

**SOCIAL SKILLS
FOR LIFE:**
Managing Strong Emotions

DVD Version

SOCIAL SKILLS FOR LIFE: MANAGING STRONG EMOTIONS

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE BOOK

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SOCIAL SKILLS FOR LIFE: MANAGING STRONG EMOTIONS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DVD Menu	i
Introduction	1
Learning Objectives	2
How to Use This Program	3
Program Summary	4
Student Activities	
1. Pre/Post Test	7
2. Questions for Discussion	9
3. Your Triggers	13
4. Your Cues	14
5. Somebody Else's Triggers and Cues	15
6. Strategies to Calm Yourself Down	16
7. Strategies to Calm Somebody Else Down	17
8. A Calm, Positive Image	18
9. Self-Talk: Write a Script	19
10. Aggressive? Passive? Assertive?	20
11. Chill Out: Write about It	21
12. Role Plays	22
13. Is This Bullying?	23
Fact Sheets	
1. Three Responses	24
2. The Reptilian Brain	25
3. Brain Diagram	26
4. Bullying	27
5. What to Do if You Are Bullied	28
6. Bibliography	29
Other Programs from Human Relations Media	30

SOCIAL SKILLS FOR LIFE: MANAGING STRONG EMOTIONS

DVD MENU

MAIN MENU

PLAY

CHAPTER SELECTION

From here you can access many different paths of the DVD, beginning with the introduction and ending with the credits.

1. Introduction
2. Triggers and Cues
3. Taking Control
4. Mental Imagery
5. Positive Self-Talk
6. Dance Routine
7. Helping Yourself
8. Conclusion

TEACHER'S RESOURCE GUIDE

A file of the accompanying Teacher's Resource Guide is available on the DVD. To open the file you need to load the DVD onto a computer that has a DVD-ROM and Adobe Acrobat Reader. Right click on the DVD icon and then double click on the file titled "Teacher's Resource Book."

“I just lost it!” “It was like I was on autopilot.” “I wasn’t thinking straight.” We often hear people make similar remarks when they are describing what it’s like to lose emotional control. In fact, these statements are much more than metaphors—they are accurate descriptions of a commonly experienced state in which our neural impulses bypass brain centers of higher thinking and engage directly with an instinctual, irrational center known as the “reptilian brain.”

Years of study tell us that throughout human evolution, the reptilian brain has helped us to evade dangers by flooding our system with hormones like adrenaline, impelling us to fight or flee. The “fight-or-flight” response is still a valuable human urge at times, but when it is evoked by emotional upset, it can ratchet up stress levels and lead to all sorts of interpersonal difficulties.

It is normal for all adolescents to struggle as they deal with messy, stressful emotions. For students with special needs who often have trouble reading social cues and interpreting the behavior of others, navigating tricky emotional terrain can be particularly difficult and daunting. Such students are likely to benefit from intensive, direct instruction and practice in interpersonal skills.

Social Skills for Life: Managing Strong Emotions is designed with special needs students in mind, with a step by step approach and dramatic situations that will resonate with untraditional students—and with mainstream students as well. It begins with an explanation of the brain-based mechanisms involved in losing emotional control and goes on to demonstrate ways to maintain equilibrium and composure, even when emotional buttons are pushed. A troupe of young actors, working on a minimalist set, leads viewers through a process in which they identify their own emotional triggers, as well as the cues or symptoms that tell them they are under emotional stress. They explore three basic kinds of responses to emotional upset—“Lash Out” (aggressive), “Self-Doubt” (passive) and “Chill Out” (assertive)—and develop strategies for restoring calm, such as breathing, counting, taking time out and positive self-talk.

The print materials in this Teacher’s Resource Book were designed to elaborate on and extend the concepts presented in the program *Social Skills for Life: Managing Strong Emotions*. Thoughtful worksheets and additional scenarios for role play are provided so that your students can safely practice the skills they have learned and develop their own repertoire of strategies for dealing with difficult emotions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After watching the video *Social Skills for Life: Managing Strong Emotions* and participating in the class activities included in this Teacher’s Resource Book, your students will be able to:

- understand that the term “reptilian brain” refers to a part of the brain that controls autonomic functions like breathing and prompts us to take protective action when threatened
- recognize that when the reptilian brain is activated, the individual responds out of instinct, and higher thinking processes are bypassed
- understand the “fight-or-flight” response to strong negative emotions
- recognize that every individual has particular things that trigger strong emotions and that each of us has our own cues that let us know we are in emotional distress
- identify their own emotional triggers—those things that push their buttons
- describe their own cues, or symptoms, of emotional distress
- identify and practice ways to maintain their emotional equilibrium, including stress-relief activities, positive imagery and positive self-talk
- identify three main styles of reacting in situations where emotions run high: “Lash Out” (aggressive), “Self-Doubt” (passive) and “Chill Out” (assertive)

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

The DVD can be shown in one sitting or in segments over several days. After students view the entire program, you may want to replay segments related to specific follow-up activities. There are several places in the program where a pause is indicated for discussion. You can follow this format or defer class discussion for later.

