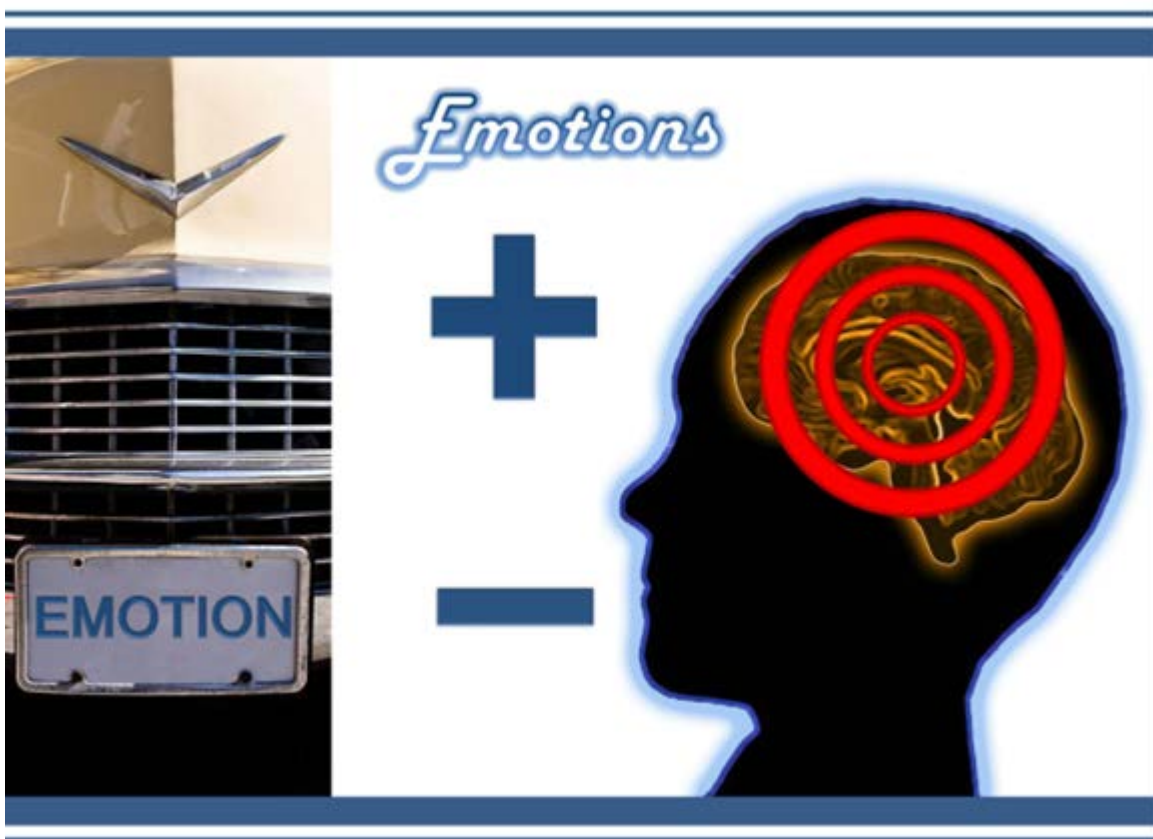


**Module 7: Share the Road: Peer Relationships**  
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**Emotions**



In general, emotions are signals from the brain that tell the body how to react to a situation. They are not necessarily good or bad, but they can be positive and negative.

