Don’t Sweat The Small Stuff

(It’s all small stuff)
Check The Newspaper

Can you find examples in today's newspaper of people who are dealing with problems in a good way? Find at least two people showing a healthy perspective on life. Then find two people who are "sweating something small."

Skills: skimming, understanding psychology of individual behavior

Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff

You know that feeling you get when you’re nervous? Your stomach gets jittery, you get lightheaded, and you start to sweat. This feeling of nervousness, sometimes known as stress, hits everyone at some time. You may get stressed out when you have a big test or when you have too much to do at one time. Stress can cause a lot of problems. It may affect your ability to concentrate and to do well in school. It might make you feel just plain bad. What can you do? How can you keep stress from ruining your life? This supplement will look at some ways you can cope with stress.

Richard Carlson wrote a book to help people cope with stress. Don’t Sweat The Small Stuff was the top-selling book in 1997 and in 1998, so we asked him for his advice on helping kids to be happy and to cope with stress. He told us what he tells his own kids:

“In my whole life, there is a theme that keeps coming up. That is that the essence of being a less-stressed person is to understand that life is not the way you want it to be. It is the way it is. The closer you come to accepting that fact, the happier you’ll be. Instead of wishing life to be different, learn to accept and enjoy the way it is. Strive for more acceptance and lower expectations.”

“Every teacher is not going to praise you,” says Carlson. “Your friends aren’t always going to notice your new haircut.” Carlson explains that if you don’t expect things like that, you won’t be disappointed when they don’t happen the way you hoped. Then you are free to focus on the good things that do happen for you instead of focusing on the disappointments. In a typical day, the average person may have 10 things happen. Nine of those may have gone fine but one did not work so well. People often find themselves focusing on the one that didn’t work instead of the nine that were fine. At the end of a day, ask yourself, “What’s the best thing that happened to me today?” Go to sleep thinking about that.

Whatever you focus on becomes real for you. So, if you always think negative thoughts – “I’m not popular enough,” “I’m fat,” “I’m not smart enough,” “I’m no good at sports” – this negativity becomes real for you. These negative thoughts can take over your life and make you unhappy. Everyone is going to have bad thoughts from time to time but you have the power to control those thoughts. The key isn’t to eliminate ever having doubts. Instead, it’s the power of knowing that you can control what you do with those thoughts and doubts.

What should you do with negative thoughts? “You have three choices,” said Carlson. “You can give those thoughts significance [importance], you can ignore them, or you can think them and then dismiss them. It’s all up to you. If you don’t give those thoughts too much importance or significance, they can’t make you unhappy. Once you understand that you have the power over the thoughts in your head, you can be happy no matter what.

Carlson says that kids have a better chance at being happy than adults. That’s because kids haven’t already had a lifetime of negative thoughts to overcome. If you can learn to control your thoughts now, when you are young, you’ll be able to be much happier when you are an adult.

Throughout this supplement, we’ll look at some of the essays in Carlson’s book. Each one will have an explanation and some activities to help you understand the ways to be happier and deal with stress.
Often we allow ourselves to get all worked up about things that, upon closer examination, aren’t really that big a deal. We focus on little problems and concerns and blow them way out of proportion. A stranger, for example, might cut in front of us in traffic. Rather than let it go and go on with our day, we convince ourselves that we are justified in our anger. We play out an imaginary confrontation in our mind. Many of us might even tell someone else about the incident later on rather than simply let it go.

There are many similar “small stuff” examples that occur every day in our lives. Whether we had to wait in line, listen to unfair criticism, or do the lion’s share of the work, it pays enormous dividends if we learn not to worry about little things. So many people spend so much of their life energy “sweating the small stuff” that they completely lose touch with the magic and beauty of life. When you commit to working toward this goal you will find that you will have far more energy to be kinder and gentler.

...Richard Carlson

**PROBLEMS BIG or Small?**

So, how do you avoid “sweating the small stuff?”

