

CHAPTER 6

Coping with Conflict and Stress

Lessons

1	What Is Conflict?	110
2	Managing Conflict	112
3	Anger	116
4	Managing Anger	120
5	Expressing Anger	124
6	What Is Stress?	128
7	Sources of Stress	132
8	Managing Stress	134
	Chapter Review	138
	Life Skills in Action	140

Check out
Current Health

articles related to this chapter by
visiting go.hrw.com. Just type in
the keyword **HD4CH06**.

“ I had a lot going on at **school**. I was on the **soccer** team and the **swimming** team.

I was also acting in the **school play**.

On top of all that, I was taking some really hard classes. One day, I started having really bad headaches. I started getting them every day. When I went to the doctor, she said that my headaches might be caused by stress. ”

Health IQ

PRE-READING

Answer the following true/false questions to find out what you already know about stress and conflict. When you've finished this chapter, you'll have the opportunity to change your answers based on what you've learned.

1. Stress and conflict are the same thing.
2. Conflict usually happens only at school.
3. Physical activity is a good way to relieve stress.
4. Stress causes only emotional problems and never causes physical problems.
5. Some stressful situations can be avoided.
6. Talking with someone about stress can relieve stress.
7. Anger always leads to violence.
8. Mediation means ignoring a problem until it goes away.
9. If you are mad at someone, it is always best to confront the person immediately.
10. Anger is usually the result of other emotions, such as frustration or fear.
11. Telling on others is always wrong.
12. A conflict will end however it ends. There is nothing you can do to change the outcome.
13. A person can be in conflict with himself or herself.
14. Compromise and collaboration are the same thing.

ANSWERS: 1. false; 2. false; 3. true; 4. false; 5. true; 6. true; 7. false; 8. false; 9. false; 10. true; 11. false; 12. false; 13. true; 14. false

Lesson 1

What Is Conflict?

No matter who you are, you have experienced conflict at some point in your life. Everyone's idea of conflict is different. But what is conflict really?

What You'll Do

- Explain what conflict is.
- Describe the difference between internal conflict and external conflict.

Terms to Learn

- conflict
- internal conflict
- external conflict

Start Off Write

Can a person be in conflict with himself or herself? Explain.

Conflict is any situation in which ideas or interests go against one another. Conflict is not always bad. If conflicts are resolved in a healthy way, they can help us learn and grow. If conflicts are not solved, they can result in headaches, lack of sleep, emotional problems, and even violence. There are two kinds of conflict: internal conflict and external conflict.

Internal Conflict

Have you ever had a hard time deciding between two things? It may sound strange that a person can be in conflict with himself or herself. However, that is exactly what happens every time you have to decide between two or more things. Conflict with yourself is called **internal conflict**. Even simple decisions can create internal conflict. Often, the expectations of others, such as teachers, parents, and peers, can make simple internal conflicts more difficult. For this reason, it is very important to develop skills for making the right decisions as well as skills for solving conflicts.



Figure 1 You experience internal conflict whenever you choose between two things, such as studying or hanging out with friends.



External Conflict

At some point in your life, you have had an argument or disagreement with another person. Conflict that happens with another person or group of people is called **external conflict**. External conflict can happen almost anywhere. You can experience external conflict at school, in your community, or even at home. Conflict often arises between people and groups because of different values and beliefs. We have all seen how external conflict can arise between nations and political groups. However, the conflicts that affect us most are the ones that we encounter every day. These conflicts can be many different things. They may be an argument between you and your parents, a fight with a classmate, or a disagreement with a friend over which movie to see. There can be many reasons for a conflict to exist. Some of these reasons may be good reasons. Some of these reasons may be bad reasons. However, most external conflicts can be solved with healthy, open, honest communication.



Figure 2 External conflict can happen in many places, such as with a teacher at school.

Lesson Review

Using Vocabulary

1. What is conflict?
2. What is the difference between internal and external conflict?

Understanding Concepts

3. What are some of the reasons that external conflict happens? What are some of the reasons that internal conflict happens?

Critical Thinking

4. **Making Good Decisions** Imagine that you are trying to decide whether to study or to go out with friends. How might the expectations of others make this decision more difficult?
5. **Analyzing Ideas** Which type of conflict do you think is more difficult to solve: internal conflict or external conflict? Explain.

Lesson 2

Managing Conflict

What You'll Do

- Explain why the way that a person communicates in a conflict is important.
- Describe strategies for resolving conflicts.
- Describe why it is sometimes important to avoid conflict.

Terms to Learn

- empathy
- compromise
- collaboration

Start Off Write

How can communication affect the outcome of a conflict?

Have you ever found yourself in a conflict that seemed to come out of nowhere? Have you ever gone out of your way to avoid a conflict, only to find yourself in the conflict anyway?

Conflict is unavoidable. So, knowing how to manage conflict when it happens is important. The most important part of managing conflict is communication.

Communicating During Conflicts

Communication is the way in which people send and receive information. The way in which we communicate during conflict or even before conflict occurs is very important. In fact, communication can determine whether conflict will get resolved or will even start. If you speak loudly and aggressively during a conflict, solving the conflict will be more difficult. If you speak calmly and respectfully, the conflict is more likely to have a positive outcome. You need to be clear about your point. Saying what you mean is an important step toward solving a conflict. You should also be aware of the way you communicate without words. Your body language—the way that you stand, your facial gestures, and even eye contact—can send powerful messages. During conflicts, your body language can often be more important than words. By being careful about the way that you communicate, you can create positive outcomes to many of your conflicts.

TABLE 1 Communicating During a Conflict

Listen	Relax	Speak calmly and clearly	Don't lose your temper
 <p>Practice effective listening. Make sure you understand the other person's position.</p>	 <p>Remain calm and relaxed. Breathe evenly.</p>	 <p>Express yourself clearly. Avoid yelling or using hurtful language.</p>	 <p>Keep your anger under control.</p>

Resolving Conflicts

The longer a conflict continues, the worse it can get. The people in the conflict may get more and more upset. They may become less likely to work out a solution to the conflict. That is why it is important to address conflict when it arises and to work with everyone involved to reach a solution. This process is called conflict resolution. *Conflict resolution* (REZ oh LOO shuhn) is the process of finding a solution to a conflict with which everybody involved in the conflict agrees. If one person simply gets his or her way, then the conflict has not been resolved even though it may be over.

