

ANGER MANAGEMENT

Facilitator Training and Workbook

By

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Common Differences Between Anger Management and Batterer Intervention Programs

Anger Management

- **Anger** is viewed as the primary problem.
- Primary focus is on managing the **emotion**.
- Abuse is seen as due to a **loss of control**.
- Intervention is **short term** (2 – 16 hours).
- Little attention given to the consequences.
- Generally **no identified victim(s)**.
- No **addressing of empathy** for the victim.
- There is **no outreach** to the victim.
- Little or no attention given to accountability.
- **Non-confrontational**. Denial is not addressed.
- Emotionally unprovocative.
- Gender is not considered to be an issue.
- It is viewed as a **personal mental health** issue.
- Intervention is confined to the specific service provided.

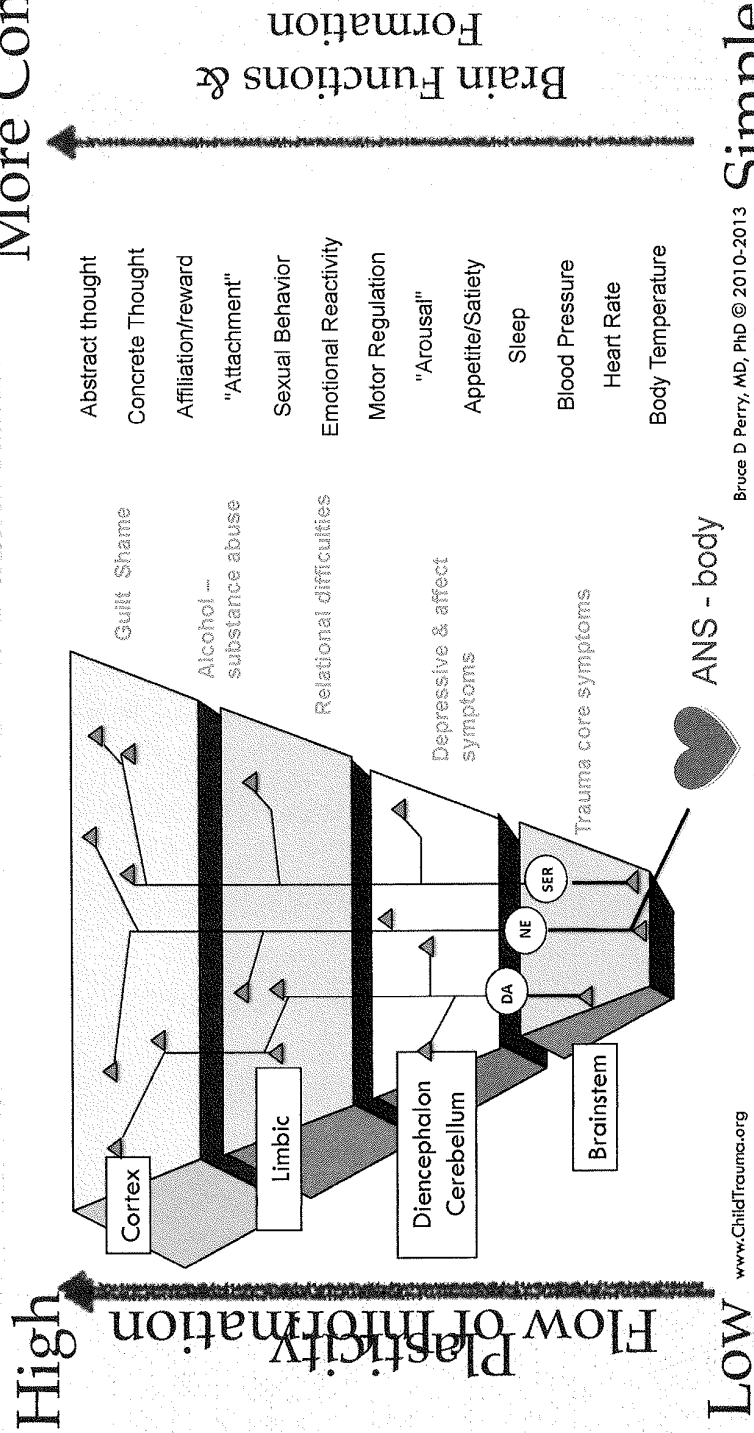
Batterer Intervention

- **Abuse and control** are viewed as the primary problem.
- Primary focus is on changing the **beliefs and behavior**.
- Abuse is seen as due to a **taking of control**.
- Intervention is **long term** (40 – 100 + hours).
- Repeated reminders of the damage caused.
- There are **identified victim(s)**.
- **Empathy building** for victim is common.
- **Referrals** are provided to the victim.
- Accountability is paramount.
- **Confrontational**. Denial is regularly targeted.
- Emotionally demanding and intense at times.
- Sexism and gender socialization are viewed as significant services provided.
- It is viewed as a **social, societal** issue.
- This intervention is viewed as just one part of a larger coordinated community response.

