy involves understanding and sharing the feelings of others. When people lack empathy, they may struggle to acknowledge or validate the experiences of others, leading to invalidation.

Remember, hard is hard. No matter the situation, it's essential to acknowledge and respect the challenges others face. Each person's struggles are valid and deserving of empathy and understanding. Remembering this principle can guide us to offer support and compassion to those who need it, without comparing or minimising their experiences.