There are three ways that a conflict can end. The first and best is a win-win situation. In this type of situation, everyone involved in the conflict is pleased with the solution. In a win-lose situation, one side is pleased with the solution, but the other side is not. In a lose-lose situation, neither side is pleased with the outcome of the conflict.

Empathy

To resolve a conflict, both sides must be willing to understand the other side's point of view. This understanding is called *empathy*. **Empathy** (EM puh thee) is the ability to understand or identify with the ideas or feelings of another person or group. Empathy doesn't mean always agreeing. It simply means that you attempt to "put yourself in others' shoes" and try to understand why others feel the way they do. Understanding why the other person or people feel a certain way can make it much easier to resolve a conflict. The more that each person in a conflict can understand the others, the more opportunities there will be to develop win-win solutions. When we focus only on our own feelings and desires, conflicts end in win-lose or lose-lose situations.



Figure 3 A conflict can end in several different ways. These ways include win-win situations, win-lose situations, and lose-lose situations.

LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITY

COMMUNICATING EFFECTIVELY

Choose a partner in your class. Together, make up a conflict that might occur between two friends. Choose who will play each part. Go through the steps needed to resolve the "conflict." Be careful to watch the way you communicate with one another, including your body language.

Negotiation

When conflicts arise, finding a solution that makes both sides happy can be difficult. That is why it is important to discuss conflict and to work with others to reach a conclusion that is positive for everyone. To do this, the people involved talk about what they want, which things are most important to them, and what sacrifices they are willing to make. This process of give and take is called *negotiation*. Negotiation (NI goh shee AY shuhn) is the first step in resolving any conflict.

Compromise and Collaboration

When we negotiate to resolve conflict, we are usually trying to achieve one of two things: compromise or collaboration.

Compromise (KAHM pruh MIEZ) is a solution to a conflict in which both sides give things to come to an agreement. For example, imagine two people are arguing over which toppings to get on their pizza. One person wants pepperoni. The other person wants green olives. A compromise would be deciding to order pepperoni this week and green olives next week.

Another way to resolve conflict is called *collaboration*. **Collaboration** (kuh LAB uh RAY shuhn) is a solution to a conflict in which both parties get what they want without having to give up anything important. Imagine the same two people in the pizza example above. Collaboration in that situation would be deciding to order a pizza that had both pepperoni and green olives on it. By working together to compromise or collaborate, the two parties in a conflict can resolve a conflict in a way that is positive for both sides.

Figure 4 By using skills such as compromise or collaboration, you can resolve conflicts in a way that pleases everyone involved.




Walking Away

A final strategy for dealing with conflict is simply walking away from conflict. Sometimes you have to decide whether it is worth your time and energy to be in certain conflicts. This is often called “picking your battles.” Believe it or not, some people actually like conflict. These people will work hard at keeping conflict around them. It is wise to avoid conflict with these people, because even if one conflict is resolved, another one will often quickly appear.

Walking away from conflict or “picking your battles” doesn’t always mean avoiding conflict. There can be many reasons to walk away from a conflict. Sometimes, it is not the right place or time to deal with the conflict. In this case, you should try to resolve the conflict at a later time. For example, if you get into a conflict with a friend during lunch, it is probably not a good idea to talk about the conflict after you return to class. You may need to wait until after class to further discuss the problem.

Finally, many conflicts can lead to violence. It is important to know when a conflict might turn violent and to walk away from conflicts that could become violent.

Figure 5 Sometimes, it is smart to walk away from a conflict that is unnecessary or out of control.



STUDY TIP for better reading

Reviewing Information
When you have finished reading this lesson on managing conflict, write an outline that describes the different strategies for managing conflict.

Lesson Review

Using Vocabulary

1. What is empathy?

Understanding Concepts

2. Why is the way that you communicate in a conflict important?
3. Describe four strategies for resolving conflicts.

4. Why is it important to avoid unnecessary conflict?

Critical Thinking

5. **Making Inferences** If you can sometimes avoid unnecessary conflicts, why not simply avoid all conflicts?

internet connect

www.scilinks.org/health
Topic: **Communication Skills**
HealthLinks code: **HD4022**

HEALTH LINKS Maintained by the National Science Teachers Association



Lesson 3

Anger

What You'll Do

- Discuss how events can cause anger.
- Describe how the actions of others can cause anger.
- Explain the importance of resolving anger at yourself.

Terms to Learn

- anger

Start Off Write

How can events lead to anger?

Figure 6 Anger can be a result of events that are out of your control, like a cancelled concert.



You can probably think of one time in the last week when you were angry about something. Anger happens often in life, and different people get angry about different things. But what is anger, and what causes it?

Anger is a strong negative feeling toward someone or something that is caused by a sense of being hurt or wronged. Everyone has feelings of anger. Anger is a normal human emotion, and anger is neither good nor bad. Anger can be caused by almost anything. However, it is usually the result of events that happen in your life or the result of your reaction to the behavior of other people.

Anger at Events

Can you think of a recent event that made you angry? Perhaps it was a game that you lost. Maybe it was a concert that you wanted to go to but couldn't. Maybe it was something bad that you read about in the newspaper or saw on television. Many everyday events can cause strong emotions. Sometimes these emotions can lead to anger.

Usually, anger at events happens when things don't turn out the way you expected. Anger is a natural response to negative situations. But often the things that make you angry are events that are beyond your control. Losing your temper or staying angry for a long time isn't going to change what happened. Instead, you should look at what has happened and try to find a way to make something positive out of it. For example, if you don't get to go to a concert, find a friend and listen to some music at your house instead. Many events in your life may cause you to become angry. Knowing how to handle your anger at negative events will make you much happier.



Aalok, age 13

"I get really angry when someone talks really loud on a cell phone in public places."



Gerritt, age 12

"It makes me angry when somebody doesn't listen to me."



Brandy, age 10

"I get angry when somebody takes one of my ideas and says that it's her idea."



Preston, age 15

"I think it is so rude when somebody chews his gum really loud or eats with his mouth open."



Kelli, age 13

"I get angry when somebody interrupts me while I'm talking."



Matthew, age 13

"It drives me crazy when my sister bosses me around."

Anger with Others

Have you ever become angry because of something that someone else has done? At times, the things other people do can cause angry feelings. Sometimes, other people do things on purpose to make us angry, such as teasing you or calling you names. If somebody is teasing you or calling you names, you should ask that person to stop. Talk to the person and try to work out the problem together in a healthy way. If that doesn't work, try ignoring the person. Usually, the reason a person teases you is to make you angry. If you get angry, then the person teasing you has won.