Allies in Change Counseling Center
Chris Huntley, Psy.D.
9/2000

Origins of Anger: Neurodevelopment

Dr. Bruce Perry's Neurosequential model



*Damage in terms of neuronal connections - threat associations, lack of stimulation, overstimulation

Anger Discussion Questions

1 Although it might sometimes feel like your anger “explodes” and comes out of nowhere, this is almost never the case. Anger builds slowly, and if you aren’t paying attention, it can happen entirely outside of your awareness. Can you think of a time when your anger caught you by surprise? In retrospect, were there any warning signs you could’ve picked up on?

2 Some people describe anger as a “secondary emotion”. This means that anger is a response to a *primary* emotion, such as hurt, fear, or sadness. For example, someone might feel hurt, and lash out with anger in response. Do *you* think anger is a secondary emotion? Why or why not?

3 Many of us pick up life-long habits related to anger when we’re children, based off of the examples set by our parents. Do you notice any similarities between how you and your family members deal with anger? What are your family’s strengths and weaknesses in dealing with anger?

4 Everyone experiences anger—it’s a completely normal emotion, and it’s healthy within limits. But as we know, anger can become a problem when it gets out of control. When *is* anger healthy, and when does it become unhealthy or harmful?

5 People can express their anger through words, actions, art, or any number of other ways. Do you express your anger in any healthy ways, and if so, what are they? What do you think might happen if you *never* expressed your anger?

6 How you think about a situation can influence how you feel about it. For example, if you think that someone “has it out for you”, you will probably see all of their actions in a negative light. Can you think of a time when your thoughts affected your anger? In what ways could changing how you think help you control how you feel?

7 What would it look like if someone was really good at managing their anger? Not just hiding their anger or ignoring it, but managing it in a genuinely healthy way. Do you know anyone who manages their anger well?

Anger Management or Batterers Intervention Programs

Anger Management and Domestic Abuse

I have found that judges issue orders for anger management and batterer's intervention programs as though they are the same thing. When I have talked with judges regarding this – some of them are quite confused as to which is which and when they should make the order for one over the other. Hopefully the following information will be helpful to them when deciding which program would be best for the individual before them in court.

How does anger management differ, if at all, from domestic abuse counseling?

Answer: The domestic violence movement would say that anger management is not applicable to batterers. Batterers are a different breed - needing batterer's intervention programs. They would say that anger management programs are not effective for the batterer's mind-set and motivation to control their huge entitlement, power and control issues and learned behaviors and attitudes that harm their victims. Domestic abuse counseling deals with the underlying power and control issues of a batterer versus teaching anger management skills.

So, how are people with anger or domestic abuse issues alike and different?

Answer: Abusers manifest Batterer characteristics: Studies have demonstrated that the batterer begins and continues his behavior because violence is an effective method for gaining and keeping control over the victim bringing no adverse effects as the result of the behavior. They have learned this from their family and begin practicing when they are between 3 and 6 years of age. Some characteristics fit a general profile of a batterer:

- A batterer objectifies women. He does not see women as people. He does not respect women as a group. Overall, he sees women as property or sexual objects.
- A batterer has low self-esteem and high self-esteem depending on the type of batterer he/she is and feels powerless and ineffective if not controlling another partner/child(ren) or family member. They may appear successful,

but inside feels inadequate and has huge fear of abandonment issues.

- A batterer externalizes the causes of his/her behavior. They blame their violence on circumstances such as stress, partner's behavior, a "bad day," alcohol or other factors. They use denial effectively in avoiding responsibility.
- A batterer may be pleasant and charming between periods of violence, and is often seen as a "nice guy/girl" to outsiders. Some behavioral warning signs of a potential batterer include extreme jealousy, possessiveness, a bad temper, unpredictability, cruelty to animals and verbal abusiveness. They show a history or pattern of using different types of abuse on another.

*A batterer doesn't take responsibility for their learned negative attitudes, behaviors and beliefs for many months into a batterers program due to their "entitlement" of being always "right" and "smarter" than others, including professionals.