How can you decide what is a small problem and what is serious?

The first step is knowing what your problems are. What bothers you and stresses you out? Maybe you’re upset when friends are not being as nice as you want them to be. Your little brother being in your room when he’s not supposed to be might make you angry. Does it make you crazy when you are frustrated by a video or computer game?

If you get a D on a test, does that cause you to feel stressed? Maybe you are upset because you just found out that your parents are splitting up. Which of these problems are big and which are small? It’s important to be able to tell the difference. You need to know when your worry is okay and when you are overreacting to little annoyances. If you spend a lot of time being stressed about things that are really not so important, you’ll waste some valuable time that you could spend on more important things — and you’ll miss opportunities to enjoy your life.

**A STRESS-BUSTING plan**

The first step in your stress-busting plan should be to learn when something is worth worrying about and when it is not worth your time.

Here is a chart for you to complete:

List the last three times you can remember being nervous or upset. Next to each one, rank it as a 1, 2, or 3. Use 1 for a really serious problem that needs your attention. Use 3 for minor annoyances that you should just let pass. Once you know what you’re dealing with, you can start using some of these strategies for dealing with stress.

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**Is This Important?**

The first question to ask yourself about something that made you nervous or upset is this: “Is this really important?” If the issue is a big one, then you can find a way to deal with it. But if it’s not really a big deal, you may choose just to let it pass.

**What do I want?**

Ask yourself what you want to get out of the situation. What is your goal? Once you know what it is you want, it’s easier to make a plan to get to your goal. If you got a bad grade on a test and your goal is to improve your grade, you can create a plan to do that. If your goal is to tell your parents so that you can get that over with, you can create a plan to do that. You can set both as goals and plan how to do each of them, but it’s important to know what your goal is when dealing with any problem.

**Check The Newspaper**

Find a big problem in today’s paper. Discuss it with your class. Skills: getting the main idea, developing awareness of values
Make Peace With Imperfection

I've yet to meet an absolute perfectionist whose life was filled with inner peace. The need for perfection and the desire for inner tranquility conflict with each other. Whenever we are attached to having something a certain way, better than it already is, we are engaged in a losing battle. Rather than being content and grateful for what we have, we are focused on what's wrong with something and our need to fix it. When we are zeroed in on what's wrong, it implies that we are dissatisfied, discontent. The solution here is to catch yourself when you fall into your habit of insisting that things should be other than they are. Gently remind yourself that life is okay the way it is, right now.

...Richard Carlson

No One is Perfect

Have you heard the expression that no one is perfect? What does that mean? You may have been told that it's important to do your best work. There is a difference between trying to do something well and trying to do it perfectly. Sometimes teachers and parents tell you that you are not working up to your potential or that you could try harder. Are they telling you that you must be perfect in order to do well? Probably not, because if you are trying to be perfect, you're never going to be satisfied. Even Olympic athletes rarely get all perfect scores.

The best way to accomplish something good is to try to do your best but accept the fact that your best may not be perfect. It's best if you can focus on what's right about what you did rather than what was wrong with it. When you stop trying to be perfect all the time, you might just find that your best keeps getting better and better.

Check The Newspaper

1. Find an example in the newspaper of someone who has done something poorly. Read the story and find all the things that person did well. What good can you find in the mistakes the person may have made?
2. Find the most perfect person you can in today's newspaper. List all the characteristics that make your person almost perfect. What characteristics make that person slightly less than perfect?

Skills: respecting individual uniqueness, developing standards of appropriate behavior
Have you ever seen a cartoon in which a character falls down a snowy hill and is rolled up in a giant snowball by the time he hits the bottom? That’s what happens sometimes when you start thinking about what might go wrong. Your mind can take off and keep going and going until your small problem is huge!