Other times, you may become angry because you feel like others are rude to you or insensitive to your feelings. You can also get angry when you feel that you are being neglected or ignored. Often, the people who are upsetting you don't even know that they are doing so. If you become angry as a result of somebody's behavior, you should tell that person that his or her behavior is upsetting to you. Then you can work together to solve the problem.

Figure 7 The behaviors of others can make us angry. Different behaviors can also make different people angry.

Health Journal

Look at Figure 7. Do any of the things that make these teens feel angry make you feel angry, too? Write down at least five things that other people do that anger you. Have you ever told the people who do these things how you feel? What could you do to keep from becoming so angry at these things?





Figure 8 You should always be careful to notice how your behavior is affecting others. These two teens don't realize that they are disturbing others.

Take a Look at Yourself

Sometimes, your behavior might cause someone else to feel angry. For this reason, you should always look at your own behavior to make sure that it is not upsetting the people around you. For example, if you are talking loudly with a friend in a public place, you may not realize that you are angering people around you. However, if you are aware of your environment and the effect of your behavior on others, you can avoid this type of situation.

Anger Turned Inward

It is easy to see how you can become angry at events or angry with others. However, you may not realize that sometimes you can become angry with yourself. Have you ever failed a test or lost a game? Afterward, you may have felt angry because you knew that you could have done better. This feeling is anger turned inward. Usually, you become angry with yourself because you feel that you have failed or made a mistake. Sometimes, you may blame others or become angry with others when you don't realize that you are actually angry with yourself. For example, when you fail a test, your first reaction might be to blame the teacher. However, when you realize you should have studied more, you might realize that you are angry only with yourself.

Forgiving Yourself

Dealing with being angry at yourself is often more difficult than dealing with anger with others. When you are angry with somebody else, you can talk to him or her about it. Then, you can work together to solve the problem. Solving the problem can be much more difficult when you are angry with yourself. You may be embarrassed to talk with somebody else about your own mistakes and failures. However, talking with someone else can help you resolve your anger. Staying angry with yourself can lead to many emotional problems, including depression and low self-esteem. Sometimes people can get so angry with themselves that they can become violent and attempt to harm themselves.

When you are angry with yourself over a mistake you have made, you may want to look at why the mistake happened. Then you can make plans for how not to make the same mistake next time. That way, a mistake turns into a positive learning experience. If you continue to be angry with yourself over a long period of time or if you find that you are often angry with yourself, you should talk to a parent or trusted adult. You shouldn't be embarrassed. Remember that everybody makes mistakes. Sometimes, we just need a little help in dealing with the feelings that our mistakes can cause.



Figure 9 If you do not resolve anger with yourself, the result may be depression or other emotional problems.

Lesson Review

Understanding Concepts

1. What are some events that can cause angry feelings?
2. How can the actions or behaviors of others result in you becoming angry?
3. Why is resolving feelings of anger with yourself important?

Critical Thinking

4. **Making Inferences** Why is it nearly impossible to avoid anger that is the result of events or of the behavior of others?
5. **Analyzing Ideas** Name three events that could result in you becoming angry with yourself. Do not mention events that were mentioned in the text.

Lesson 4

Managing Anger

What You'll Do

- Describe how anger can lead to violence.
- Describe the signs that violence is about to happen.
- Describe how anger can affect relationships.

Terms to Learn

- violence

Start Off Write

What could happen if you don't manage your anger well?

Derek's sister had promised that she would take Derek to the football game. At the last minute, Derek's sister said that she couldn't go. Derek got very angry and said hurtful things to his sister. Derek's sister's feelings were very hurt, and now Derek wishes he could take back all of the things he said.

If Derek had managed his anger well, his relationship with his sister might not have been damaged. It can be hard to manage your anger when you are so upset, but there can be serious consequences if you don't. These consequences can include damaged relationships and even violence.

Anger and Relationships

Do you remember the last time you were angry with a parent or sibling or even your teacher? One or more of these people has probably been angry with you too. Regardless of how much you like other people and how close you feel to them, every relationship you have can produce angry feelings. Anger is not always an unhealthy thing. If you manage your anger well, your relationships can improve. By sharing the feelings behind your anger, you can better understand other people and grow closer to other people. If you do not manage your anger, it can damage or ruin your relationships.

Figure 10 You probably have many relationships in your life. All of these relationships can cause conflict and anger from time to time.



Anger and Violence

When the people in a conflict are angry, violence is more likely to happen. **Violence** is using physical force to hurt someone or to cause damage. Violence does not always happen when people are angry. However, if anger is not managed, violence is often the result. Usually, there are many emotions that cause anger. These emotions include loneliness, sadness, and frustration. If these emotions are not addressed, they continue to build and cause anger. Eventually, this anger can spill over into violence. It is important to be aware of your own feelings so you can address anger and the emotions that cause it before violence occurs.

Predicting Violence

Often, you can tell when your own anger begins to get out of control. Hopefully, you can stop yourself from becoming violent. However, predicting when other people or persons are about to become violent is more difficult. By looking for signs that others might become violent, you may be able to protect yourself from violence. The first signs that violence may happen are verbal signs. A person who is about to become violent often yells or uses profanity. His or her words are usually angry and threatening. The person might even make a direct verbal threat against a person or a group of people. There are also physical signs that a person is about to become violent. A person who is becoming violent will often move into your personal space. The person's body language will be tense. His or her fist may be clenched, and his or her facial expressions may show anger.



Figure 11 Anger is often the result of many emotions building up, like water filling a cup. If anger is not dealt with, it can turn into violence.

SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY

The term *truce* is used most often in discussing military conflicts between two governments or groups. Research and write a paper on what *truce* means in a military context, and give examples of how truces have been used in past military conflicts.

Calling a Truce

Some anger in a relationship can be expected and can cause healthy change. However, too much anger can be unhealthy. If anger toward another person seems to last for a long time, you may need to call a truce. Calling a *truce* (TROOS) means taking a break from the conflict to let things cool down. Remember that when you call a truce with somebody, you aren't simply walking away from the conflict. The conflict will still need to be resolved. But resolving the conflict will be easier when both sides have had a chance to calm down.

