Scenario

While hurriedly driving down a road, a car of four passengers is pulled over by an officer. The police officer gets out and begins to make his way towards the vehicle. The driver, Nick, quickly turns and asks his passengers what to do. Jay in the back right seat says to roll down the window, however Rob in the passenger seat flinches and under his breath advises Nick to drive off. Mary in the back left seat shrugs, she says, "We've been smoking. I don't wanna get arrested." The officer approaches the vehicle and with a knock of his knuckle on the driver's window, asks for it to be rolled down. Nick reluctantly rolls down the window. The officer catches the car's smell but proceeds to ask for their information and where they came from. Nick presents his fake ID and insurance to the officer and tells the officer that they just left a party. Rob stays in a cold silence. As the officer returns to his vehicle to validate Nick's information, Rob breaks his silence and tells Nick to leave the scene. After a short while, Nick then slams the gas, causing Mary to curse loudly at Nick while they speed down the road. Fueled by frustration of the scenario, Jay yells at Nick to slow the car down. The group is now splintered, but Nick continues to drive until he sees more police cars pursuing them. Eventually the police catch up to them, and Nick and Rob are pulled from the car and arrested. Although not detained, Mary and Jay are taken to the precinct along with Nick and Rob where they all provide their statements.

Objective

Below is a description of your assigned passenger profile. As a group, come up with a few sentences explaining the conflict from the perspective of your passenger. What kind of conflict did your passenger experience? Why might they have acted the way they did in the conflict? How might their experiences have informed their response? If this scenario were covered by the media, how might the media interpret and display the events?

Name: Rob
Age: 20
Gender: Male
Ethnicity: White
Background:
- Originally from St.Louis
- Grew up in an upper class suburban neighborhood
- Graduated from private highschool, now attends college as a freshman
- Relationship status, dating a girl he met in his freshman communication class
- Criminal record, previously arrested for having drugs in his vehicle while driving

Police statement: "I was in the front passenger seat of the vehicle, when I told Nick to "punch it". I told Nick to do so because I had recently watched a news article in which a police officer had shot an individual who appeared to reach for a weapon. Despite knowing that none of my friends had weapons on them I did not want to take any chances with them getting hurt or killed. Personally I have little trust in police officers because of how they have treated me in the past."

Understanding Conflict

1. Primary conflict types:
   - **Competitive style**
     A party is very assertive and interested in getting their own way even if that means escalating the conflict
   - **Avoidant style**
     A party does not assert themselves, trying to avoid conflict entirely
   - **Collaborative style**
     A party is active in the conflict, trying to cooperate and settle the situation
   - **Accommodative Style**
     One party is working cooperatively with another party without trying to assert their own concerns
   - **Compromising Style**
     One party gives up a little of what they wants in order to get whatever else they want, while the other party is also willing to do the same

2. Conflict-related emotions are communicated through:
   - **Intensification**
     Acting like one is happier than they actually are
   - **De-intensification**
     Acting like one feels less emotion towards something
   - **Simulation**
     Acting like one is feeling an emotion they do not actually feel
   - **Inhibition**
     Acting like one does not feel a certain emotion they actually feel
   - **Masking**
     Acting like one feels an emotion that is very different from what they are actually experiencing (i.e. anger, jealousy, hurt, guilt)

3. How personality, gender, and relationship distance among individuals influence conflict
   - **Personality**
     Influence of individualism-collectivism on conflict communication styles (idiocentrics v allocentrics)
   - **Gender**
     Different gender expectations based on culture
   - **Relationship distance**
     In-group v out-group (in-croup in individualistic cultures tend to have less influence on individual behavior than in collectivistic cultures)

4. Dimensions of social conflict and how they are represented in media
   - **Complexity**
     Media focuses only on its manifest stages and minimizes the presentation of its underlying causes
   - **Intensity**
     Media tends to present only the more intense moments
   - **Solvability**
     Social conflicts covered by news appear to be short term and easily solved

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