## Module 7: Share the Road: Peer Relationships

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#### Negative Emotions

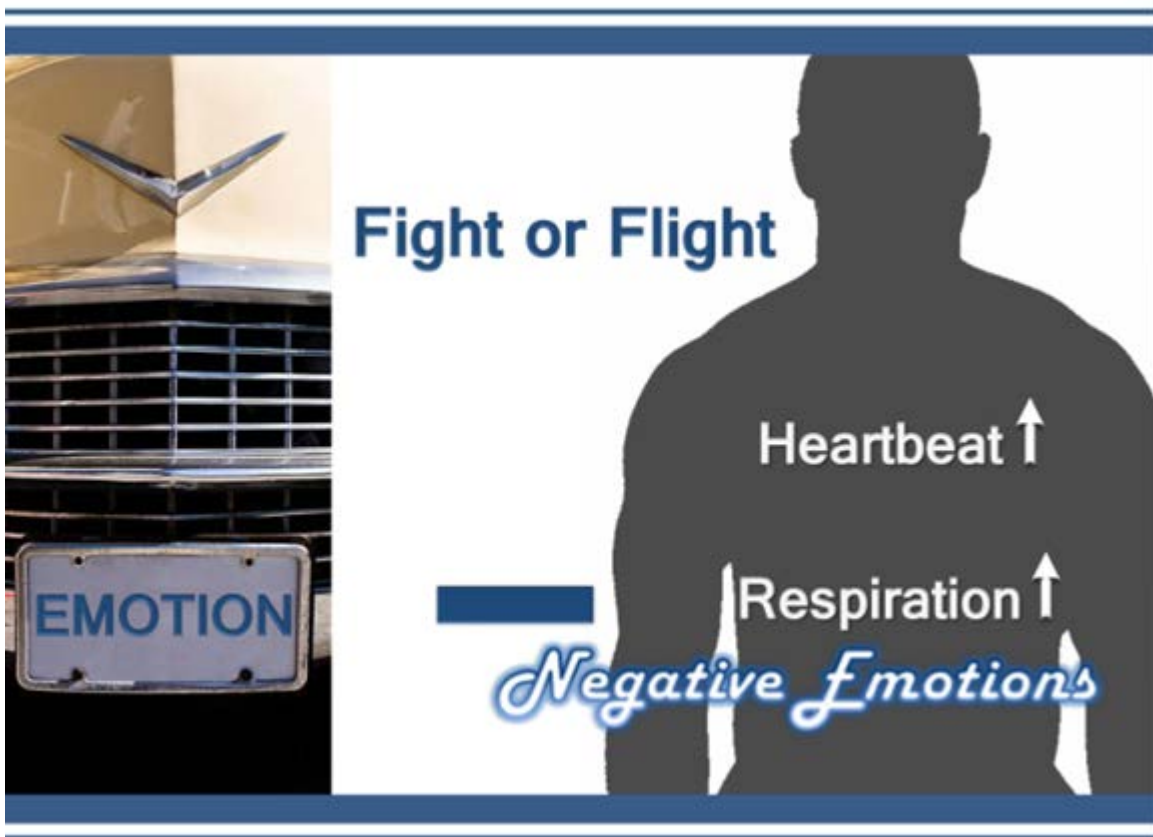


Negative emotions are feelings we experience when something goes wrong. Fear, anger, boredom are only a few emotions that can be negative. Fear tends to be the fuel for negative emotions. It can be a fear of the unknown, like the outcome of a conflict, or a fear of what lies in the dark or what happens beyond high school. Normally, when we experience a negative emotion, we set out to right the wrong and correct the situation.

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#### Fight or Flight



What happens to your body when you are angry or afraid? Your body prepares itself to react. A section of your nervous system is called the sympathetic nervous system. It prepares your body for the “fight or flight” response, or your body’s reaction to activity, emergencies, and emotions. In situations of fear or anger, your heartbeat and respiration increase, sending additional oxygen and nutrients to your muscles. This allows your body to react physically to an incident, by fleeing the scene or remaining to fight. Once the emotional response is over, your body returns to a normal state.

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#### Positive Emotions



Positive emotions are fueled by the desire to enjoy. They are feelings we experience when something goes our way. When we experience a positive emotion, we become positive, which opens us to more creativity and exploration. We yearn for more of what makes us feel this way, allowing us to mature in a positive fashion.

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#### Peers



Along with emotions, our peers -- or those people with whom you go to school, work, play, or just hang out -- can influence how you react to situations. Peer influence (or peer pressure) is persuasion, positive or negative, given by your peers that affects your behavior.

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#### Peer Influence



Peer influence goes back a long way in time. It is what has shaped our culture today. Fashion, food, trends all came to be because others influenced the movement. Peer influence occurs for one of two reasons: to avoid rejection or because you feel less knowledgeable and are learning. For instance, you might decide to do something you normally wouldn't do to please your friend. In trying to avoid rejection, you do something you really don't believe in doing.

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#### Learning from Peers



On the other hand, peer influence can persuade you to try a new thing and to grow. For example, you might want to try shooting a bow and arrow. You have a friend who is really good, so you hang out with him and learn his techniques in shooting a bow. You grow to really like this hobby. Your friend has influenced your reaction, your emotion of pleasure, to this new hobby by helping you learn.

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#### Peer Support



Peers can have positive and negative influences on us, but overall, peer pressure is vital to our growth and development. As you grow, you become more independent from your parents. In addition to your family, teachers, or coworkers, your friends are part of your support structure. They are an additional source of your physical, emotional, and social support, and they become significant influences on how you emotionally react to situations and events.