Individuals with Anger Management issues tend to be dealing with explosive or out-of-control anger due to distorted thinking and skill deficits. They generally will take responsibility for their behavior once confronted or once they are dealing with the consequences. Their characteristics include: uninhibited anger, disinhibited anger, low grade anger, self-esteem issues, unstable attachments, etc. Their anger doesn't always end up in soul trauma to another person as domestic violence does.

Are there substantial philosophical differences in treatment goals and processes when dealing with anger management and domestic abuse issues?

Answer: The real question should be: Who is in control of prescribing treatment? Courts and employers. Many times there is no continuity. The domestic violence movement has lobbied for legislation which requires courts to mandate 26 to 52 weeks of batterer's intervention programs (depends on the state) in many states. Thus, this becomes the treatment for domestic abuse offenders. DUI and road rage offenders, other assault offenders and employees with anger issues will be mandated for anger management classes/courses depending on the judge and employer. The judge decides how many classes and anger management treatment providers would like a standard 26 to 52 week program to be ordered to give them time to help the individual change. If a shorter time frame is ordered, the client doesn't get the necessary time to help with underlying anger issues. Judges need to be uniform in the orders they give and to understand that a 6 week anger management program is not effective for long term change.

The treatment goals are different as described in question 1.

c) Can anger management clients be treated in the same groups as domestic violence clients? If so, why? If not, why not?

Answer: though I am an anger management specialist and a domestic violence advocate/batterers facilitator - I would argue that anger management and domestic violence clients could be treated in the same group as long as it is a batterers intervention group and not vice versa. Why? Because the batterers training is more in-depth and gets to the heart of the issues of a batterer and anger. We teach empathy, respect, taking responsibility, identifying cognitive distortions and building healthy communication and relationships. We also get into blaming, denial, minimization and accountability for learned behaviors, attitudes and beliefs and effects on victims and children. The aspects of anger management training can be used in conjunction with batterers intervention program but batterers ought not to be mandated to attend anger management only as it is not as in depth and does not hold accountability in the same way. It is a very short cognitive behavioral educational program and doesn't cover types of abusers and other important information like cycle of abuse, psychopathy, sociopathic-type relationships and more.

Batterer's intervention programs have not proven themselves effective unless abusers want to change. Research shows that 3-11% change but that should not be surprising. Anger Management programs do not prove effectiveness either unless participants want to change. However, in California, the 52 week batterer's intervention programs give the abuser time to be motivated to desire that change where as a 26 week anger management program is not long enough to effectively get into all the issues surrounding that anger and learned response to it. Thus, they need to participate in a program which is more comprehensive and will hold them accountable and be connected to law enforcement and which has a time frame that is effective for change.

d) How do you define anger management as against your definition of domestic abuse?

Answer: Anger Management teaches practical and cognitive skills for transforming the emotion of anger into healthy behavior.

Domestic abuse (intimate partner violence) intervention teaches the power/control philosophy; accepting the consequences, taking responsibility and changing behavior.

ANGER MANAGEMENT – Understanding Anger-Related Disorders

- *Identifying Habitual Anger-Evoking Thoughts
- *Reframing
- *Mindfulness
- *Practicing Happiness-related habits
- *Enhancing Empathy
- *Uninhibited Anger
- *Disinhibited Anger
- *Chronic Low Grade Anger
- *From Mad to Sad – Anger Turned Inward
- *Bipolar Disorders
- *Dissociated Anger
- *Self-Esteem
- *Unstable Attachments
- *Impaired Empathy
- *Coping with Loss
- *Self-Awareness Skills
- *Interpersonal Skills
- *Behavioral Skills
- *Cognitive Skills
- *Nutritional Skills
- *Acceptance-Based Skills
- *Trauma to Transformation

Forgiveness and Healing

- *Health benefits to forgiving
- *Barriers to forgiveness
- *Words for meaning change

History of Anger Management Services

The negative effects of anger have been observed throughout history. Advice for countering seemingly uncontrollable rage has been offered by ancient philosophers, pious men, and modern psychologists. Seneca The Younger (4 BC- 65 AD) advised for pre-emptively guarding against confrontational situations, perspective taking, and not inciting anger in anger-prone individuals. Other philosophers echoed Seneca with Galen recommending seeking out a mentor for aid in anger reduction. In the Middle Ages, saints would serve as both examples of self-control and mediators of anger-induced disputes. Examples of intercession for the common people from the wrath of local rulers abound in hagiographies. The story of St. Francis of Assisi and the metaphorical Wolf of Gubbio is one famous instance.