You might go to bed at night and suddenly remember that you forgot to bring home a school notice you were supposed to get signed by your parents. Then you worry about what your teacher is going to say when she finds out. Then you worry that you might get sent to see the principal. Then you panic about how angry your parents might be if they get called at work because you are in the principal’s office. Finally you’re imagining the conversation your parents might have with the principal and the punishment that might follow.

Your mind is really off and running, and before you know it, you’re at the bottom of that snowy hill rolled up in a giant snowball. If this happens to you it’s important for you to know how to stop this kind of thinking. If you know you do this sometimes, you can do something about it. Next time you find yourself worrying and letting your mind run wild like this, just stop. Tell yourself that so far, nothing that bad has happened and try to focus on one good thing that might happen instead of all the bad things. If you can just catch yourself and stop the negative thinking before your snowball really gets rolling, you can save yourself from a lot of stress.

A powerful technique for becoming more peaceful is to be aware of how quickly your negative and insecure thinking can spiral out of control. Have you ever noticed how uptight you feel when you’re caught up in your thinking? And, to top it off, the more absorbed you get in the details of whatever is upsetting you, the worse you feel. One thought leads to another, and yet another, until at some point, you become incredibly agitated. The solution is to notice what’s happening in your head before your thoughts have a chance to build any momentum. The sooner you catch yourself in the act of building your mental snowball, the easier it is to stop.

...Richard Carlson

Be Aware Of The Snowball Effect on Your Thinking

Runaway Mind

Runaway Mind

Runaway Mind
Your own moods can be extremely deceptive. They can, and probably do, trick you into believing your life is far worse than it really is. When you’re in a good mood, life looks great. You have perspective, common sense, and wisdom. In good moods, things don’t feel so hard, problems seem less formidable and easier to solve. When you’re in a good mood, relationships seem to flow and communication is easy. If you are criticized, you take it in stride.

On the contrary, when you’re in a bad mood, life looks unbearably serious and difficult. You have very little perspective. You take things personally and often misinterpret those around you.

Here’s the catch: People don’t realize their moods are always on the run. They think instead that their lives have suddenly become worse in the past day, or even the last hour.

The truth is, life is almost never as bad as it seems when you’re in a low mood. Rather than staying stuck in a bad temper, convinced you are seeing life realistically, you can learn to question your judgment. Remind yourself: “Of course I’m feeling defensive (or angry, stressed, depressed); I’m in a bad mood.”

The trick is to be grateful for our good moods and graceful in our low moods – not taking them too seriously. The next time you feel low, remind yourself, “This too shall pass.” It will.

...Richard Carlson

Crabby, Cranky, and Generally Feeling Crummy

You oversleep on Monday morning and Mom wakes you up in a panic because you are late for school. You have a 100-question multiple-choice science test staring you in the face and an oral book report. You are nervous about the auditions for the school play this week and still have no date for this weekend’s dance. You rush into the kitchen and check the refrigerator and there is no milk for cereal, your brother finished the last of the Frosted Mini-Wheats, and you really don’t have time to eat anyway. And it looks like another Bad Hair Day. You run to the bus stop only to find that the bus already left. You will have to hike the mile and a half in the cold. No wonder you are in a bad mood.

As you race up the front steps of the school, you bump into the new kid in school who is cute and smart. You almost melt as you smile at each other and exchange hellos. The world is not coming to an end; suddenly there is hope. You bounce into class ready to face the day and that bad mood is a thing of the past.

Your moods are constantly changing. When all seems lost you can take comfort in knowing that a simple turn in events can make you feel differently. Or if you can manage to look at your life from a different point of view, you can change your mood. Maybe a good night’s sleep, an A on a test, or front-row tickets to a concert can make you forget about your problems. In any case, realize that your bad moods will pass, so don’t take them too seriously. Of course, the good moods will, too, so enjoy them while you can.

Check The News

1. Divide a piece of paper into two columns. Label one column “Good Mood” and one column “Bad Mood.” Find people in the newspaper and write their names in the appropriate column, based on the mood each is in. Which mood is easier to find and why do you think that is so?
2. Make a collage of all the moods you can find in peoples’ faces in today’s newspaper.

