

Your Journey to Self-Determination

Course 4: Managing Emotions and Conflict

Lessons 1-3

Lesson 1

Slide 1

Narrator

Welcome to the Managing Emotions and Conflict Course. In this first lesson, we will share some strategies that you may find helpful in managing your emotions.

Slide 2

Narrator

Have you ever felt so angry that you were unable to think clearly? Your hands shake, your heart starts to race, and your thoughts are running faster than you can process. Now imagine trying to make a good decision. Sounds like a recipe for disaster, right? Yet, we sometimes find ourselves doing just that.

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Narrator

Learning to manage your emotions will allow you to make better decisions. You will also be able to better advocate for yourself.

Slide 4

Narrator

The most important strategy you need when learning to manage your emotions is to take care of yourself. Do something that is good for your wellbeing, such as getting enough sleep or exercising. During times when you feel really stressed, give yourself a break. Consider cutting back on doing so many activities at once or say no to new ones. Finally, find time to talk to someone: a friend, a teacher, or a relative. Sometimes all it takes to make you feel better is to share your feelings with someone who is a good listener.

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Narrator

Another strategy for managing your emotions is to recognize what triggers a strong reaction from you. Are there certain behaviors, places, words, people or situations that make you angry or upset? Understanding your triggers does not make them go away. But, knowing what they are can help you

plan for how to manage your emotions when you are dealing with situations and behaviors that typically upset you.

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Narrator

You can also let other people know what your triggers are in advance. For example, if you become upset when you are asked to read out loud in front of the class, it would be good to let your teacher know at the start of the school year. You could say, “I am very uncomfortable reading in front of class. Please do not call on me to read out loud. This really upsets me.”

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Narrator

The key to successfully managing your emotions is to find out what will work best for you. Some people find that taking a break or deep breaths helps them the most. And some people need to get additional support from someone they trust. The main goal is to calm yourself before continuing the conversation.

Slide 8

Narrator

Let’s see if you can find the *two* myths about managing your emotions.

1. [Sometimes all it takes to help you feel better is to share your feelings with someone else.](#)
2. [Understanding your triggers can help you plan for how best to manage or cope with them.](#)
3. [Emotions often increase during conflict.](#)
4. [Strategies that help someone else manage their emotions will always work for you too.](#)
5. [You are best at solving problems and advocating for yourself when you are angry.](#)
6. [Taking care of yourself is one of the best strategies for managing your emotions.](#)

Slide 8 Responses

- 1. Sometimes all it takes to help you feel better is to share your feelings with someone else.**
This statement is true. [Try again.](#)
- 2. Understanding your triggers can help you plan for how best to manage or cope with them.**
This statement is true. [Try again.](#)
- 3. Emotions often increase during conflict.**
This statement is true. [Try again.](#)
- 4. Strategies that help someone else manage their emotions will always work for you too.**
Congratulations! You found a myth. Not all strategies work the same way for everyone. Find the strategies that work the best for you.
[Go back](#)
[Continue](#)
- 5. You are best at solving problems and advocating for yourself when you are angry.**
Congratulations! You found a myth. It is best when you wait until you've calmed down before you try to advocate for yourself or solve problems.
[Go back](#)
[Continue](#)
- 6. Taking care of yourself is one of the best strategies for managing your emotions.**
This statement is true. [Try again.](#)

Slide 9

You've completed your first lesson of the *Managing Emotions and Conflict* course.

Lesson 2

Slide 1

Narrator

Welcome to the Managing Emotions and Conflict Course. If you interact with people, you will come across some intense emotions from time to time. They are a natural part of life. However, many people do not know what to do or say when intense emotions are expressed. This lesson will give you some effective strategies for responding to other people when they are feeling strong emotions.

Slide 2



Narrator

Let's begin by looking at the following situation. José and a good friend of his try out for the soccer team. They find out together that José made the team but his friend didn't. José can see that his friend is upset.

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Narrator

What should José do?

- [Try to change the subject right away or distract him.](#)
- [Tell him, "Don't be mad... you can always try out again next year."](#)
- [Give him a little time and then say, "You look really upset. I bet it was hard to see that you didn't make the team."](#)

Slide 3 Responses

What should José do?

Response to Option A. (Try to change the subject right away or distract him.)- This isn't the best response. Sometimes we try to ignore intense emotions or move past them by changing topics. But ignoring strong emotions will typically end up causing more harm in the long run. Strong emotions, like anger and frustration, can continue to build if not addressed. These emotions often signal that there is something important that needs attention.

[Continue](#)

Response to Option B. (Tell him, “Don’t be mad... you can always try out again next year.”)- This isn't the best response. Telling someone not to feel a certain way or jumping right into problem solving when someone is experiencing intense emotions are not effective strategies. Most people want someone just to listen to them and try to understand what they are experiencing.