Role-play activities are especially useful in helping students rehearse new behaviors and learn social skills. For role playing, here are some points to keep in mind.

- Establish at the outset that there is to be no physical contact and that students are to use school-appropriate language.
- The entire class can perform role play in pairs or small groups, or one pair or group can take center stage, fish-bowl style.
- Role plays can be very short. Half a minute may be enough.
- There is no right or wrong way to enact a role play. The group can discuss which strategies seem effective, and each individual can develop a style and voice that works for him or her, incorporating the ideas of others as he or she sees fit.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

Set on a stage with flexible, minimal props, the program features a troupe of young actors—Mike, Eliza, David, Samara and Molly. As the program begins, the actors are arranging props on stage to set the first scene. The scene opens with Mike seated outside the Assistant Principal’s office, looking unhappy. Eliza comes along and asks what happened. Mike explains that he saw David hitting on Mike’s girlfriend Samara, and the scene cuts to a black-and-white sequence showing David and Samara by the lockers, standing close together, smiling, but not flirtatious. Mike sees them, is seized by jealousy and pushes David into a locker. The Assistant Principal (played by Molly) intervenes.

Having heard Mike’s story, Eliza reveals that she is on her way to the nurse. Mike guesses immediately that her “illness” is a ruse to get out of making a presentation in biology class. Eliza admits that he is right and bemoans her aversion to speaking in front of a group. Mike and Eliza concur that while their situations are different, their responses are the same—they lose control and practically forget who they are.

Molly chimes in to tell them that this is because the stress of the moment sends them into in their “reptilian brain,” the most primitive part of the brain, which controls autonomic responses like heartbeat and breathing. David points out that the reptilian brain also is the home of the fight-or-flight response, an important defense mechanism. This response, Molly notes, is activated when all kinds of upsets happen, and we react as if our lives were on the line. This is why, when Eliza has to speak in front of a group, she wants to disappear, and why, when Mike sees Samara with another guy, he wants to fight.

The title *Triggers and Cues* introduces the next segment of the program. The ensemble introduces the concept of triggers, the things that push our buttons and make us see red. They enact a few brief scenarios: a parent-child conflict about neatness, a sibling conflict about possessions and a student-teacher conflict about behavior.

David points out that each of us has our own personal collection of triggers and that we also vary in how we react to those triggers—what happens in our bodies and our minds when something triggers a strong negative emotion. The actors mention a few examples of cues that let us know our buttons have been pushed: blushing, shaking, muscle tension, dry mouth and tight throat. The video pauses for students to discuss their own triggers and cues.

A title introduces the next segment, *Taking Control*. Three basic responses to emotional upset are introduced, related to the fight-or-flight response. The reptilian brain may prompt you to attack, or “Lash Out,” or it may make you feel intimidated, as if you want to run away, and fill you with “Self-Doubt.” To get out of fight-or-flight mode, it’s necessary to “Chill Out” so you can respond from your thinking brain—not your reptilian brain.

The actors suggest several ways to buy time in order to allow the thinking brain to kick in: taking deep breaths, counting to ten in your head, taking a drink of water and walking away.

Mental imagery is also discussed as a way to get into a calm, positive frame of mind. The beach, a birthday party, a special outing with a parent and the free feeling of skateboarding are mentioned by the actors as examples. Viewers are asked to think of positive images of their own.

Positive self-talk is also presented as a way to remain calm and in control. Creating an internal, confident voice that offers encouragement and support can check reactive, shoot-from-the-hip responses.

The actors model a variety of responses to several scenarios. In the first, Mike plays the part of a waiter and Eliza takes the role of a difficult customer. After a stream of complaints about the food, Eliza makes a disparaging comment about Mike's command of the English language. Samara lists the triggers that are setting Mike off: disrespect, sarcasm, arrogance and bias. Mike describes his cues: His heart beats like a drum, his face is hot and he has a sensation of tunnel vision—all he can see is the awful customer!