Skills: classifying, appreciating creative expression
Surrender To The Fact
That Life Isn’t Fair

A friend of mine, in response to a conversation we were having about the injustices of life, asked me the question, “Who said life was going to be fair, or that it was even meant to be fair?” Her question was a good one. It reminded me of something I was taught as a youngster: Life isn’t fair. It’s a bummer, but it’s absolutely true.

One of the mistakes many of us make is that we feel sorry for ourselves, or for others, thinking that life should be fair, or that someday it will be. It’s not and it won’t. When we make this mistake we tend to spend a lot of time wallowing and/or complaining about what’s wrong with life. “It’s not fair,” we complain, not realizing that, perhaps, it was never intended to be. The fact that life isn’t fair doesn’t mean we shouldn’t do everything in our power to improve our own lives or the world as a whole. To the contrary, it suggests that we should. When we do recognize that life isn’t fair, however, we feel compassion for others and for ourselves.

...Richard Carlson

Check The News

It may be fun to stage a debate about justice in your class. Divide into two teams. One team will argue that life is fair and just. The other will argue the opposite. Each team will search the newspaper for stories that support its side of the argument. Teams will select spokespeople to present their side.

Skills: communicating with clarity

Imagine that your soccer team, the Ravens, has practiced hard for weeks. The kids organized a car wash and went door to door selling candy to raise money to buy equipment for the team. You agreed as a team that all members should take turns in the field so that everyone had a chance to play. No one gave the team much of a chance to win and, sure enough, you lost nine consecutive games. The Cheetahs, the best team in the league, pushed and shoved and broke the rules all the way to nine victories in a row.

The Ravens were scheduled to meet the Cheetahs in the final game of the season. A win by the Ravens against the Cheetahs would save the season and deny the Cheetahs a fifth straight championship. But the Cheetahs took control of the game early using unsportsmanlike tactics and won, 42-0. Sometimes life isn’t fair. Who said it was supposed to be?

Should the Ravens feel sorry for themselves? Losing gracefully is an important lesson to learn. It’s easy to deal with success. The challenge of life is learning how to handle the disappointments. And if you understand the un unfairness of what happened to your team, you are a lot more likely to be understanding when you see injustice happening to someone else. You might even be moved to help someone out when you see some thing unfair going on.
No Sweat!
A Game of Stress Management

Directions:
1. Each player gets a game piece.
2. Players take turns flipping the coin. The first person to get “heads” goes first.
3. To start, move to the start position and flip the coin. “Heads” moves two spaces, “tails” moves one space.
4. Follow the instructions on each space.
5. Continue playing until everyone finishes.

You’ll need:
- A coin to flip.
- A small game piece, such as an eraser, a coin, a paper clip, or a piece of candy, for each player.

You were a good listener. Move an extra space.

You thanked your mother for making breakfast. Take another turn.

You got depressed and ate too much chocolate. Move back one space.

You’re worrying about your English test instead of studying for it. Lose a turn.

Your best friend cancelled Friday night’s plans. You made other plans. Move an extra space.

You said something nasty about the girl who sits next to you in math. Lose a turn.

You got depressed and ate too much chocolate. Move back one space.

You’re worrying about the fight you had with your friend. Move back one space.

Name one good thing about yourself. Move two spaces ahead.

Name one thing you’re lucky to have in you.

You thanked your mother for making breakfast. Take another turn.

You’re still thinking about the fight you had with your friend.
You're worried about not having a date for the prom, which is six months from now. Move back one space.

You got angry at your brother for eating the piece of cake you were saving. Lose a turn.

The new kid in school calls you every day for homework. If you think you'd help, move ahead one space. If you know this would bother you, move back two spaces.

You had to wait a long time in the supermarket line, so you sang to yourself. Move ahead two spaces.