Going Too Far

In some cases, failing to manage anger may have consequences. Anger that is not managed can cause many problems in our relationships. These problems can include bitterness or hurt feelings. Anger can also cause problems in getting along with our parents or teachers. If anger is not managed but is allowed to continue, it can ruin relationships permanently. Expressing anger in an unhealthy way can also have other consequences. These consequences might include getting grounded, losing privileges, or being disciplined at school. If anger turns into violence, the consequences might even include trouble with the police. Remember that anger can be healthy and can cause positive changes. However, when anger is not managed, it can be very destructive and can even turn into violence.



Figure 12 If anger is not managed, it can lead to violence.

Preventing Violence

If you are aware that someone is making threats, you should always tell a parent or trusted adult. You read or hear about a lot of violence in the news every day. Much of this violence could have been prevented if people had reported threats or aggressive behavior before the violence happened. By being aware of clues that violence might happen and by taking the proper steps to report threats or to get away from potentially violent situations, you can help prevent violence.



Figure 13 Always report threats of violence to a trusted adult.

LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITY

MAKING GOOD DECISIONS

Imagine that you are talking with a friend about an argument he had with a classmate. Your friend is still very angry. He tells you that tomorrow he is going to bring his brother's hunting knife to school to scare the classmate that he was arguing with. You don't think that your friend

is serious, but you know that he is very angry, and you know that his brother does have a hunting knife at home. What should you do? What might happen if you tell a teacher what your friend said? What might happen if you don't tell a teacher?

Lesson Review

Using Vocabulary

1. What is anger?
2. What is violence?

Understanding Concepts

3. How does anger lead to violence?
4. What are some negative things that can happen in any of our relationships if anger is not resolved?

5. Name two types of signs that violence is about to happen, and give one example of each type.

Critical Thinking

6. **Applying Concepts** Does calling a truce mean that a conflict is over? What might be the benefits of calling a truce? What might the benefits or dangers be of continuing the conflict?

Lesson 5

Expressing Anger

What You'll Do

- Explain the importance of expressing anger properly.
- Describe three healthy ways to express anger.
- Identify three unhealthy ways to express anger.
- Explain that other factors can affect the way we express anger.

Start Off Write

How can you express your anger in a healthy way?

Andrea's friend Corey borrowed some clothes and wouldn't give them back. Andrea yelled at Corey and said some mean things. Now Corey won't talk to Andrea, and Andrea may never get her clothes back.

If Andrea had expressed her anger in a different way, she might have been able to keep her clothes and her friend.

The Way You Express Anger Is Important

As you learned earlier, anger is a natural response to many situations. Because anger is a natural response, it is not good or bad. However, the way that you express your anger can be healthy or unhealthy. If anger is expressed in an unhealthy way it can make others angry and can force a conflict to end negatively. If anger is expressed in a healthy way, the conflict may end in a positive way. Often, expressing anger in a healthy way can be difficult. However, making sure that a conflict ends well is worth the effort.

Figure 14 The way in which anger is expressed can determine whether a conflict ends positively or negatively.



Steven cuts in front of Joel in the cafeteria line.



Joel tells Steven that he thinks that it was rude to cut in line, and that Steven should go to the back of the line.



Steven goes to the back of the line.



Joel gets angry and pushes Steven.



Joel and Steven both end up in the principal's office.

Healthy Expressions of Anger

When you are angry, you are less able to think calmly about the things you say or do. That is why when you are in a conflict, you have to make more of an effort to remember the healthy ways to express your anger.

When you are in a conflict, you express yourself with your words and with your body. You should be careful to use your words in a calm way to tell the other person why you are angry. Do not use threatening or aggressive language. The more you share your feelings and the less you use name-calling, threats, and yelling, the better chance you have of being listened to. You should say what you think should be done to fix the conflict.

You should also be aware of the way that you express your anger with your body. Keep a little bit of distance from the other person in a conflict. If you are too much in someone's personal space, you may seem threatening or aggressive. Also be careful not to clench your fist or make any other threatening movements.

Watch Your Words

Remember that the way that you express your anger will often determine how the other person in a conflict expresses his or her anger. When you are calm and express your anger in a healthy way, getting what you need out of a conflict is much easier. For example, imagine that you and a friend are arguing over a book that your friend borrowed from you. If you yell at your friend and call him a thief, he will most likely yell and call you names as well. You may damage your friendship, and you probably won't get your book back. Instead, try telling your friend "It is upsetting me that you haven't given back the book you borrowed. Can we talk about it?" Your friend will see that you are upset and will be more willing to work out a solution.



Figure 15 Expressing anger in a healthy way, such as having a calm discussion, makes resolving conflicts much easier.

Health Journal

Think about the last time that you were very angry. Why were you so angry? How could you have better expressed your anger? Write about your experience in your Health Journal.



Myth & Fact

Myth: People will listen or understand you better if you speak loudly or aggressively.

Fact: Loud and aggressive speech may result in others becoming defensive, which means they are less likely to understand or appreciate your position.

Unhealthy Expressions of Anger

Sometimes, it is acceptable to be loud or aggressive depending on the situation. For example, it may be all right to be loud while you are watching a football game. It may also be all right to be aggressive while you are playing basketball.

However, being loud or aggressive is not appropriate in most social situations. This is especially true when you are angry or in a conflict. Expressing anger in an unhealthy way during a conflict decreases the chance that the problem will be solved. It also increases the risk that the situation will turn violent. The more aggressive and angrier you appear during a conflict, the greater the chance that the other person or people will become angry and aggressive.

Some of the unhealthy ways in which anger is often expressed are in loud or aggressive speech, name-calling, and threats. Another unhealthy expression of anger is threatening or aggressive body language, such as invading somebody else's

personal space. The unhealthiest way to express anger is through violence. Violence is never useful. In addition to making any conflict much worse, violence can have more serious consequences. These can include suspension from school or trouble with the police.

If you are in a conflict and the other person uses unhealthy expressions of anger, remain calm. This may be difficult. If you don't think you can remain calm, walk away and try to resolve the conflict later. Doing so will help you avoid violence.



Figure 16 Yelling and pointing your finger, like the teen in this picture, are unhealthy ways to express anger.



Figure 17 Getting the right amount of sleep and eating properly can put you in a good mood. Being in a good mood can make you less likely to get angry or to express anger in an unhealthy way.