First, Mike demonstrates a “Lash Out” response, yelling at the customer and insulting her. Samara and David remark that this would probably cost him his job. Next, Mike responds with “Self-Doubt,” apologizing profusely and behaving as if he is somehow at fault. Samara asks Mike what he is thinking, and Mike replies that his thoughts are dominated by embarrassment, self-criticism and fear of losing his job. Eliza points out that the customer was bullying Mike. Finally, Samara prompts Mike to try the “Chill Out” response. She advises him to calm down, step back and think about his goals—what's important to him in this situation. Mike takes a few breaths, musters some positive self-talk and deals politely with the customer while maintaining his dignity.

In another scenario, Eliza, Molly and Samara are practicing a dance routine for the talent show. Eliza suggests an idea, and Molly immediately dismisses it, saying there isn't time to try something new. David points out Eliza's triggers: feeling ignored and put down, as if her ideas don't matter. And her cues are obvious: she loses her concentration and starts making lots of mistakes.

Eliza reacts in “Lash Out” mode: she insults Samara and Molly and quits the show. In “Self-Doubt” mode, she meekly acquiesces and puts down her own idea. Finally, she is able to “Chill Out” and pitches an alternative: try her idea, and if it doesn't work, abandon it and move on. Molly agrees that this is fair. Mike congratulates Eliza for sticking up for her idea while keeping her tone reasonable and friendly.

In the last scenario, the actors are organizing the money from the school's annual candy sale. Mike tells David to check names off the master list as Mike reads them. David hesitantly agrees. As soon as Mike starts reading off the names, it is clear that David can't work fast enough. Mike, Samara and Eliza joke that he needs a refresher course on the alphabet.

David is clearly upset by the sarcasm, teasing and put-downs. In fact, he says he feels enraged that his friends are treating him like he's stupid. First, David lashes out, ripping the list of names and throwing it at Mike. Molly points out that this behavior could hurt David's friendship with Mike and damage his reputation with the group.

Next, David demonstrates an approach that shows self-doubt. David admits that he feels stupid and humiliated. The harder he tries, he says, the slower he gets. If this really happened, he says, he might cry or just drop the paper and walk away.

Finally, David demonstrates what happens when he takes the "Chill Out" approach. The group replays the scenario and this time, when Mike asks David to check off the names, David explains that this is difficult for him. Mike proposes that they switch roles, and that is agreeable to everyone.

The program closes with a summary of the main points, touching briefly on the reptilian brain, triggers and cues, positive self-talk and the importance of keeping goals in sight. David points out: "We can take control and not let strong emotions overpower us."

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Name: _____

Pre/Post Test

Decide whether the following statements are true or false.

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| 1. | TRUE or FALSE: The part of the brain that reacts to danger with a fight-or-flight response is called the “Stone Age” brain. | FALSE |
| 2. | TRUE or FALSE: When you are in a state of emotional upset, it is hard to think clearly. | TRUE |
| 3. | TRUE or FALSE: An emotional “trigger” is something that doesn’t bother you very much. | FALSE |
| 4. | TRUE or FALSE: Blushing, shaking, muscle tension, a dry mouth or a tight throat are common cues that let you know your buttons have been pushed. | TRUE |
| 5. | TRUE or FALSE: When strong emotions lead you to “Lash Out,” you respond in a way that is aggressive and hostile. | TRUE |
| 6. | TRUE or FALSE: When strong emotions are linked to “Self-Doubt,” you are most likely to act in a way that is mean and vicious. | FALSE |
| 7. | TRUE or FALSE: When you “Chill Out” in response to emotional upset, you are likely to become weepy and tearful. | FALSE |
| 8. | TRUE or FALSE: Mental imagery is a way to get into a calm, positive frame of mind. | TRUE |
| 9. | TRUE or FALSE: Positive self-talk is an example of “Lashing Out.” | FALSE |
| 10. | TRUE or FALSE: Dealing effectively with strong and difficult emotions is a skill that can be learned by anyone. | TRUE |

The Answer Key to this activity appears on the next page.