In modern times, the concept of controlling anger has translated into anger management programs based on the research of psychologists. Classical psychotherapy based anger management interventions originated in the 1970s. Success in treating anxiety with Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) interventions developed by Meichebaum inspired Novaco to modify the stress inoculation training to be suitable for anger management. Stress and anger are sufficiently similar that such a modification was able to create a successful branch of treatment. Both stress and anger are caused by external stimuli, mediated by internal processing, and expressed in either adaptive or maladaptive forms. Meichebaum, and later Novaco, used each aspect of experiencing the relevant emotion as an opportunity for improvement to the patient's overall wellbeing.

Associated people

Seneca

One of the first people to study anger and the control of anger was the Roman philosopher Seneca. He studied anger during his lifetime, c. 4 BC- AD 65, and from his experiences and observations he formulated ways to control anger. This could be considered an early form of anger management. Seneca noted the importance of how to avoid becoming angry, how to quit being angry, and how to deal with anger in other people.

Another theorist who came after Seneca was Galen, a Roman era philosopher, who built on the work of Seneca to formulate new ideas in the area of anger management. Galen stresses the importance of a mentor to help deal with excess anger.

Peter Stearns

Peter Stearns played an important part in researching the differences in anger between genders. Stearns concluded that there are similarities between male and females experience of anger. June

Crawford came up with an opposing idea about how the two genders deal with anger. Her research concluded that men and women deal with anger by different means.

Raymond Novaco

Works from Raymond Novaco in the 1970s have contributed too many of the recent ideas on the management of anger. These ideas have led to the implementation of different anger management programs. An important idea from Novaco is the importance of looking at the situations that led up to the anger in order to have control over the anger. He stated that anger is an emotional response to situations. Novaco stated that anger occurs in three modalities, either cognitive, somatic affective or behavioral. After discovering the anger there should be discussion and self-examination in order to relieve the anger. This process was thought to help the client identify the situations that lead to anger and deal with the anger depending on the step that the anger is occurring in. The client is able to use different relaxation skills to reduce their anger before it advances.^[13]

Targeted populations

Empirically supported programs exist for a variety of people seeking anger management.

Adults

Anger management interventions are based in cognitive behavioral techniques and follow in a three step process. First, the client learns to identify situations that can potentially trigger the feeling of anger. A situation that elicits anger is often referred to as an anger cue. If a potential trigger can be avoided, the individual can not only avoid unwanted outbursts, but also avoid internal conflict. Often anger occurs through automatic thought and irrational beliefs. This poses a problem for treatment because the patient may respond too quickly to change the thought or behavior. Wright, Day, & Howells referred to this phenomenon as the "hijacking of the cognitive system by the emotional system". Second, relaxation techniques are taught as appropriate responses to the identified situations. Common techniques include regulating breathing and physically removing yourself from the situation. Finally, role-play is used to practice the application of the learned techniques for future encounters with anger-inducing situations in the individual's life. The end result of repetition is an automatic response of learned beneficial techniques. Modifications of each general step result in distinctive programs. Additionally, different fields of psychology will change aspects of the above three step process, which is primarily based in cognitive-behavioral therapy. Group, family, and relaxation only therapies each contribute to the wider range of available anger management programs. Successful interventions can result in not only a reduction of the outward display of aggression, but also a decrease in the internal level of anger.

Relaxation therapy can reduce cognitions and motivations to act out, and through relaxation, clients gain coping skills to better manage their anger. This therapy addresses various aspects of anger such as physiological, cognitive, behavioral, and social. These aspects combined are what make

relaxation an effective treatment for anger. The Mindfulness therapy technique attempts to teach clients acceptance of bodily sensations and emotions. Mindfulness originated in Eastern spiritual traditions that are practiced through meditation. A two-prong component of Mindfulness includes: self-regulation and orientation toward the present moment. The center of this therapy technique is experiencing the present moment in a non-judgmental manner that is reflective of meditation. In practice, clients observe breathing, sitting and walking during meditations. The goal is for clients to understand that his or her thoughts of anger are merely thoughts rather than reality. Mindfulness is also a technique used in the relaxation approach, because the technique reduces physiological arousal. Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy explains anger through the client's beliefs and emotion, rather than the event itself. The concept involves clients interpreting events in a rational manner in order to avoid irrational thoughts that lead to anger. Delayed reaction technique is when clients attempt to uncover what is making them angry before acting out on their anger. This allows them to have time to change what is making them angry and increase time before their response; this encourages thought on a more rational level. In addition, clients are also encouraged to avoid demands in order to avoid anger. An example of a demand placed on a client may be that, "I have to have this done by my standards". Diet treatments, reflexology, and acupuncture are methods of treating anger that have mental health practitioners skeptical. The diet or nutritional treatments are aimed at uncovering the problem that is at the source of their anger. The process of uncovering the problem is done by researching biochemical imbalances that have an influence on mental health. For example, an individual who consumes gluten rich foods may be negatively influenced because his or her body is unable to process gluten properly. This negative influence may result in an increase in aggression, irrational thought process, and ultimately anger.

