



## Managing Emotions



### Bell Ringer

Think of a time you felt really emotional and said or did something that you later regretted. The emotion can be positive (excitement, joy) or negative (angry, afraid). What was the situation? How did you feel? How did you react at the time? What did you do after your emotion cooled down?

## Managing Anxiety - Example

Carlos has exams coming up soon. Each day the exams get closer, he feels more anxiety and his emotional temperature goes up.



**Extremely Hot:** Exams *tomorrow* – Carlos stresses out, pulls an all-nighter and gets three hours sleep.

**Very Hot:** Exams *three days away* – he feels very anxious and overwhelmed, drinks coffee and stays up late.

**Hot:** Exams *a week away* – he's very worried and begins to study but distracts himself with video games and socializing.

**Very Warm:** Exams *10 days away* – he is worried.

**Warm:** Exams *two weeks away* – he starts to worry.

**Slightly Warm:** Exams *three weeks away* – he begins to think about them.

**Cool:** Exams *four weeks away* – Carlos is not even thinking about them.

What prompted Carlos' anxiety?

What could Carlos do to cool his anxiety along the way?



### Reflection/Application

Write about time when you felt a strong emotion and were able to soothe it. How did it change the situation and the outcome?

In the future, when you begin to feel a strong emotion, use the calming strategies to de-escalate the emotion, then write about it.

Graphics: ©Shutterstock, Keith Bell  
Graphics: ©School-Connect

# Handout 2.4.2

## De-Escalating Emotions

Which strategy would you use if you felt: a) like laughing loudly in a quiet community space? b) terribly nervous before giving a speech? c) embarrassed after falling hard in the hallway? d) furious with a friend or family member? e) so excited that you're hyper-ventilating? f) tired and unmotivated?



STRATEGY	EXAMPLE	REASON
<b>Belly Breathing: Breathe deeply and slowly (in through your nose, and out through your mouth) while pushing out your belly.</b>	You feel yourself getting hot and tense and your voice getting louder. You take three deep breaths.	Slows you down; sends oxygen to your brain so that you can think more clearly; provides a chance for the frontal lobe (Rational Center) to kick in
<b>Use positive self-talk.</b>	“Slow down; I can handle this.”	Builds personal power through self-control; decreases your chance of being manipulated into a fight
<b>Dispute negative thoughts and attributions. (Reframe the situation –“Flip the Script.”)</b>	“She seems to be ignoring me! . . .No, maybe she’s just preoccupied with all that’s going on.”	Activates your frontal lobe (Rational Center) and overrides your limbic system (Emotional Center)
<b>Remove yourself from the situation (Time Out).</b>	If you feel out of control, go where you can be alone, cool down, and think.	Provides a chance to cool down away from the pressure of a situation
<b>Take a walk or run.</b>	If you feel an emotion strongly, walking or running will help you to relax.	Releases natural chemicals in your body that cause you to let go of tension and feel better
<b>Envision a peaceful scene (or a “happy place”).</b>	Think about a peaceful scene you are familiar with, e.g., a park, the seashore, a fountain, a mountain lake, or a field.	Decreases your pulse rate; induces positive emotions; allows you to think more clearly
<b>Talk about your feelings with an understanding friend or adult.</b>	A friend, parent, sibling, mentor, teacher, counselor	Helps you to understand the source of your emotions and “get it off your chest”
<b>Reflect and write about emotions.</b>	Keeping a journal	Helps you to think things through and review your progress

Graphics: ©Shutterstock, Keith Bell