Name: _____

Answer Key

- | | | |
|-----|--|-------|
| 1. | TRUE or FALSE: The part of the brain that reacts to danger with a fight-or-flight response is called the “Stone Age” brain. | FALSE |
| 2. | TRUE or FALSE: When you are in a state of emotional upset, it is hard to think clearly. | TRUE |
| 3. | TRUE or FALSE: An emotional “trigger” is something that doesn’t bother you very much. | FALSE |
| 4. | TRUE or FALSE: Blushing, shaking, muscle tension, a dry mouth or a tight throat are common cues that let you know your buttons have been pushed. | TRUE |
| 5. | TRUE or FALSE: When strong emotions lead you to “Lash Out,” you respond in a way that is aggressive and hostile. | TRUE |
| 6. | TRUE or FALSE: When strong emotions are linked to “Self-Doubt,” you are most likely to act in a way that is mean and vicious. | FALSE |
| 7. | TRUE or FALSE: When you “Chill Out” in response to emotional upset, you are likely to become weepy and tearful. | FALSE |
| 8. | TRUE or FALSE: Mental imagery is a way to get into a calm, positive frame of mind. | TRUE |
| 9. | TRUE or FALSE: Positive self-talk is an example of “Lashing Out.” | FALSE |
| 10. | TRUE or FALSE: Dealing effectively with strong and difficult emotions is a skill that can be learned by anyone. | TRUE |

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 2A

QUESTIONS FOR
DISCUSSION

1. In the opening of the program, Mike is in trouble because of how he handled the situation with Samara and David. What could he have done differently?
2. If Eliza were a friend of yours, what might you do to help her deal with her anxiety about speaking in front of groups?
3. Describe the reptilian brain. When people respond out of their reptilian brain, how do they act? (Note: *The Reptilian Brain* fact sheet elaborates on the reptilian brain.)
4. What is an emotional trigger? What are some things that are triggers for you? (Note: A pause in the program poses this question.)
5. What is a cue? What are some of your own cues? (Note: A pause in the program poses this question.)
6. The program points out: “What bugs you may not bother someone else, and what sends someone else up the wall may be just fine with you!” Discuss this statement.
7. The “fight-or-flight” response can lead us to respond inappropriately to emotional distress. What might be some circumstances in which fighting or running away would be appropriate responses?
8. Comment on the calming-down strategies mentioned in the program. Which ones do you think would be effective, and why? Have you ever used any of them? If you wish, share what happened.
9. What is a calming, positive mental image for you? (Note: A pause in the program poses this question.)
10. Comment on the situation with Mike as the waiter and Eliza as the customer. Would you say the customer was bullying the waiter? Can you think of any other positive ways the waiter could have responded?
11. In the dance practice situation, suppose Molly had persisted in refusing to try Eliza’s idea. What might have happened?
12. Mike points out that Eliza’s tone in talking to Molly was reasonable and friendly. Discuss how tone of voice and body language affect communication.
13. In the candy drive situation, why do you think David initially agreed to check off names, even though he knew it would be hard for him?
14. Comment on the replay of David’s situation. What is different? What does he do that is effective?

The Answer Key to this activity appears on the next page.

Answer Key

- In the opening of the program, Mike is in trouble because of how he handled the situation with Samara and David. What could he have done differently?

Answers will vary. They may include the following:

He could have walked away to cool off.

He could have asked one or both of them what was going on.

He could have taken deep breaths or counted to help him stay calm.
- If Eliza were a friend of yours, what might you do to help her deal with her anxiety about speaking in front of groups?

Answers will vary. They may include the following:

Help Eliza practice her presentation before she has to give it.

Plan to present a smiling, positive face Eliza can look at during her presentation.
- Describe the reptilian brain. When people respond out of their reptilian brain, how do they act? (Note: *The Reptilian Brain* fact sheet elaborates on the reptilian brain.)

The reptilian brain is the innermost of three layers of the human brain, located near the base of the skull. It is the most primitive part of the brain, governing autonomic functions like heartbeat and breathing as well as instinctual self-protective behaviors like the fight-or-flight response. When people respond out of their reptilian brain, the higher thinking areas of the brain are not involved. This causes people to feel incapable of rational thought, and to act and think irrationally. Essentially, people in reptilian mode feel as if they have lost their minds.
- What is an emotional trigger? What are some things that are triggers for you? (Note: A pause in the program poses this question.)

A trigger is something that sets off a strong emotional reaction. A trigger “pushes your buttons” and makes you “see red.” Personal triggers will vary.
- What is a cue? What are some of your own cues?

A cue is a sign or symptom that an individual exhibits when his or her emotions have been triggered. Examples of cues that let us know our buttons have been pushed include blushing, shaking, muscle tension, dry mouth, tight throat, inability to think of something or remember something. Personal cues will vary.
- The program points out: “What bugs you may not bother someone else, and what sends someone else up the wall may be just fine with you!” Discuss this statement.