Anger treatments success rate can be difficult to estimate because anger is not a recognized disorder in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders. This manual is used as a reference for mental health professionals. Some research does exist on comparing various treatments for anger, but they also describe methodological difficulties in making accurate comparisons. The most concrete evidence for anger treatment is that multiple techniques have proven to be more successful than a single technique. The relaxation approach had the highest success rate as a standalone treatment. The effectiveness of the CBT-based anger management therapies has been evaluated by a number of meta-analyses. In a 1998 meta-analysis with 50 studies and 1640 individuals, measures of anger and aggression were used to compare the effects of the anger management intervention with no treatment. A significant effect for anger management was found with a 67% chance of improvement for individuals having received the anger management as compared to the individuals without the therapy. In addition, a 2009 META-analysis compared psychological treatments for anger across 96 studies. After an average of 8 sessions, a significant improvement in anger reduction resulted. Overall, the completion of an anger management program is likely to result in long lasting positive changes in behavior.

Professionals

One motivation for seeking anger management can be career related. As both a preventative and corrective tool, anger management is available to help individuals cope with potentially anger-inducing aspects of their jobs. One such situation applies to caretakers of individuals with mental illness. The daily stress combined with slow or no progress with the people under their care can create a high level of frustration. Skills training for caretakers of relatives with dementia has been developed to help cope with these feelings of frustration in a positive manner.

Anger management is also beneficial in law enforcement. The role of police officers is to protect civilians; however conflicts between the police and the general public can develop. The goal of anger management would be to reduce such occurrences like police brutality from negatively impacting the relation between law enforcement and citizens. Anger management programs tailored towards this goal could orient themselves towards these means by focusing on conflict resolution and including specific law enforcement scenarios in the training. This need was noticed by Novaco, who originally designed an intervention for anger management based on cognitive behavioral therapy, resulting in a specialized skills training program for law enforcement.

Children and adolescents

Anger management programs with a cognitive-behavioral basis have been modified for children and adolescents. There are three common types of CBT aimed at the youth. First, skills development (Communication, negotiation, rationalization, etc.) uses modeling to teach appropriate reactions to anger. Second, effective education focuses on identifying the feelings of anger and relaxation. Finally, problem solving conveys a view of cause and effect for situations as an alternative to anger. A wide range of methods can be used to convey these three components, with both age and severity being important factors. For younger children, involvement can be increased by presenting anger management in more of a fun format with educational games and activities being available. For adolescents, group therapy can be an effective form given the resemblance to the individual's natural social environment. The severity of expressed anger issues often relates to the intensity of the subsequent anger management program. A few violent outbursts in a classroom setting could result in several sessions with the school's counselor. However, more severe juvenile delinquency could result in court mandated anger management sessions in a juvenile correctional facility.

The effectiveness of anger management has been studied in children and adolescents for the purpose of evaluating existing programs and designing more effective programs. In meta-analyses of 40 studies, an overall effect size of 0.67 was found for CBT anger management treatment, suggesting anger management as a legitimate approach to problematic levels of anger. Skills development (0.79) and problem solving (0.67) both had a higher impact than affective education (0.36). This was believed to be due to behavioral aspects being more easily conveyed than cognitive

for children. The true value from early interventions aimed at youths comes from the preventative aspect. Curbing negative behaviors early in life could lead to a more positive outlook as an adult.

Individuals with intellectual disabilities

Individuals with intellectual disabilities can struggle with managing anger. When faced with aggression from individuals with an intellectual disability, caretakers often employ a combination of four different strategies. Depending on both the setting and individual, the following strategies for aggression minimization present in different ways.