[Continue](#)

Response to Option C. (Give him a little time and then say, “You look really upset. I bet it was hard to see that you didn’t make the team.”)- This is a great response. Most people need a little space when they are feeling an intense emotion. This also gives José a chance to think about what his friend is feeling and to acknowledge that feeling. This is a great first step.

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Slide 4

Narrator

When someone experiences strong emotions, it's good to begin by thinking about how you might feel in a similar situation. This is called empathy. Next, you can show the person you care. One way to do this is by sharing what you think they might be feeling. To continue with our example, José could say something like, “You look really upset. I imagine it was hard to see that you didn't make the team.”

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Narrator

Next, be prepared to listen to understand. Strong emotions are a sign that the topic being discussed is very important to that person. Ask a question and be prepared to listen without judging or interrupting. José might ask his friend, “Do you want to talk about it? Is there any way I can help?” These questions can help a friend open up and lead to a more meaningful conversation. Maybe his friend responds, “I'm worried that we won't hang out much anymore because you'll be too busy with practice.”

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Narrator

Once some time has been spent listening for understanding, it might be appropriate to start problem solving. Don't rush into this step though... Check to make sure the other person is ready. If the person is still trying to work out their feelings, you may want to suggest a break or ask your friend to come over tomorrow to talk more. This will give your friend a chance to calm down and collect themselves before continuing to talk. This strategy is really helpful when someone is very upset. After a break, be sure to follow-up and ask if they are ready to talk about their concerns.

Slide 7

Narrator

Helping people work through emotions takes practice. There are some pitfalls to avoid. First, do not make assumptions about why someone feels a certain way. Allow the person to tell you exactly why she or he feels that way. Next, if someone is really upset, do not tell them to calm down. It doesn't work, and could make the person feel defensive along with whatever else they are feeling. Offering a break is a much better option.

Slide 8

You've completed your second lesson of the *Managing Emotions and Conflict* course.

Lesson 3

Slide 1

Narrator

Welcome to the Managing Emotions and Conflict Course. In this third lesson, we will focus on strategies you can use when you experience conflict.

Slide 2

Narrator

If you have been in any kind of relationship, you have experienced conflict. Conflict is a natural part of life and can happen at home, school, work... just about any place you can think of. Conflict involves a struggle between two or more people and can happen for many reasons. A conflict most often takes place because people have different or opposing needs or wants. Although a conflict may feel like a major road block to solving a problem, it doesn't have to stop us in our tracks. We can develop skills needed to effectively manage conflict.

Slide 3

Narrator

Think about a couple of different times that you experienced conflict over the past year or so. How did you respond? Did you respond in the same way each time? How did that work for you?

Slide 4



Narrator

Many of us tend to behave a certain way when we are in conflict. Our “go to” response, however, might not always be the best approach. The best approach depends on the situation... who we have the conflict with, how important the issue is to us, and when the conflict happens.

Slide 5

Narrator

For example, maybe your best friend has not returned a school book that you loaned and you need it for your homework. Maybe you typically try to avoid or ignore conflict, but your response in this situation needs to be different. You can't afford to get another zero. This is an important issue for you, so you decide to talk to your friend about needing the book back.

Slide 6

Narrator

Now try to put yourself in the following situation and select the answer that best reflects how you would likely respond.

It's 6:30 p.m. on a Saturday night and you want to meet up with some friends. Your mom tells you to be home by 8:30 p.m. Most of your friends have later curfews and can stay out until 10:30 or 11:00 p.m. You want to be able to stay out longer with your friends. You're embarrassed about the very early curfew. How do you respond?

- A. [Tell your mom that most of your friends have much later curfews. You'd like to have a regular curfew as late as your friend's, but ask if you can stay out this time until 10 p.m.](#)
- B. [Agree to be home by 8:30 p.m. You know that your mom is super stressed right now. You tell your friends you need to leave by 8:00 to take care of something.](#)
- C. [Tell your mom that most of your friends have much later curfews. Let her know that many of your friends have other things going on and can't get together until 7 or 8 p.m. You will likely be leaving just when people are getting there. You feel left out and are embarrassed by the early curfew. You ask your mom why she wants you to be home so early. You listen to her and share some possible solutions that could work for both of you.](#)
- D. [Tell your mom, "My friends can stay out until 10:30 so I'll see you then."](#)

Slide 6 Responses

How do you respond?

Response to Option A.- What happens next? Your mom agrees to let you stay out a little later tonight (9:30 p.m.), but your curfew returns to 8:30 p.m. next weekend. You're back to where you started. This type of response is known as compromising. Both people give up something to resolve the situation. When the issue and relationship are important and you want to quickly resolve a conflict, it may be best to compromise.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn more about other types of conflict responses.