Staying Cool

Have you ever felt as if you were angrier or more likely to act aggressively on a certain day or at a certain time? Sometimes, our moods are caused by things that we can control. For example, you may have noticed that when you stay up too late, you are in a bad mood the next day. There are certain things that you can do to make yourself less likely to express your anger in an unhealthy way. First, make sure that you are getting enough rest. If you are getting tired or irritable in the middle of the day, you may need to go to bed earlier. Also, your body needs a healthy diet and regular exercise. Eating too much sugar or exercising too little can cause changes in your mood that may lead to anger. By taking care of your body, you can make sure that you are able to think clearly and calmly and to express your anger well.

Lesson Review

Understanding Concepts

1. Why is the way in which you express your anger important?
2. What are three healthy ways to express anger?

3. What are three unhealthy ways to express anger?

Critical Thinking

4. **Making Inferences** What are some other problems that eating poorly or getting too little sleep might cause?

Lesson 6

What Is Stress?

What You'll Do

- Explain what stress is.
- Describe the negative effects of stress on a person.
- Explain how stress can have a positive effect on a person.

Terms to Learn

- stress

Start Off Write

Can stress affect your physical health? Explain.

Charles has a test in math in a week. He is very worried about how he is going to do. He has had trouble sleeping and has been getting upset easily because of his worrying. What is causing Charles's problems?

Charles's problems are a result of stress. **Stress** is a physical and emotional response that is the result of a new or uncomfortable situation. Depending on how we deal with it, stress can have a positive or negative effect on our lives.

Everybody Has Stress

Everybody experiences some stress in his or her life. The amount of stress a person experiences can vary from day to day. Some days, a person may feel overwhelmed by the amount of stress in his or her life. But on other days, the same person may not experience very much stress. You have little or no control over the amount of stress in your life. However, you do have control over how you manage your stress. If it is managed properly, stress can be something that drives you to succeed and grow. If it is managed poorly, stress can cause serious physical, mental, or emotional problems.

Figure 18 Everybody experiences stress. Even a famous athlete, like Natalie Williams, experiences stress when she is competing.



What Is Negative Stress?

Negative stress is stress that results in problems in your life. Sometimes, negative stress is the result of a negative situation, such as an illness or injury. These types of situations are often beyond your control and can happen at any time. That is why it is important to recognize and know how to manage negative stress when it arises.

Another way that negative stress can happen is by managing stress poorly. For example, the stress caused by taking a math test is not necessarily negative. However, if you get so worried about the test that you cannot study, the stress can quickly become negative.

Often, you can learn something from dealing with negative stress in your life. For example, attending a new school can be frightening and uncomfortable. However, this experience can help you cope with other major changes later in life. Remember that you don't have to let negative stress become a bigger problem than necessary. Do not dwell on the negative stress in your life. Remember that almost every problem has a solution. Every bad time will pass eventually if you confront your problems and work to solve them.

The Signs of Negative Stress

It is possible to deal with negative stress in a healthy way if you recognize the signs of negative stress. You may recognize things that cause negative stress. But you may not always recognize what this stress is doing to you physically and emotionally. Physically, stress may make you feel tired. If you have too much stress, you may experience health problems. These problems can include stomachaches, headaches, hair loss, and even heart problems. Negative stress can also cause serious emotional problems, including nervousness, restlessness, and sadness. These problems can lead to more serious problems, such as depression or suicide. By recognizing the signs of negative stress in your life, you will know when you need help. A trusted adult can give you advice on how to deal with your negative stress.



Figure 19 Dwelling too much on the negative stress in your life can cause your problems to become even greater.

Myth & Fact

Myth: Health problems caused by stress aren't serious.

Fact: The way you respond to stress can cause many serious and lifelong problems, such as high blood pressure and heart problems.

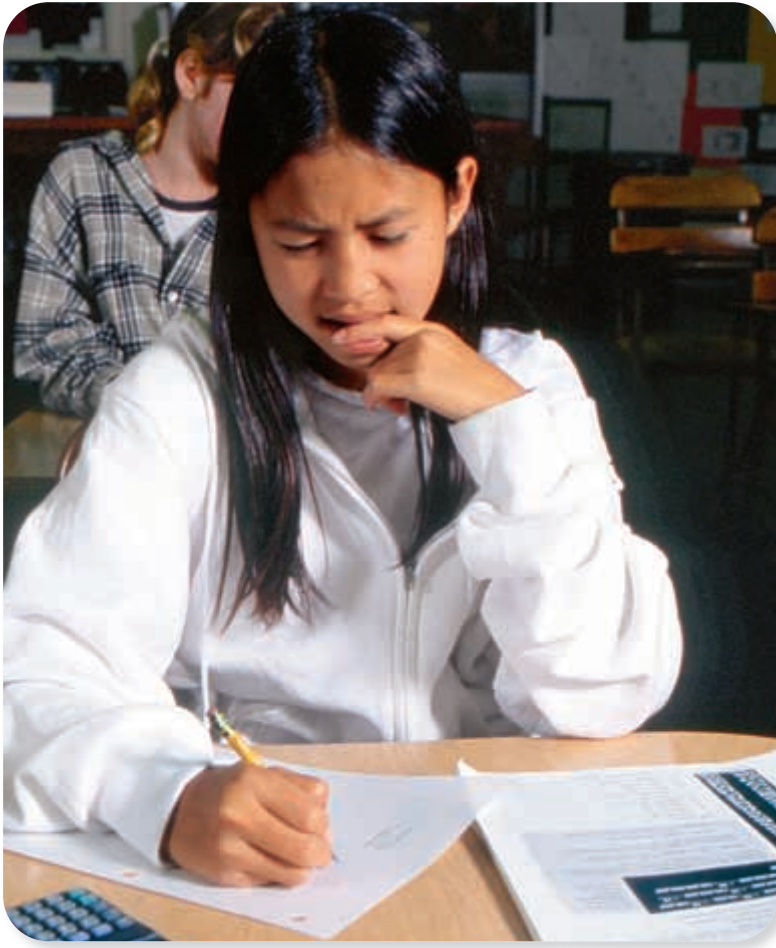


Figure 20 The stress that results from trying to do well in school is positive stress. However, too much stress, even positive stress, can have a negative effect.

What Is Positive Stress?

While much of the stress we experience is negative, some stress is positive. Positive stress is stress that pushes you to do better or to grow. If you've ever been in a sporting event or contest, you've probably experienced positive stress. The stress you feel while competing can lead you to perform better. Pressure to do well in school can also be positive. It can push you to get better grades.

