

SuperSibs

Supporting Siblings of Children with Cancer

Spring/Summer 2024



Meet SuperSib **Claire**

Age: 13

When Claire warms up to someone, her nurturing and hilarious spirit shines through. As the oldest of three, Claire cares deeply for her siblings. When her little brother, Carter was diagnosed with Hodgkins lymphoma, their family was devastated. While they navigated Carter's diagnosis and were finding a new normal, Claire knew that their plans were changing and learned the value of being flexible. Today, she continues to do her best in school, keep up with extracurricular activities and hang out her friends, all while supporting Carter throughout every step of his journey.

To submit your own SuperSib story or read more, visit [SuperSibs.org](https://www.SuperSibs.org).

Advice for other SuperSibs

“Stay close to your sibling with cancer by visiting during hospital admissions and hanging out at home whenever you can. Be silly and make your hero laugh.”



Sometimes our emotions lay quietly until they fade away, and other times they bubble below the surface, waiting to erupt. Emotions can be powerful and felt in your whole body. Emotions can make you feel on top of the world, joyous, elated, excited — or underneath it, sad, angry or even just confused. Tackling emotions is complex and it takes practice to understand and process what you are feeling. **Anger** is a particularly complicated emotion, but one felt by everyone at different points in their lives. It is normal to get angry sometimes. Recognizing all the emotions behind anger, such as worry, fear, jealousy, guilt and insecurity, can help you.

Did you know part of your brain's job is to protect you?

Yep, it's true. There is a part of your brain that constantly looks out for things that could harm you. It tries to warn you of perceived danger, which creates the feeling of stress. The more you are exposed to anxiety-inducing situations, the more your brain is triggered, which can cause anger to bubble over.

How Meditation Can Help

Meditation is a great tool to identify those hidden emotions behind your anger. Practicing meditation can help you understand why you feel that way and then help you find ways to calm down, make yourself feel better and let it go or learn from it.

Doing small meditations daily helps with managing emotions. Just take 10-15 minutes a day and focus on your breath. For guided meditation, try the Calm app.



Response vs. Reaction

As we just learned, part of your brain's job is to instinctively protect you from something that causes you harm, fear or stress. Sometimes we react immediately to stressful situations, and often we are not thinking about our own deeper emotions contributing to our actions. When we take the time to pause and think about why we are angry and upset, we give ourselves the opportunity to respond in a more thoughtful and intentional way.

We can ask ourselves questions in situations like:

“Why am I letting this get to me?”

“I normally wouldn't be this angry that my team lost the game. Why does today feel worse?”

“Am I the one responsible for what happened, but I'm blaming someone else?”

“Is my bad quiz grade the real reason I'm getting angry at my friends who did well?”

“Why do I feel like I am angry at my family, when I really just wish our circumstances were different?”

Read through the examples below of **angry reactions, and then match them to a more **positive response**.**

- **Yelling at your parent for arriving late to pick you up from school.**
- **Making a mean comment on a friend's post to get back at them for teasing you.**
- **Lashing out at a family member or friend after having a bad day.**
- **Shouting and grabbing the remote from your sibling or friend's hand when you don't agree on a show to watch.**
- **Refusing to do the chores that a parent asked you to do.**
- **Calling yourself stupid after getting a bad grade.**
- **Calmly asking for more time to complete your chores.**
- **Taking turns watching shows or finding a show both you and your sibling or friend can enjoy.**
- **Telling your parent you felt embarrassed or worried while waiting for them.**
- **Listening to music after having a bad day.**
- **Talking directly about how it made you feel when a friend teased you.**
- **Asking for help if you are struggling in school/Being kind to yourself and acknowledging the impact of stressful circumstances.**

You **ARE** in control!

The Uncontrollable: It's important to remember there are things you cannot control and things that you can.

Look at the examples of things that you cannot control on the TV screen below. Fill in the blanks with other examples.