1. Reactive strategies - Aim to minimize impact of overtly aggressive behavior by using established protocols. Ex. Enforced isolation after the start of a violent outburst.
2. Ecological interventions - Attempt to reduce aggression level by changing an aspect of the environment for a more calming effect. Ex. Reducing ambient noise to lower irritation.
3. Contingency management - Focuses on modifying behavior through a combination of reinforcement and punishment. Ex. Using a token economy to enforce rules concerning behavior.
4. Positive programming - Teaches life skills as an alternative to aggression. Ex. Anger management with a CBT background.

The need for anger management is also evident in situations where individuals with intellectual disabilities are prescribed psychotropic medication as the result of aggressive and/or self-injurious behavior. The medication's role as a chemical restraint does not help modify the underlying cause of aggression. Sedation is best used as an emergency measure with skills training as a long term solution to decreasing the overall rate of violent incidents. In a meta-analysis reviewing 80 studies, behavioral based interventions were found to be generally effective in modifying behavior. Additionally, cognitive behavioral therapy as administered by lay therapists was found to be effective, which supports the feasibility of such anger management programs.

Impediments

There are a number of factors that can lower the probability of a successful anger management intervention. One such obstacle is the level of the individual's motivation. Overall low readiness is an impediment to the effectiveness of anger management due to the lower attendance rates and negative effect on the therapeutic alliance. Involuntary assignment to an anger management program, for example court mandated sessions, will result in a lower average motivation level than voluntary admission. In one study with incarcerated inmates, there was a correlation found between individual readiness and improvement.

Additionally, given the component of anger as a social construct, difficulty with communication between cultures can serve as another impediment. What is deemed an appropriate expression of

anger is culturally dependent. Therefore, a mismatch between client and therapist could result in a misunderstanding as to the end goal of the program. For example, a client could only wish to decrease physical violence, while the therapist aims to decrease both verbal and physical outbursts. Gender dependent expectations of anger expression can contribute as well to societal standards. The same violent outburst for a man and woman is subject to different interpretations due to anger being seen as more permissible in males.

The cost of taking anger management could also be a significant obstacle. The time required for anger management depends on the program. Weekly one hour sessions with 8-12 sessions per program are common, but a single intensive all day session variety exists as well. The monetary cost can amount to \$30–\$50 per session for general therapy, or much higher fees for specialized coaching. The availability of anger management programs locally can be problematic for more isolated areas, creating an additional cost for travel. However, online options can follow the same structure as an in person intervention with similar outcomes.

Benefits

The benefits of undergoing anger management center around the successful reduction in anger and violent outbursts. Personal relationships that have been previously strained by a high level of aggression are likely to undergo improvement. Professionally, workplace relationships have a similar outcome that is beneficial to an individual's career and personal sense of satisfaction. Legally, continued attendance to anger management programs, mandated or not, can be seen as a sign of good faith. For incarcerated individuals, an earlier parole time can be the result of good behavior learned from anger management classes. From an emotional standpoint, reducing the internal level of anger results in a decrease in stress and an increase in overall happiness as a result.

From a medical standpoint, physical illnesses also improve from positive emotional and behavioral changes. Anger management style and overall level of anger has been associated with both acute and chronic pain sensitivity. Blood pressure is another physiological aspect effected by anger, with increased levels of anger being correlated with higher blood pressure. The implications of an effect on blood pressure for overall health are made evident by the link between high blood pressure and the increased risk of cardiovascular disease. An increase in the immune system's efficacy has also been observed as a result of the increased level of relaxation. Successful anger management could also lead to an overall longer life span due to the decrease in reckless behavior and violent altercations.

Types of treatment

Here is a look at specific types of anger management treatment options that have been studied and conducted in experiments. Several of the studies examined used self-report, which is some

psychologists feel could be a limitation for results. People do not want others to think of them as angry individuals, so their answers could be changed to fit how society wants them to behave.

Positive therapy

This is a style that is commonly used in elementary schools for students expressing anger outbreaks. Researchers who have looked into the reason for young student anger have found that one common reason could be the inability to adjust socially. Students that were selected for this study received a daily one-hour session throughout one week of school. The leaders of the therapy talked with the children and tried to do activities that put the child in a positive mood while interacting. At the end of the week, research showed that there was a negative correlation between anger and social adjustment. This therapy lowered the overall anger levels of the students involved while raising them in social adjustment.

Cognitive behavioral treatment and personal development

The use of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) is something that many anger management therapies incorporate. By trying to get a patient to open up about their emotions and feelings and being driven to accomplish a specific task (in this case controlling anger), a person can see positive results in their behavior.