Positive stress sometimes results from happy events that lead to changes in a person's life. Examples of this type of event include vacations, the birth of a new brother or sister, and school graduations. If you experience this type of event, focus on your happiness—not on the changes. Doing so will help you enjoy the events more.

Recognizing Positive Stress

Often, positive stress can lead to increased performance, energy, and even excitement. You feel a different type of stress when you are trying to achieve a higher grade than when you are faced with trying to avoid a lower grade. Similarly, there is a difference between the stress of gaining a new sister and the stress of losing a grandparent.

It is important to recognize the sources of stress in your life that are positive. And make sure that these do not become sources of negative stress. Although positive stress can be a very good thing in your life, positive stress can have negative effects if there is too much of it in your life. If you are always being pushed to win or compete, for instance, you can develop some of the same symptoms that are caused by negative stress.

Health Journal

Think about your own life. What are some things that increase your stress? Write about the sources of stress in your life. Do you think that the stress in your life is positive or negative stress? Explain.



STRESS TEST

For each of the following statements, record how often you have experienced that situation. 1=Never; 2=Almost Never; 3=Sometimes; 4=Often; 5=Very often or always (DO NOT WRITE IN BOOK)

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. feeling angry or frustrated | 7. fighting with parents or caretakers |
| 2. feeling lonely | 8. worrying |
| 3. feeling pressure to perform well at school | 9. losing your temper |
| 4. feeling pressure to perform well in sports | 10. suffering headaches |
| 5. feeling behind in schoolwork | 11. feeling tired |
| 6. fighting with friends | 12. experiencing stomach pain |

For the following list of events, check off every event that has happened to you in the last 12 months. Then, record the number of points next to each event that has happened to you. (DO NOT WRITE IN BOOK)

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. starting at a new school (6) | 7. large increase in number of arguments with friends or family members (5) |
| 2. failing a class or an important exam (3) | 8. birth of new brother or sister (5) |
| 3. parents divorcing (10) | 9. serious injury or illness (6) |
| 4. joining a sports team (2) | 10. moving to a new town or city (7) |
| 5. losing at an important competition (3) | 11. being teased or bullied regularly (5) |
| 6. death of a close friend or relative (8) | |

Now add up your score, and measure your results against the following scale:

- 12–40 Low to moderate stress:** You are experiencing little stress in your life. It is good that you are not dealing with a lot of negative stress. Be sure that you are not missing out on activities that can cause positive stress.
- 41–90 Average stress:** You are experiencing an average amount of stress. Look at your answers for this test. Where did most of your points come from? Keep an eye on these sources of stress, and be sure that they do not start causing too much negative stress in your life.
- 91–120 Stressed out!:** You have too much stress in your life. Talk to a parent or trusted adult about the results of this test, and see what you can do to reduce the level of stress in your life. Do this before the stress causes you many serious problems.

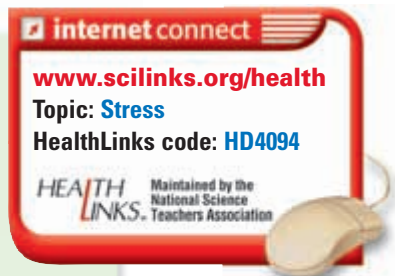
Lesson Review

Using Vocabulary

1. What is stress?
2. What effects can negative stress have on a person?
3. How can stress positively affect a person?

Critical Thinking

4. **Identifying Relationships** Is all stress either positive or negative? Is it possible for stress to be positive and negative? Explain your answer.



Lesson 7

Sources of Stress

What You'll Do

- Describe emotions as a source of stress.
- Describe how events and other people can result in stressful emotions.

Start Off Write

What are some sources of stress in your life?

Portia's family just moved to a new city, and Portia has just started at a new school. Portia is feeling a lot of new emotions, including fear and loneliness. These emotions are causing a lot of stress in Portia's life.

Although stress can be caused by almost anything, it is usually a response to new or uncomfortable emotions or a response to an unexpected or uncomfortable event. In Portia's case, stress is being caused by the event of moving and the emotions that have resulted from it.

Stressful Emotions

Stress is caused by how you react to situations and by your feelings about them. New or uncomfortable situations can cause many different emotions. Depending on the situation, these emotions can be positive or negative. For example, if you are competing in an important game, you might feel excitement or nervousness. On the other hand, if a loved one dies, you may feel sadness or anger. The way that your body responds to your emotions is what causes stress.

It is very important to deal with stressful emotions before they become a problem. Stressful emotions are perfectly normal, but if they are not addressed, they can lead to serious physical and mental problems.

TABLE 2 Common Teen Stressors

Common stressors	Possible emotions caused by stress
Schoolwork	fear of failing, anger at doing poorly, pride at doing well, and frustration at amount or difficulty of work
Relationships with friends	affection toward friends, fear of upsetting friends, anger or frustration caused by fighting with friends, and jealousy caused by friends' relationships with others
Relationships with family members	frustration or anger at having to follow rules, and anger or jealousy caused by arguing or competing with siblings
Competing on a sports or academic team	fear of performing poorly, frustration at performing poorly, and pride at performing well

What Causes Stressful Emotions?

Stressful emotions can be the result of several things. Sometimes, stressful emotions come from our relationships with other people. For example, you may feel a lot of stressful emotions after having a disagreement with another person. Expectations that others have for you and your performance can also result in many stressful emotions. For example, if you play on a sports team, you may feel stressful emotions because your parents, the coach, and your teammates all expect you to play well.

Events in our lives are another source of stressful emotions. The death of someone close to you, changing schools, or competing in a sport are just some of the events that can cause stressful emotions. Most often, the events that cause us stress are things that are beyond our control. These events can happen at any time. If you don't know how to deal with stressful emotions as they arise, you can quickly find yourself with way too much stress. Knowing how to manage stressful emotions can lessen the impact that stress has on your life.



Figure 21 Big changes, such as moving to a new city or town, can cause a great deal of stress.

Lesson Review

Understanding Concepts

1. In your own words, describe how emotions can lead to stress.
2. What are three examples of events that can result in stressful emotions?

Critical Thinking

3. **Making Inferences** Why might you feel more stress after an argument with somebody close to you than after an argument with a stranger?

Managing Stress

Melissa has a lot of stress in her life, and she is beginning to have stomachaches because of it. Is there anything that she can do to avoid having stress in her life?

What You'll Do

- Describe two ways to prevent stressful situations.
- Discuss how stress can be controlled by talking about it.
- Describe how stress can be controlled through physical activity.
- Describe how stress can be controlled through creative activity.