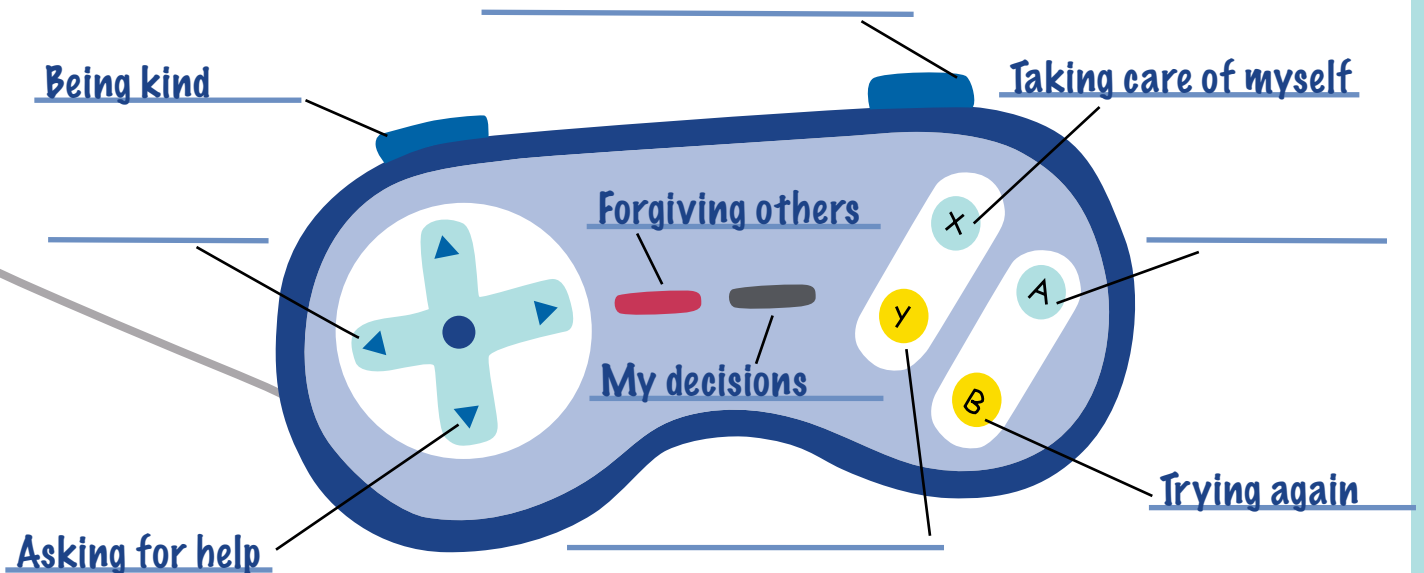
What others say. _____ **What others do.**

What others think. _____

What others feel.

The Controllable: When you spend too much time focusing on things that are out of your control, it's easy to become angry. Instead, focus on things that you have the power to change!

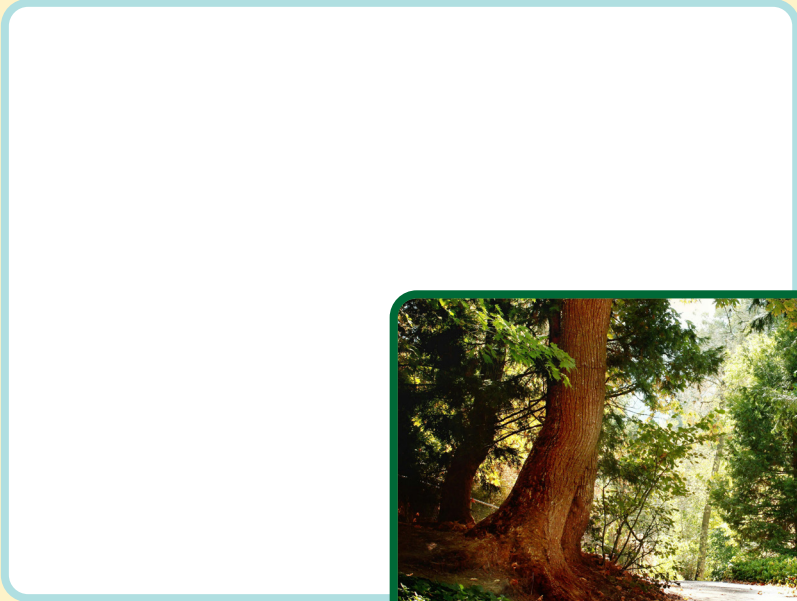
Fill in the blanks with things you can control. This is a great tool for transforming anger and letting it go!



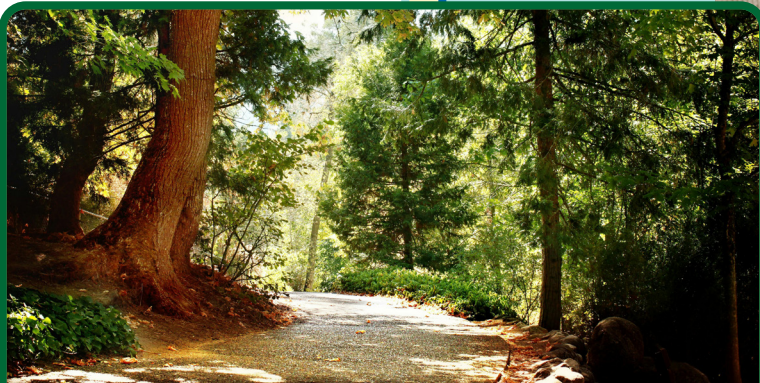
Coping

By now you've done a lot of work to identify the feelings underneath anger, the differences between responding and reacting, and how meditation can be a useful tool to work through anger. Well done! Let's find some ways to cope with our feelings so we can let them go and move on.