You're worried about not having a date for the prom, which is six months from now. Move back one space.

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You try to be happy no matter what happens. You win!
Practice Random Acts of Kindness

There is a bumper sticker that has been out for some time now. You see it on cars all across the nation (in fact, I have one on my own car). It says, “Practice Random Acts of Kindness and Senseless Acts of Beauty.” I have no idea who thought of this idea, but I’ve never seen a more important message on a car in front of me. Practicing random kindness is an effective way to get in touch with the joy of giving without expecting anything in return. It’s best practiced without letting anyone know what you are doing.

Perhaps the greatest reason to practice random kindness is that it brings great contentment into your life. Each act of kindness rewards you with positive feelings and reminds you of the important aspects of life – service, kindness, and love. If we all do our own part, pretty soon we will live in a nicer world.

...Richard Carlson

Be Kind
Kindness is certainly nothing new. All the great religions of the world encourage kindness to others. Yet we are bombarded with reports of violence, injustice, and betrayal.

A few years ago, a woman from California grew tired of hearing about all the bad news in the world and decided to start encouraging people to perform kind acts. She wrote a letter to a magazine and the idea started to catch on. This marked the beginning of the Random Acts of Kindness Movement.

Wouldn’t it be great if instead of all the bad news, we heard about Random Acts of Kindness and Senseless Beauty instead? Do you ever do the dishes or take out the trash just because you want to make your parents happy? Do you help your kid brother when he struggles with his homework? Do you pick up trash in the schoolyard even if you didn’t put it there?

When you do a kind deed for someone, that person feels so good that he or she will do something nice for someone else. The good feelings will grow and grow until everyone is being kind to everyone else. You’ll also feel good about yourself because being kind is the right thing to do. Imagine how different life would be if everyone always practiced kindness.

CHECK THE NEWSPAPER

1. Write down all the Random Acts of Kindness that are committed by class members for a week. Divide up into small groups and create newspaper front pages with the stories about the kind acts.

2. The Random Acts of Kindness movement began because a California woman was tired of hearing about so much bad news. Rewrite a bad news story from the newspaper so that it turns out to be good news.

Skills: writing narrative and descriptive paragraphs, organizing thoughts and opinions
It's tough enough trying to create a life of serenity when dealing with your own mental tendencies, issues, real-life problems, habits, and the contradictions and complexities of life. But when you feel compelled to deal with other people's issues, your goal of becoming more peaceful becomes all but impossible.

How often do you find yourself saying things like, “I wouldn’t do that if I were her,” or “I can’t believe he did that,” or “What is she thinking about?” How often are you frustrated, bothered, annoyed, or concerned about things that you not only cannot control or be of actual help with, but are also none of your business?

Minding your own business goes far beyond simply avoiding the temptation to try to solve other people’s problems. It also includes eavesdropping, gossiping, talking behind other people's backs, and analyzing or trying to figure out other people. One of the major reasons most of us focus on the shortcomings or problems of others is to avoid looking at ourselves.

When you catch yourself involved where you really don't belong, congratulate yourself for having the humility and wisdom to back off. In no time at all, you'll free up tons of extra energy to focus your attention where it's truly relevant or needed.

...Richard Carlson

No Time For Gossip

Your good friend is telling you about her problems with her latest boyfriend. She gives you the details of her Saturday night date to the movies. You tell her she is getting involved too quickly. You overhear a group of kids making fun of the guy who sits next to you in English class and you report this information to him. You tell the kids in your homeroom that they show no school spirit because they are uninterested in the latest school fund-raising drive. Your intention in each of these situations is to help, but is it always a good idea to get involved in everyone’s affairs?

Maybe the kids in school are always gossiping about their friends and acquaintances. Perhaps they make fun of each other and point out each other’s faults behind their backs. They talk about each other without any regard for their feelings. He’s a dork, she’s a flirt, he’s so conceited, and she’s a spoiled brat. Why do they belittle their friends?