Students can discuss this question in pairs, in small groups, or as a class. Pairs and small groups can report out to the whole group after their discussion has concluded.

Name: _____

QUESTIONS FOR
DISCUSSION

*Points to bring out in the discussion include:
the importance of empathy, or the ability to see another person's point of view even when it is different from your own
why it is a good idea to speak up when something bothers you
examples of de-escalating, non-threatening ways to speak up*

7. The “fight-or-flight” response can lead us to respond inappropriately to emotional distress. What might be some circumstances in which fighting or running away would be appropriate responses?

Answers will vary. For both fighting and fleeing, answers may include examples of evading danger and self-defense. For flight, students may mention the idea of fleeing when we ourselves are in danger of losing control and hurting someone else.

8. Comment on the calming-down strategies mentioned in the program. Which ones do you think would be effective, and why? Have you ever used any of them? If you wish, share what happened.

Answers will vary. Try to bring out a range of examples. If students are reluctant to answer, sharing examples from your own experience may help them open up.

9. What is a calming, positive mental image for you?

Answers will vary. Try to bring out a range of examples. If students are reluctant to answer, sharing an example of a calming image that works for you may help them open up.

10. Comment on the situation with Mike as the waiter and Eliza as the customer. Would you say the customer was bullying the waiter? Can you think of any other positive ways the waiter could have responded?

*Answers will vary. Regarding bullying, points may include:
There is a power difference. The customer automatically has more power than the server, who is expected to defer; so she was using her power in a way that suggests bullying.
Intentionality is unclear. The customer may or may not have been aware of the effects of her behavior; and if she was unaware, some might say she was not bullying.
Repetitiveness is not established. It is unclear whether the customer behaved like this with this or other servers in the past.*

Regarding other possible positive responses, points may include:

- using humor*
- asking a manager for help*
- asking to trade tables with another server*
- taking a short break*

Name: _____

QUESTIONS FOR
DISCUSSION

11. In the dance practice situation, suppose Molly had persisted in refusing to try Eliza's idea. What might have happened?

Answers will vary and may include the following:

Eliza might have continued to insist, leading to a standoff.

A fight, physical or verbal, might have occurred.

Eliza might have sought help from another student or an adult.

Eliza might have quit the activity.

The third member of the group might have stood up for Eliza.

12. Mike points out that Eliza's tone in talking to Molly was reasonable and friendly. Discuss how tone of voice and body language affect communication.

Answers will vary. Students can demonstrate saying the same things differently, varying tone of voice and body language to show how they change meaning.

13. In the candy drive situation, why do you think David initially agreed to check off names, even though he knew it would be hard for him?

Answers will vary but will probably emphasize that David might have been embarrassed to admit the task was hard for him.

14. Comment on the replay of David's situation. What is different? What does he do that is effective?

In the replay, David is open, up-front, and matter-of-fact about the difficulty he has in performing tasks that involve lining up things on a page. He is unapologetic and appears to be unembarrassed.

Name: _____

What types of situations or comments tend to set you off? What are some things that activate your reptilian brain and flood you with hard-to-manage feelings?

PART ONE: Describe two or three of your emotional triggers here.

Trigger 1:

Trigger 2:

Trigger 3:

PART TWO: Share your triggers with a partner and answer the questions below.

How are you alike in what your triggers are?

How are you different?

PART THREE: Discuss with a partner: Why is it helpful to be aware of your own triggers?

Name: _____

What are the signs and symptoms that you generally experience when your emotions are triggered? What happens to your body? What happens to your thought processes?

PART ONE: Describe two or three of your cues here.

Cue 1:

Cue 2:

Cue 3:

PART TWO: Share your cues with a partner and answer the questions below.

How are your cues alike?

How are your cues different?

PART THREE: Discuss with a partner: Why is it helpful to be aware of your cues?

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 5

**SOMEBODY ELSE'S
TRIGGERS AND CUES**

For this activity, think of a friend or family member and see if you can identify his or her triggers and cues.

PART ONE: What sets that person off? List his or her triggers here.

Trigger 1: _____

Trigger 2: _____

Trigger 3: _____

PART TWO: What cues does this person display when his or her emotions are triggered? Write them here.

Cue 1: _____

Cue 2: _____

Cue 3: _____

PART THREE: Discuss with a partner: Why is it useful to be aware of someone else's triggers and cues?

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 6
**STRATEGIES TO
CALM YOURSELF DOWN**

PART ONE: Read the following list of strategies that you can use to calm yourself down.