Start Off Write

How do you control the stress in your life?

The bad news is that nobody can avoid stress. However, the good news is that there are many things you can do to manage your stress and to prevent many stressful situations.

Preventing Stressful Situations

Not all stress can be avoided, but some of it can be prevented. Recognizing stressful situations before they happen can be difficult. Doing so requires practice. The older you get, the easier it may become to recognize and prevent stressful situations. If you have been in a situation that was stressful, remember how you dealt with it. Think about what you might do differently if a similar situation arises. If possible, stay out of situations that have caused you a lot of stress in the past. For example, if you know that going camping makes you uncomfortable and nervous, then don't go camping. Planning ahead can also keep certain situations from becoming stressful. For example, have you ever taken a test for which you did not feel well prepared? Next time, if you begin studying earlier, you might be able to prevent this stress.

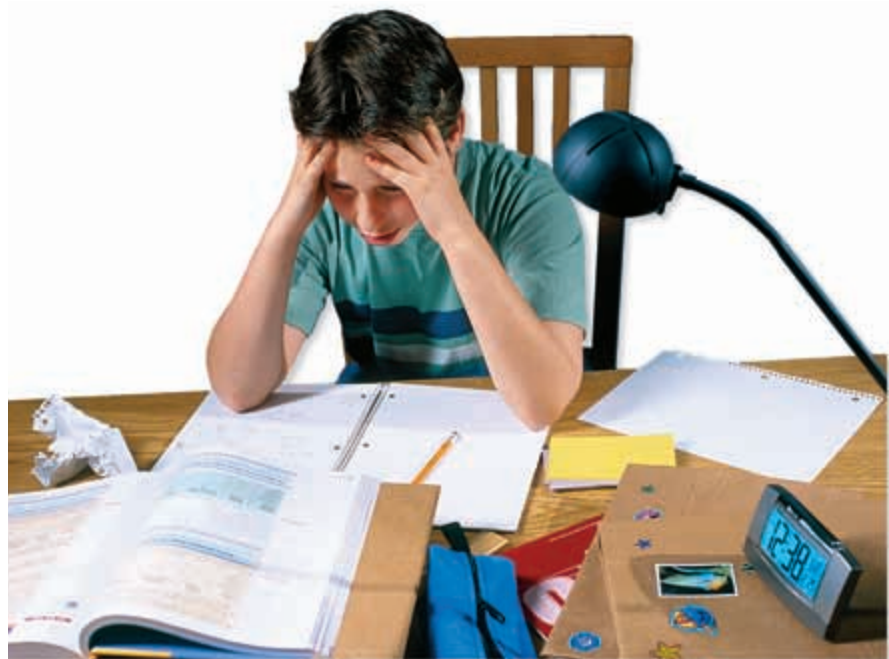


Figure 22 By planning ahead, you can sometimes prevent stressful situations, such as having to study all night for a test.



Figure 23 Stress can often be relieved by simply talking to somebody, such as a parent or trusted adult, about the stress.

Talk About It

While it may seem simple, talking to someone is one of the easiest ways to deal with stress. Sometimes problems can seem bigger if you keep them to yourself. Sharing your feelings can reduce or even get rid of your stress. As soon as you talk to somebody about your problems, the problems may suddenly seem not as bad.

Other times, you may need the help of others to solve the problems that cause your stress. Somebody else may be able to think of a solution that you had not considered. It doesn't always matter whom you choose to talk to. The important thing is that you trust the people to whom you turn for advice. As you begin to form relationships, you will learn which people you trust and to which people you feel comfortable talking. The people to whom you might talk include parents, siblings, or other trusted friends or adults.

LIFE SKILLS ACTIVITY

MAKING GOOD DECISIONS

Imagine that you are on a sports or academic team. You really enjoy the team, but lately, the team's coach has been putting a lot of pressure on you to improve. The extra practice time is taking away from your studies. You realize that being on this team is causing a lot of stress in your life. What do you do?

Hands-on ACTIVITY

STRESS SURVEY

1. Pick 10 people that you know. Be sure to pick both peers and adults.
2. Ask each person to rate his or her stress on a scale of 1 to 10. Ask each person how many hours of exercise he or she gets every week. Ask each person what his or her largest source of stress is.
3. Make a chart showing each person's name, age, and answers to the three questions.

Analysis

1. Look at your chart. Do people who exercise more also have less stress? Why do you think your results turned out the way they did?

Reducing Stress Through Physical Activity

Another way to reduce stress is through physical activity. When you think of physical activity, you might immediately think of running, jumping, lifting, and sweating. These types of activities are great for relieving stress. However, there are many other ways to be physically active and to reduce stress. You might take a walk, go swimming, or ride a bicycle. Whatever activity you choose should take your mind and energy away from the cause of your stress. The activity should also be enjoyable. If you do not enjoy running, then the time you spend running may not help to relieve your stress.

Remember that physical activity is only a way to manage stress. Stress can be removed only by facing and solving the problems that cause it. Physical activity will never make stress go away entirely. When you are finished exercising, the problems that were causing your stress will still be there. However, after physical activity, your body and your mind will be refreshed. As a result, you will cope better with the problems that are causing your stress.

Figure 24 Physical activity can reduce stress. If you are trying to reduce stress, be sure to pick an activity that you enjoy.



Be Creative!

When looking for ways to reduce stress in your life, you should rely on your creative side as well as on your physical abilities. While you can certainly reduce stress by running around the block or playing soccer, you should also have non-physical ways to relax. For example, you might write in a journal, draw or paint, write poetry, doodle, or listen to or play music. All of these activities take your mind off stressful situations. Some of these activities, especially journal writing, can actually help you work through some of the problems that cause stress. However, most of these activities are intended to take your mind off stress. Again, these activities aren't necessarily going to make stressful situations go away. However, they may give you a break from stress so that you are refreshed. When you are refreshed, you will be better able to manage your stress.

The next time you are in a stressful situation, try different ways to reduce your stress. This will help you determine which method of controlling stress works best for you.

Figure 25 Creative activities, such as writing in a journal, can help you relieve stress.



Lesson Review

Understanding Concepts

1. Is it possible to prevent stressful situations? If so, how?
2. What are two benefits of talking about stress?
3. How does physical activity help you deal with stress?
4. How can creative activities help you relieve stress?