Try these simple ways to clear your mind and find your happy place. Fill in the blank rectangles with your favorite ways to de-stress.



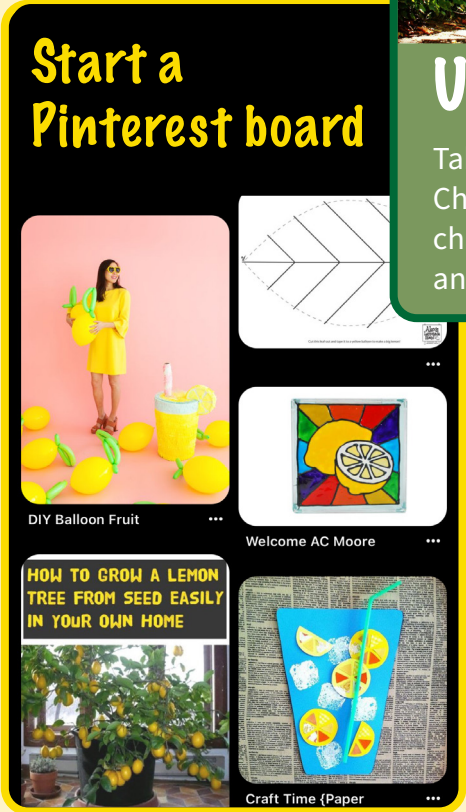
**Make a
playlist**



Unplug
Take a vacation from the pressure of social media. Challenge yourself to take a few days off from chatting online and connect with friends in person and outdoors!



**Download an
app that plays
calming sounds**



SuperSibs wants to hear from you!

Like what you see? Have an idea for a future playbook? Email SuperSibs@AlexsLemonade.org.




THE SAYING “making lemonade out of lemons” MEANS TO FIND THE **SWEET** IN A BITTER SITUATION OR FINDING POSITIVES IN A DIFFICULT TIME.



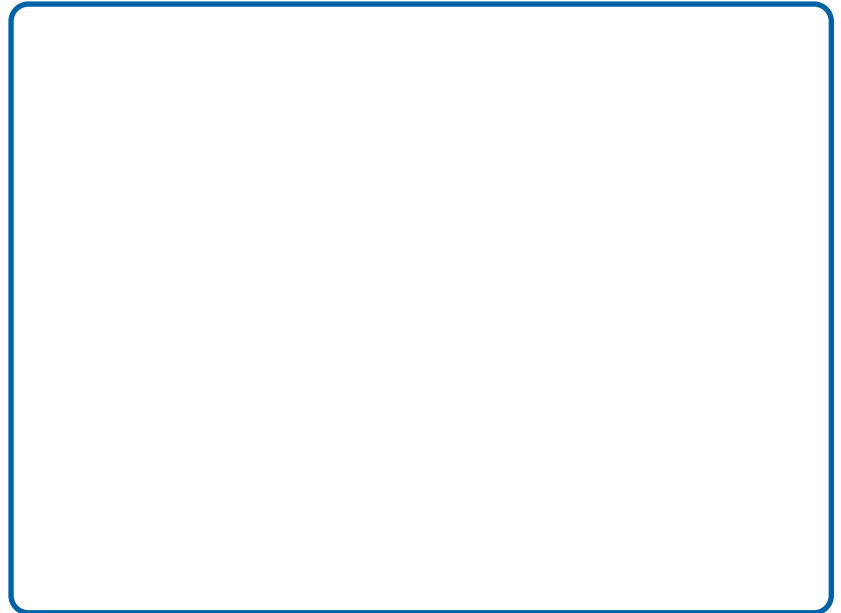
Journal Prompt

In your journal, write or draw how you can make lemonade out of the lemons in your own life.

Ink About It



Close your eyes and draw a picture of a lemon. Once you open your eyes, you’ll notice it probably is not how you imagined it would look. Now, with your eyes open, use that drawing to create your own work of art. It can be anything you want — you just turned a lemon into lemonade! With a caregiver’s permission, email your completed artwork to us at SuperSibs@AlexsLemonade.org for a special prize!



ALSF Founder Alex and her brother Eddie

To do something positive during a difficult time, Alex’s brothers Patrick, Eddie and Joey helped Alex hold her famous lemonade stands. If you are interested in holding a lemonade stand, scan the QR code to learn more!