- take deep breaths
- count to ten
- take a drink of water
- walk away
- think of a positive mental image
- use positive self-talk
- focus on your goals

PART TWO: What other strategies can you think of? List them below.

PART THREE: As a class, create a list of the “Top Ten Strategies to Calm Yourself Down.” Copy the list onto the back of this sheet.

PART FOUR: Choose one strategy that you think will work best for you. Write about it in the space below.

PART FIVE: Share your strategy with a partner.

Name: _____

SELF-TALK: WRITE A SCRIPT

In the program, you saw actors using positive self-talk to help them get through difficult situations. For the two situations below, create your own scripts for positive self-talk that would help you if you were in the situation described. Then share your scripts with a partner.

SITUATION ONE: Someone you don't know very well walks up to you and says in a loud, hostile voice: "I heard what you said about me, liar!" You never said anything about this person.

My first reaction probably would be:

Here is something positive I could tell myself in my head:

SITUATION TWO: Your teacher scolds you for not handing in your homework. You definitely did your homework, and you are absolutely sure you turned it in.

My first reaction probably would be:

Here is something positive I could tell myself in my head:

Name: _____

ACTIVITY 10
AGGRESSIVE? PASSIVE? ASSERTIVE?

For each situation, write down two possible responses. Then classify each response as *aggressive*, *passive* or *assertive*. Finally, note the possible positive and negative outcomes that might result from your responses. Use a separate sheet of paper if you need more space.
 Note: You may want to refer to the *Three Responses* fact sheet.

Situation	Possible Response	Aggressive, Passive or Assertive?	Possible Positive Outcomes	Possible Negative Outcomes
As you're walking home from school, you see a group of tough-looking kids up ahead.				
Someone laughs at you for having a speech impediment.				
Your friend criticizes what you are wearing.				

Name: _____

Together with a partner, act out the following situations. One of you will play the role of A, and the other will play the role of B. For each situation, demonstrate all three responses:

“Lash Out” response
(but no physical contact, please!)

“Self-Doubt” response

“Chill Out” response

Situation 1

B just got a haircut that didn’t turn out so well. A sees B’s new haircut and bursts out laughing.

Situation 2

A puts down a sweater to save a seat at the assembly and goes to talk to a friend. A returns to the seat to find the sweater on the floor and B sitting in A’s seat.

Situation 3

A bumps into B in the cafeteria line. B’s tray goes flying, and the food spills on the floor.

Situation 4

B has gotten into the habit of copying A’s homework. A is getting fed up with doing B’s work. B walks up to A in the hall and says, “Give me the history homework. Don’t make me wait—I need it now!”

Situation 5

B’s graphing calculator has been missing for a week. It has several distinctive stickers on the back. In study hall, B sees A using a graphing calculator that looks exactly like B’s.

Name: _____

IS THIS BULLYING?

Do these situations involve bullying? Mark each one Y for Yes, N for No, or NS for Not Sure. Remember: Bullying involves a power difference, a pattern of bullying behavior and usually an intention to hurt or frighten someone.

	YES	NO	NOT SURE
1. Every day, several boys wait for Catelyn near her locker. They make comments about her appearance and call her names. Catelyn is afraid to go to her locker.			
2. When Will started growing a mustache, Brad started calling him "Smudge." Now most people call him that.			
3. Jenna sits in front of Mike in biology class. Every class, Mike says to her, "So when are you going out with me?" She always smiles and says, "Not in this century."			
4. Jessica spread some nasty rumors about Denise. Now Denise is being ostracized. None of her friends will talk with her or sit with her at lunch.			
5. Maria sent Kylie an email about how much she liked Kevin. Kylie forwarded the email to a lot of people. Maria is so embarrassed that she doesn't want to go to school.			
6. Paul is small for his age. In gym class, some kids make fun of his size. At least once a week, someone picks him up and puts him into a garbage bin.			
7. Kelly and Alison tried out for the same part in the school play. Alison got the part. Kelly is telling everyone that Alison got the part only because her mom is on the school board.			

FACT SHEETS

Name: _____

As you saw in the program, there are three basic responses that commonly occur in emotionally difficult situations.

1. LASH OUT

The “Lash Out” response is an aggressive response. People who lash out tend to have quick tempers that flare up easily and they are likely to get into fights. (That’s what happened when Mike saw David talking to Samara.)

“Lash Out” may look strong, but it’s usually not. Losing your self-control is not a sign of strength. (Remember that Mike ended up in the Assistant Principal’s Office after lashing out.)