Critical Thinking

5. **Making Good Decisions** You are feeling a lot of stress, and you think some physical activity might help. You could go running, which is a lot of exercise but not much fun to you, or take a walk in the park, which is fun but not much exercise. Which activity do you think will be better for reducing stress? Explain.

internet connect

www.scilinks.org/health
Topic: **Stress Management**
HealthLinks code: **HD4095**

HEALTH LINKS. Maintained by the National Science Teachers Association

Chapter Summary

- Conflict is any clash of ideas or interests. Conflicts can be internal or external.
- The way in which you communicate during a conflict can determine if the conflict ends positively or negatively.
- Conflicts can be resolved in several different ways.
- Anger is a strong feeling that can be caused by a sense of being hurt or wronged.
- Anger is neither positive nor negative, but the way it is expressed can be healthy or unhealthy.
- Resolving anger before it results in violence is important.
- Stress is a response to a new or uncomfortable situation. Stress can be positive or negative.
- It is important to manage stress so that it does not result in serious problems.
- Stress can be managed by talking to someone, through physical activity, or through a creative outlet.

Using Vocabulary

For each pair of terms, describe how the meanings of the terms differ.

- 1 internal conflict/external conflict
- 2 compromise/collaboration
- 3 positive stress/negative stress

For each sentence, fill in the blank with the proper word from the word bank provided below.

conflict	violence
negotiation	stress
anger	empathy

- 4 ___ is a clash of ideas or interests.
- 5 ___ is a physical harm that one person does to another on purpose.
- 6 ___ is a response to a new or uncomfortable situation.
- 7 The ability to understand or identify with another person's ideas or feelings is called ___.

Understanding Concepts

- 8 Why does external conflict arise? Give two examples of external conflict.
- 9 What are three possible outcomes of a conflict? Explain each one.
- 10 Why might you want to walk away from a conflict?
- 11 How can anger turn into violence?
- 12 Why is it bad to stay angry at yourself for a long period of time or to be angry at yourself often? What should you do if you are often angry with yourself?
- 13 Name three unhealthy ways of expressing your anger, and give an example of each.
- 14 What are some physical and emotional symptoms that you might experience if you are feeling too much stress? How can you avoid them?
- 15 What are two consequences of managing anger poorly?

Critical Thinking

Applying Concepts

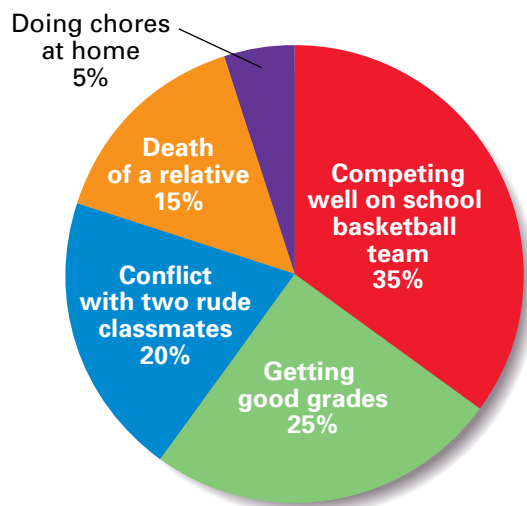
- 16 In this chapter, you learned several different ways of managing stress. What benefits might creative ways of relieving stress have that physical ways of reducing stress do not? What benefits might physical ways of relieving stress have that creative ways do not?
- 17 Imagine that you are having a conflict with somebody. She begins to raise her voice until she is yelling. She then pokes you in the chest and calls you a nasty name. Do you think that this conflict might become violent? What should you do?

Making Good Decisions

- 18 Your friend Maggie wants to return a pair of shoes to the store. When she gets to the store, the clerk tells her that he will not take them back. Maggie becomes very angry and begins acting aggressively and talking loudly. Is Maggie's reaction a good way to solve the conflict? What would you recommend that she do differently?
- 19 Imagine that you have several tests coming up at school. You are studying a lot, and you feel as if these tests are causing negative stress in your life. What can you do to turn this negative stress into positive stress?

Interpreting Graphics

Sources of Stress in Kim's Life



The figure above shows the different sources of stress in the life of an eighth-grade student named Kim. Use this figure to answer questions 20–24.

- 20 What is Kim's greatest source of stress?
- 21 What percentage of the stress in Kim's life is negative?
- 22 What percentage of the stress in Kim's life is positive?
- 23 What percentage of Kim's stress is not school related?
- 24 Write down each of the sources of stress in Kim's life, from the most important to the least important, and write whether the stress is negative or positive.

Reading Checkup

Take a minute to review your answers to the Health IQ questions at the beginning of this chapter. How has reading this chapter improved your Health IQ?

Coping

At times, everyone faces setbacks, disappointments, or other troubles. To deal with these problems, you have to learn how to cope. Coping is dealing with problems and emotions in an effective way. Complete the following activity to develop your coping skills.

Stressed Out!



Setting the Scene

Sondra just started 6th grade. She likes her classes, but she can't seem to find enough time to do all of her homework. Sondra thinks her classes are much harder than the classes she took last year. She worries that she will not be able to earn good grades in all of her classes, and she feels stressed.



The 5 Steps of Coping

1. Identify the problem.
2. Identify your emotions.
3. Use positive self-talk.
4. Find ways to resolve the problem.
5. Talk to others to receive support.

Guided Practice

Practice with a Friend

Form a group of two. Have one person play the role of Sondra, and have the second person be an observer. Walking through each of the five steps of coping, role-play Sondra dealing with the stress resulting from her schoolwork. The observer will take notes, which will include observations about what the person playing Sondra did well and suggestions of ways to improve. Stop after each step to evaluate the process.

Independent Practice

Check Yourself

After you have completed the guided practice, go through Act 1 again without stopping at each step. Answer the questions below to review what you did.

1. What emotions could Sondra be feeling? How do those emotions contribute to her stress?
2. What are some ways that Sondra could solve her problem?
3. Who could Sondra talk to about her problem?
4. What do you do to cope when you feel stressed?



On Your Own

After a few weeks, Sondra works out a study schedule that helps her stay on top of all of her classes. She no longer feels stressed by her classes. At soccer practice one day, Sondra's coach tells her that she will play goalie in the biggest game of the season. The coach says that Sondra is a good goalie and that the team will be counting on her to do well in the game. Sondra feels proud but also nervous. Draw a comic strip that shows how Sondra could use the five steps of coping to deal with her nervousness.