A specific study found in the *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry* focused on using a mix of CBT as well as trying to use personal development (PD) the patient. The conclusion of the study found that the participants increased their usage of the anger management techniques and that they also felt more in control of their own anger. On top of that, the PD led to higher views of themselves and more positive self-esteem. Aggression has been shown to be a result of poor self-worth as well as thinking that those around you do not care or support you, so this PD is vital in helping change a person's self-perception. Personal changes like these can lead to less aggression and cut down on violent acts.

Anger diary

Understanding your own emotions can be a crucial piece of learning how to deal with your anger. Children who wrote down their negative emotions in an "anger diary" actually ended up improving their emotional understandings, which in turn lead to less aggression. When it comes to dealing with their emotions, children show the ability to learn best by seeing direct examples of instances that led to certain levels of anger. By seeing the reasons why they got angry, they can in the future try to avoid those actions or be prepared for the feeling they experience if they do find themselves doing something that typically results in them being angry.

There is not sufficient evidence of this needing to be implemented in elementary schools, but activities like this could lead to children writing down their negative feelings and anger and taking time to cool down instead of lashing out and doing aggressive actions in person.

People with violent backgrounds

This is the easiest group to think of but is not a group of people you can skip right over. Just because someone has a violent past does not mean they would not benefit from an anger management (AM) program. One such study found that offenders who were currently in high security hospitals that went through a self-report 20 class training program actually had very positive results. Results of the self-report showed a decrease in aggression and a lack of responding when angry. There were two issues to keep in mind though; a hospital setting and a setting in which the researchers did not want to provoke much anger due to the instability of the patients.

When it comes to previous anger offenders, the normal course of action focuses on how to not respond when feeling angry. Few studies focus on forensic mental health settings like the one previously mentioned. More tend to focus on understanding the person's mental health could lead to understanding what specific AM strategy would be most effective.

Ways to plan ahead for reduced chance of anger management

Research is starting to show that the better individuals understand what anger management is and how it can help them personally and in relationships aggressive actions are less likely to occur. Specifically, couples need to understand what to do in a fight or disagreement, and the more knowledgeable the individuals are on how to manage their anger, the better prepared they are when confronted with a problem with another person.

Potential causes of development of anger problems

Things like heavy drinking, a mental disability, and PTSD can all lead to a person committed an aggressive act to another person. Also not having any training on how to handle oneself in a time of aggression can lead to very undesirable outcomes. These things are typically associated with a heightened chance of anger, but there are other factors less known that can also lead to people acting in a negative way.

Migraines

Something as small as a frequent migraine can actually cause certain levels of aggression and the need for anger management. A recent 2013 study examined migraines and its association with anger problems in young children (m = 11.2 years of age). The patients in the study were split into low migraine attack frequency (AF), intermediate AF, high frequency, and chronic migraine AF. The

tendency for a participant to inhibit their anger and not lash out was found more in children with higher AF. Children that qualified for low migraine AF actually had more anger expression.

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Everyone gets angry. Sometimes it makes us say and do things we later regret and don't really mean. This workshop will give you some insight into stopping that behavior and making choices that won't involve hurting verbally, psychologically or emotionally, another person with whom you want to resolve and solve issue(s) with.

Ask this question, "How would the quality of my life improve if I used my anger in a safe and appropriate way?"

The anger challenge is to learn ways to deal with your anger constructively. This is a real challenge to some people. This workshop will help you to learn about yourself, your anger, and help you feel better about your communication with others and self if you apply what you learn.

A national speaker, trainer and author, a Doctor of Psychology, Nationally Certified Psychologist, Diplomate of the American Psychotherapy Association, Dr. Kathie Mathis is experienced in administration, counseling, and coaching. Holding certificates in Sex Addiction, Anger Management, Domestic Violence, Drug/Alcohol Counseling, Parenting, Pairs Relationship Counseling, Sociopathic Style Relationship Facilitator Training and Counseling, Action Coaching and Laughter Coaching, Dr. Kathie has been helping others for over 25 years. She appeared on the Dr. Phil Show and has written several books with her last book entitled "Emotional Addiction – A Bitter Sweet Truth" now selling on Amazon.com. Dr. Mathis is an advocate and legislative as well as judicial educator on issues relating to abuse.

Dr. Mathis has appeared on radio, television, and is sought after as a keynote speaker at national conferences and events. She hosted her own cable television show for 4 years entitled "Real People, Real Problems, Real Solutions" which had an audience of over 350,000 people. She has recently been asked to be a consultant on a reality television show having to do with sociopathic style relationships and abuse.