2. SELF-DOUBT

The “Self-Doubt” response is a passive response. People who act out of self-doubt tend to be timid and lack confidence. They are likely to give up, give in or run away. (That’s what happened when Eliza was going to have to make a presentation.)

“Self-Doubt” looks weak, and often it is. It is important to be able to stand up for yourself and say what you think and feel.

3. CHILL OUT

The “Chill Out” response is an assertive response. People who are able to chill out tend to be confident, steady and calm. They know how to stay in control even in emotionally difficult situations. (That’s what happened when Mike, as the waiter, didn’t let the difficult customer get to him.)

“Chill Out” is a strong, effective response that helps you stay calm and stand up for yourself without losing control.

Of course, if you are really at risk of physical harm, fighting back may be necessary, or giving in or running away might be the smart thing to do. Often, though, we respond as if we are in physical danger even when we’re not. That’s our reptilian brain telling us what to do!

Name: _____

The *reptilian brain* was identified and named by Paul D. MacLean, an American physician and researcher. He developed a model called the *triune brain*. This model describes the brain as having three layered parts, each one related to a stage in the evolution of species.

The *reptilian brain* is the innermost layer of the brain.

Dr. MacLean theorized that it developed early in our evolutionary history, and we share it with birds and reptiles.

It generates instinctive survival behavior, such as the *fight-or-flight* response to danger.

It also controls *autonomic* functions—processes like breathing and heartbeat that go on without our consciously making them happen.

Wrapped around the *reptilian brain* are two *mammalian brain* layers.

1. The middle layer, the *limbic system*, is a structure we share with mammals such as dogs and cats.
2. The outermost layer, the *neocortex* (also called the *cerebral cortex*) is associated with higher-order mammals, such as primates and humans. It controls higher-order thinking skills, reason and speech.

The *reptilian brain* can override the more rational parts of the brain. This leads to behavior that is impulsive, irrational and unpredictable.

It is a constant challenge for human beings to use their rational brain—the *neocortex*—to monitor and control responses that originate in their *reptilian brain*.

