

Speak Your Mind

How would you respond? Choose your answers.

1. A friend thinks she's being funny, but her comments about your new coat really make you mad. You . . .

 - a. don't do anything.
 - b. yell at her to knock it off.
 - c. think of something you can say to embarrass her and get her back.
 - d. tell her you're upset, and ask her to stop teasing you.
2. You just got new headphones for your MP3 player. On the way to school, your friend yanks them off and breaks them. You . . .

 - a. pick them up and put them in your backpack, saying nothing.
 - b. are furious and demand they be replaced by Friday.
 - c. say nothing but tell everyone about what happened, making her look really bad.
 - d. tell your friend that you're bummed. If she offers to replace your headphones, you let her. If she apologizes, you accept her apology. Otherwise, you chalk it up to experience—and leave your player and headphones at home.
3. A friend tells you that her mother has cancer. You tell someone else, and it gets around school. Your friend is unbelievably angry with you. You . . .

 - a. avoid her at all costs.
 - b. get angry back. It's not as if what you said wasn't true.
 - c. blame the rumors on someone else.
 - d. admit that you were very wrong. Apologize, and ask her what you can do to make things right.
4. You're at your friend's house when your friend starts being really disrespectful to her parents. You feel uncomfortable and decide to leave. Later, you . . .

 - a. apologize and beg for forgiveness.
 - b. blame your friend for having such a freaky family.
 - c. run home and e-mail everyone about the fight.
 - d. tell your friend how you felt, but reassure her that you're still her friend.
5. You know that your friend is mad at you. You've seen the signs. But she's not saying why, and you have zero idea what you've done. You . . .

 - a. say nothing and hope the situation gets better on its own.
 - b. get angry, too. Two can play this game!
 - c. share your troubles with other friends, saying, "I don't know why she's doing this to me!"
 - d. write her a note saying that you've noticed she's been giving you the cold shoulder. Tell her that you value the friendship and want to work things out.



How did you score?

mostly a's

You tend to push strong feelings away to avoid a conflict, even if it means you get hurt or taken advantage of. Problem is, your silence forms a wall between you and other people. Learn to share your feelings. Start by writing in a journal. Next, speak out more at home, and then with other people with whom you feel safe. It will be hard at first, but it's worth it.

mostly b's

Anger without self-control is like a car without brakes. Ask yourself, *Is it easy to be friends with me?* If you're always losing your cool, people will avoid you to keep from becoming targets. Give yourself time to calm down, and think before you react.

mostly c's

You're trying to get your message across, but you're going about it the wrong way. Getting other friends involved in your fights almost always makes things worse. Talk only to the person you're fighting with. Sharing your feelings may bring the two of you closer together.

mostly d's

You understand the value of communication in friendships. You're learning to be honest and sensitive to your friends' feelings—and to your own. Way to go!