We talk about other people because it makes us feel better about ourselves. We are actually making comparisons between ourselves and others to see how well we measure up. Focusing on other people’s flaws allows us to avoid dealing with our own shortcomings. If we can resist the peer pressure to put others down, then we can take a serious look at how we can become better people. Sometimes it is important to mind your own business and concentrate on your own life.
Anger MANAGEMENT and STRESS Control

When I was growing up my father used to count out loud to ten when he was angry with my sisters and me. It was a strategy he, and many other parents, used to cool down before deciding what to do next.

I’ve improved the strategy by incorporating the use of breath. All you have to do is this: When you feel yourself getting angry (or stressed), take a long, deep inhalation, and as you do, say the number one to yourself. Then, relax your entire body as you breathe out. Repeat the same process with the number two, all the way through at least ten (if you’re really angry, continue to twenty-five). What you are doing here is clearing your mind with a mini-version of a meditation exercise. The combination of counting and breathing is so relaxing that it’s almost impossible to remain angry (or stressed) once you are finished. It helps make “big stuff” look like “little stuff.”

....Richard Carlson

Anger is tough to control and it certainly can make you feel stressed. The breathing method described here is amazingly helpful. Try it. It really works!

Here is a chart to fill in to find out if this method helps you. Use this log to keep track of the times you feel angry or stressed. Show whether or not you used the breathing method and, in the third column, record the differences in how you felt.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Times I Feel Stressed/Angry</th>
<th>I count to 10</th>
<th>How I Feel</th>
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<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
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The significance of this statement is that it can teach you to stop constantly wishing you were somewhere else. We tend to believe that if we were somewhere else - on vacation, with another partner, in a different career, in a different home, in a different circumstance - somehow we would be happier and more confident. We wouldn't!

The truth is, if you have destructive mental habits or if you're constantly wishing things were different, these identical tendencies will follow you, wherever you go. And the reverse is also true. If you are a generally happy person who rarely gets annoyed and bothered, then you can move from place to place, from person to person with little negative impact.

Something wonderful begins to happen with the simple realization that life, like an automobile, is driven from the inside out, not the other way around. As you focus more on becoming peaceful with where you are, rather than focusing on where you would rather be, you begin to find peace right now in the present.

...Richard Carlson

Do You GET It? Do you understand the statement, “Wherever you go, there you are”? Try this exercise to find out.

1. List the major problems in your life right now.
2. Circle those problems in the list that are likely to last for a long time.
3. If you could make one major change in your life, what would that be?
4. List two problems that change would solve.
5. On the list, circle those problems you can solve without making a major change in your life.
6. List two problems you once had but don’t have anymore.
7. Write a description of how you solved those problems
8. Think about the ways you can use similar solutions to solve the problems that you listed in question 1.

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<th>The Change</th>
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Check The Newspaper
Comic-strip characters often face problems. Find a character with a problem in today’s comics. Write a letter of advice to that character telling how to solve the problem.
Skills: writing letters, making judgments
The happiest person on earth isn’t always happy. In fact, the happiest people all have their fair share of low moods, problems, disappointments, and heartache. Often the difference between a person who is happy and someone who is unhappy isn’t how often they get low, or even how low they drop, but instead, it’s what they do with their low moods. How do they relate to their changing feelings?

Most people have it backward. They take their low moods very seriously and try to figure out and analyze what’s wrong. They try to force themselves out of their low state, which tends to compound the problem rather than solve it.

When you observe peaceful, relaxed people, you find that when they are feeling good, they are very grateful. They understand that both positive and negative feelings come and go, and that there will come a time when they won’t be feeling so good. To happy people, this is okay, it’s the way of things. They accept the inevitability of passing feelings.

The next time you’re feeling bad, rather than fight it, try to relax. See if, instead of panicking, you can be graceful and calm.

...Richard Carlson

**What Do You Do?**

Take this quiz to see how you handle bad moods:

Circle the number that best shows how you handle feeling bad.