Name: _____

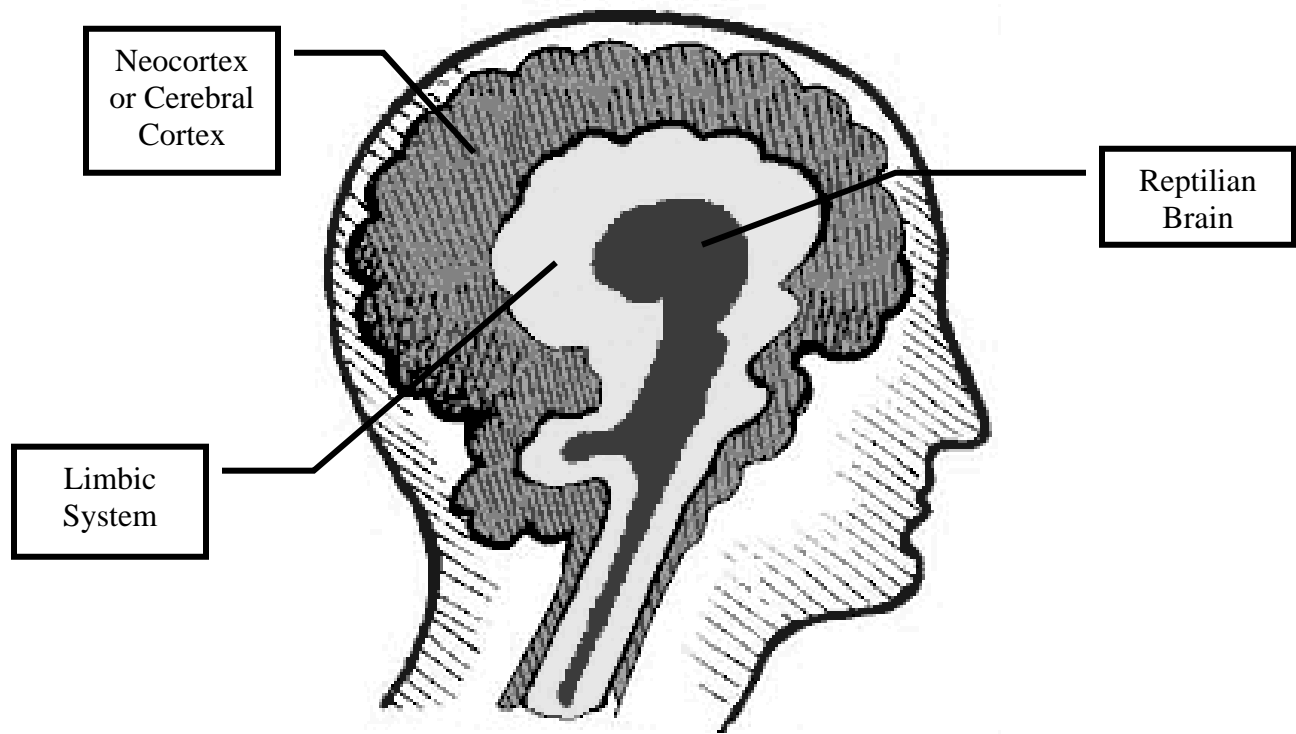


Image source: www.sustainablesonoma.org/pix/threebrains.gif

Want to find out more about the brain? Try the following websites:

Public Broadcasting System Series: The Secret Life of the Brain

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/brain/history/index.html>

British Broadcasting Company

map of the brain by structure and function.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/science/humanbody/body/interactives/organs/brainmap/>

Name: _____

Being bullied is one of the most upsetting things that can happen to a person. Many experts describe bullying as having three main characteristics:

1. **A big difference in power between the one who is bullying and the one who is being bullied**
This is a key characteristic of bullying that everyone seems to agree on. This unequal power between the two people is what makes bullying a very different situation from a conflict or disagreement between equals.
2. **A repetitive pattern**
Those who bully others may victimize the same person over and over, or they may choose a series of victims, one after another. Either way, they are exhibiting a pattern of bullying behavior.
3. **Intentionality**
This means that the bullying behavior is purposeful and intended to hurt or frighten. People who bully know what they are doing, and they enjoy it. Some people think it's possible to bully someone without being aware of it. This issue comes up in cases involving authority. For example, a boss might publicly and loudly rebuke employees for mistakes. The boss might see this as part of his or her legitimate authority, but the employees might feel bullied. Do you think it is possible to bully someone without intending to?

Some other points about bullying:

Groups can bully.

Groups have more power than individuals, and people in groups often feel freer to do things that they would not do on their own.

Those who bully look for victims they can hurt.

They often choose victims who will be the most helpless and the most easily upset.

Girls as well as boys can bully.

Boys' bullying is more often physical, while girls' bullying tends to be more relational and social.

Bullying is not "normal" and it is never OK.

People used to dismiss bullying as unimportant, saying things like, "It's part of life" or "boys will be boys." Today people recognize that bullying has serious negative effects for both the victims and bullies. Schools and other institutions are taking responsibility for maintaining environments in which everyone feels safe.

Name: _____

**WHAT TO DO IF
YOU ARE BULLIED**

Every instance of bullying is different. How you respond to being bullied will vary depending on the circumstances. The important thing is to develop a style that feels natural for you. Here are some tactics you can try.

Ignore It

Bullies look for a response: fear, humiliation... something that will let them know that they have succeeded in inflicting hurt or pain. If you act as if they're not there, they may look for a more rewarding target and leave you alone.

Walk Away

Walking away can be an effective response. Like ignoring, it deprives the bully of the satisfaction of hurting someone. It is by far the best idea when someone is physically threatening you.

Assert Yourself

Speak up for yourself. Be firm and clear. Choose your words carefully so you can be strong without being provocative. Some phrases people may find effective are: "*It's not OK when...*(name the behavior)" or "*Stop...*(name the behavior)."

Laugh It Off

Sometimes making a joke can defuse a tense situation. But be careful with humor—if a bully feels ridiculed, humor can escalate tension, too.

Find Strength in Numbers

Often, those who bully have multiple victims. They like to make their victims feel alone, but victims need not be isolated. Get together with others who are being bullied and come up with ways to help each other and stand up for each other.

Seek Help

If you are being bullied, that means someone stronger or more powerful is taking advantage of you. You may need help in dealing with the problem. If you are bullied at school, it is okay to ask a school administrator or counselor for help. Most schools have clear policies and procedures to prevent bullying and to stop it when it does occur.

Name: _____

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Assertiveness Self-Help Brochure
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<http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying/>

Website of Dr. Ken Rigby
University of South Australia

http://www.harcourtbooks.com/authorinterviews/bookinterview_Simmons.asp

An interview with Rachel Simmons, author of *Odd Girl Out*.

<http://www.news.wisc.edu/packages/emotion/>

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