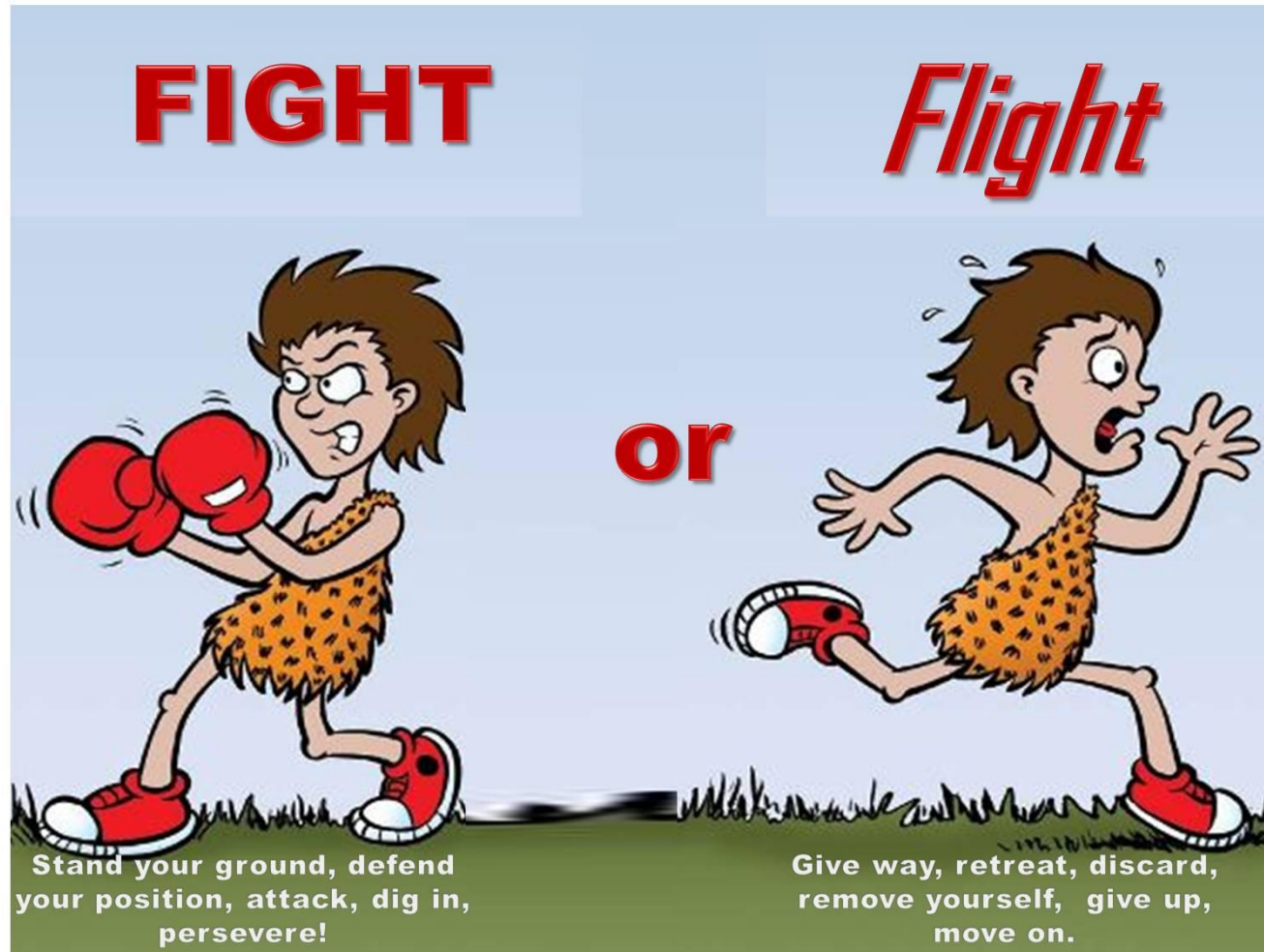


# Brain Reactivity

# Fight or Flight

- ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mtRrxNTnyh8>



# Event Response Action

- ▶ Event: Perceptions, thoughts, feelings
- ▶ Reaction: Chemical release, changes in brain function
- ▶ Action: Behaviour

# Example

- ▶ Event:
  - ▶ Perception: Friend doesn't say hi
  - ▶ Thoughts: Are they mad at me?
  - ▶ Feelings: Anxious, upset
- ▶ Reaction:
  - ▶ Chemical release = cortisol
  - ▶ Changes in brain function = emotional mind
- ▶ Action:
  - ▶ Argument with friend



# Interrupt the cortisol cycle

- ▶ Event:
  - ▶ Perception: Friend doesn't say hi
  - ▶ Thoughts: Are they mad at me?
  - ▶ Feelings: Anxious, upset
- ▶ Reaction:
  - ▶ Chemical release = cortisol
  - ▶ Changes in brain function = emotional mind
- ▶ Action:
  - ▶ Use strategy for calming down
- ▶ New Thought
  - ▶ Maybe friend is upset about something
- ▶ New feeling
  - ▶ Calm, compassion
- ▶ Action
  - ▶ Ask friend if they are ok
  - ▶ Offer support

# Example

- ▶ Event:
  - ▶ Perception: Teacher announces a test
  - ▶ Thought: I'm going to fail
  - ▶ Feelings: panic
- ▶ Reaction:
  - ▶ Cortisol release
- ▶ Action:
  - ▶ Swear at teacher
  - ▶ Walk out of room



# Think of your own...

- ▶ Identify a feeling you have had in the last 24 hours
- ▶ How did you know you were feeling that way? (tears in your eyes, knot in your stomach)
- ▶ How did you deal with it?

# Interrupting the cortisol cycle



- ▶ Feeling are natural and ok!
- ▶ Reacting impulsively or searching for reasons and explanations for the feelings can keep cortisol levels high
- ▶ If you do something to relax, cortisol levels go back down in 15-20 min
- ▶ If you focus on figuring out what's wrong the brain can release more cortisol, making things worse!