If your answer is never, circle 0; for sometimes, circle 1; for often, circle 2; for always, circle 3.

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<th>0</th>
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<td>1. I blame myself.</td>
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<td>2. I blame others.</td>
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<td>3. I take stock of myself.</td>
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<td>4. I complain to a friend.</td>
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<td>5. I clean my room.</td>
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<td>6. I daydream about being somewhere better.</td>
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<td>7. I eat more than I should.</td>
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<td>8. I abuse substances (cigarettes, alcohol, drugs).</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. I go shopping.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11. I get into fights.</td>
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<td>12. I feel panicky.</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. I think I’ll never feel any better.</td>
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<td>14. I wonder if my life is worth living.</td>
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**TOTAL**

Score: 0-5, you handle feeling bad well; 6-10, you’re on the right track but you could take it a little easier; 10-14, you need to change your ways; 15 and above, you should really ask for some help in dealing with bad moods.
The book Don’t Sweat The Small Stuff ends with these two words: “Treasure Yourself.” What do you think that means? In this space, write at least ten wonderful things about yourself. You are worth treasuring and these are just a few of the reasons why.

Check The Newspaper

1. Look through the news sections of today’s newspaper and find a story about something bad that happened to a person. Think of two ways in which that person could find some good outcome from the bad event. Did the person deal with the event in the same way you would have handled it?
2. It’s tough to keep your moods from affecting your schoolwork. Athletes are also in positions where they cannot let their moods affect their performance. Find an athlete in today’s paper whom you admire. List examples from the story that show that his/her personal mood did or did not affect the sport.

Skills: understanding perspective and point of view, analyzing individual characteristics and moods.
This game is like the familiar word-find puzzle. The only difference is that each of the hidden words is concealed within the letters of a sentence. For example, the word STOVE is hidden in the following sentence:

“In today’s race I was first over the finish line!” boasted Susan.

If you look carefully, you’ll see the word STOVE in the last two letters of the word “first” and the first three letters of the word “over.” Get the idea? See if you can find the following words, selected from your Don’t Sweat The Small Stuff supplement, hiding in the sentences below. We’ve done the first one to get you started.

ANGER • CONTROL • COPE • FAIR • GOAL • KIND • MENTAL • MINOR • MOOD • PLAN • POWER • REACT • STRESS • THOUGHT • UPSET

Example: At the witch’s command, Rapunzel’s tresses descended from the tower window. (stress)

1. “A good supper and a nice warm bath ought to make you feel good as new,” chirped Mrs. Emery, scooping up the weary little spaniel.
2. Groucho and Harpo were two of the famous Marx brothers.
3. When Phil clicked on the next icon, trolls, leprechauns, and other creatures appeared on the computer screen.
4. Eric opened his eyes with a start, wondering what had awakened him.
5. The ladies nibbled on small cakes and sipped coffee from the teacups Ethel had bought at the flea market.
6. Tameka was determined to find the bearded man, even if she had to tiptoe down every corridor and peek in doorways.
7. When Carlos offered to teach the tango, a lot of girls signed up for lessons.
8. To the amazement of the crowd, Philip landed on his feet and walked away without a scratch.
9. At that moment a loud bell sounded, signaling the end of the round.
10. Both Larry and Sam were active in the student council.
11. A number of airlines had been forced to cancel their flights because of the heavy snow.
12. The lieutenant questioned everyone in the room in order to determine the approximate time of the robbery.
13. Whenever the choir sang, Ernest hummed and swayed in time to the music.
14. According to the security guard, a husky fellow named Elmo, odd sounds had been heard coming from the deserted gallery.

Solution: 1.) thought, 2.) power, 3.) control 4.) cope 5.) MENTAL 6.) MINOR 7.) MOOD 8.) mental 9.) upset 10.) kind 11.) goal 12.) plan 13.) react 14.) mood