[Continue.](#)

Response to Option B.- What happens next? Your mom has no idea that the early curfew is becoming a bigger issue for you. You've notice that your friends aren't including you as much as they use to. This type of response is a passive response. When the relationship is more important to you than the issue, you might choose to avoid the conflict or let things go this time. You might also use this response when someone has more power or authority than you. Another reason to choose this type of response is if it is not a good time to address the conflict.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn more about other types of conflict responses.

[Continue.](#)

Response to Option C.- What happens next? Your mom listens to you. She didn't realize this was happening and how you feel about it. She explains why she wants you home earlier. You both come up with some solutions and agree to one that works for both of you. You get to stay out later (10 p.m.) on the weekends. You promise to let her know where you'll be and to call her if your plans change. This type of conflict response is a collaborative response. When both the issue and the relationship are important, working through the conflict is a great approach. This approach can take longer but can result in the best solution for everyone.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn more about other types of conflict responses.

[Continue.](#)

Response to Option D.- What happens next? Your mom gets really angry. When you return, your mom tells you that you are grounded for 2 weeks. This means no going out and no phone! This type of conflict response is a controlling response. You might use this approach when achieving the goal is more important than the relationship.

A controlling response might be necessary or the best option at times, for example, when someone's health or safety is at risk.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn more about other types of conflict responses.

[Continue.](#)

Slide 7

Narrator

Once again, try to put yourself in the following situation and select the answer that best reflects how you would likely respond.

You are assigned a group project and quickly realize that no one in your group is committed to doing the work. How do you respond?

- A. Get started on the work early because it's going to take a while with no one helping you.
- B. Talk to the group about your concerns. Ask them if they have some ideas for the project and what they would like to work on? Listen to see if they have any concerns regarding the project. Offer some possible solutions and be open to hearing other ideas.
- C. Tell each person exactly what they need to do and when they need to do it by. Let them know that if they don't do their part of the project by that date, you will tell the teacher.
- D. Let them know that if they do some of the research, you'll pull everything together and write the first draft of the report even though this is the biggest chunk of the work.

Slide 7 Responses

How do you respond?

Response to Option A.- What happens next? You find that you don't have time to do your other homework because this project is taking up so much of your time. Your grades in some other classes are starting to slip. You might need to talk to your classmates after all. This is a passive response. When you don't want to deal with a situation or the people involved, you might respond this way. Sometimes you might act this way when you don't want to stand out or be viewed differently than the rest of the group.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn about other types of conflict responses.
[Continue.](#)

Response to Option B.- What happens next? You find out that people in your group really want to have fun and like to joke around. You think that there are some ways in which the group could have fun and still get the work done. The group comes up with a few ideas and settles on one that will be a lot of fun to work on. All team members are now committed to doing the work. You also discover that you're becoming better friends with the people in your group and are doing things outside of school with them. This is a collaborating response. When both the issue and the relationship are important, working through the conflict is a great approach. This collaborative approach to conflict can take longer but can result in the best solution for everyone.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn about other types of conflict responses.
[Continue.](#)

Response to Option C.- What happens next? A couple of the students say something like "sure... whatever" but they don't appear to be any more committed to doing the work. When the time comes for everyone to share what they have done so far, you find out that no one else did anything. You go to the teacher and begin to complain about your group members. Your teacher tells you to work it out with your group. This is a controlling response. You might choose this approach when achieving the goal is more important to you than the relationship. As you can see in this situation, people often don't react very well to this approach. A controlling response might be necessary when someone's health or safety is at risk. However, a controlling approach won't work unless you have power or authority in the situation.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn about other types of conflict responses.
[Continue.](#)

Response to Option D.- What happens next? The group agrees to do research for the project even though they would rather do nothing. You still end up doing all of the writing but at least you don't get stuck doing the whole project. This is a compromising response. It involves people giving up something

to resolve the conflict. When the issue and relationship are important to you but you want to quickly resolve the conflict, it may be best to compromise. In a compromise, no one gets everything they want.

[Go back](#) and select another answer to learn about other types of conflict responses.

[Continue](#).

Slide 8

Narrator

It's not always easy to figure out which approach will work the best for you, but it may help to ask yourself some questions. The next time you have a conflict review how you handled similar conflicts in the past. Ask yourself, "Was I satisfied with how things worked out?" If you haven't found much success using a particular approach for a certain kind of situation, maybe it's time to consider trying another approach. Also ask yourself, "How important is this issue to me?" If it isn't that important, maybe you let this one go. And lastly, ask yourself, "Are the relationship and the issue equally important?" If so, working things out through a collaborative approach will probably benefit you the most. If you're still unsure about the different ways to respond to conflict, you may want to repeat this lesson. If you do, be sure to select all of the responses for each situation.

Slide 9

You've completed your third lesson of the *Managing Emotions and Conflict* course.