Dr. Kathie Mathis's commitment to helping victims of abuse has been recognized internationally with awards, certificates and other acclamations. Her humor, knowledge and down to earth presentation style is enjoyed by audiences from elementary school up to professionally proficient adults. Dr. Kathie is honored

that she is asked to present this workshop to you and hopes you benefit from the information you receive.

This book is intended to be used by facilitators for individuals who need specific tools to help them handle their anger. Anger management support groups and education/prevention classes will find this book an informative tool to understanding where anger comes from, how to manage it appropriately, and how to apply the skills necessary in situations in which anger control is an issue.

Changing your behavior takes work.

Our brains have enormous “plasticity,” meaning they can create new cells and pathways. But our brains also create strong tendencies to do the same thing over and over. It is “pleasure seeking” as well so will repeat things that cause it to release pleasure chemicals, that when repeated enough, can cause addiction to the thing that caused the reaction.

Here’s why: the brain cells that fire together wire together. Meaning, having run in a certain sequence, they are more likely to run that sequence again until it becomes a habit. It’s one of the ways the brain conserves energy. By now, you’ve got a deeply grooved pathway to doing what you’ve always done. That’s why change is hard; you’ve got to practice enough to create a new pathway that is strong enough to compete with the old one.

According to many brain scientists it can take six to nine months to create that new automatic behavior. But it can be done. If one uses affirmations as part of their retraining, it can take 21 days to 3 months to create a new automatic behavior. I just finished working with a micromanaging executive who no one believed could stop meddling. His goal was to have his employees rate him great at delegating in six months. He succeeded — and so can you at whatever you want to change.

Three limiting beliefs that curb ability to change behavior: ✓

1. Bad habits can’t be broken.

People don’t understand that the change process is not about getting rid of bad habits. The pathway to your current behavior is there for life. Instead, you want to focus on the new, more positive habit and keep at it no matter how many times your brain jumps the tracks and goes back to the tried and true.

2. I’ll forget.

People fail to put reminders in place in the beginning. Unless you have a

trigger from the outside, like a Blackberry reminder, a note on your computer, or a coach or buddy, it's virtually guaranteed you'll keep defaulting to the old behavior.

3. I want it all.

People are not concrete enough about what they want and are unrealistic about what they can reasonably ask themselves to change. Here's what an executive client of mine said he wanted to change in three months: "to be more positive with co-workers, staff and colleagues, to be more creative and productive and to take better care of myself." "How about create world peace while you're at it?" I replied. "And what does 'more' mean anyway?" As this client demonstrated, we expect too much of ourselves, and we expect to change overnight. When that doesn't happen, we resign ourselves to staying the same, convinced that we are weak or unmotivated.

These beliefs can make us even more stuck in a rut. But there are even more ways to shake these excuses and retrain your brain.

Ways to retrain your brain

1. Make it nonnegotiable.

Promise yourself that you are absolutely going to do it. When you do it, where you do it and how you do it can, and most likely will, change according to circumstances. But that you *will* do it is not open for consideration. Making it compulsory is a tool for overcoming backsliding after your initial enthusiasm fades.

2. Make it actionable.

You have to know what actions you're going to take: ten cold calls a day, for instance. Or asking more questions. Then be sure to track yourself so you can tell if you're succeeding.

3. Come up with solutions for your usual excuses.

Instead of just hoping it will be different this time, write down your typical rationalizations and create coping strategies in advance. Instead of just hoping it will be different this time, write down your typical rationalizations and create coping strategies in advance. That way you won't get stopped in your tracks and lose forward momentum when they arise. And yes, they will!

4. Schedule it in.

Want to have blue sky thinking time? Block it out on your calendar. Want to work out? Schedule it. Make a specific, time-bound appointment with yourself and you'll be much more likely to do it.

5. Do it daily.

The more you make what you want part of your everyday life the more it will become so routine that soon you won't even have to think about it. If you want to get better at networking for instance, do something every day: one email, call, or meeting.

6. Focus on the horizon.

Take a tip from high performance athletes. Look at how far you've come, not how much you have left to do. Scientists call this the horizon effect. It creates encouragement — "I've done twice as much as a week ago!" and builds determination — "I've made it this far; I might as well keep going." Don't forget to ask yourself how you've accomplished the task, so you can mine your success for ideas on how to keep going.

7. Don't turn goof ups into give ups.

You will mess up or forget. Remember, you're learning. How many times does a baby fall before learning to walk? When you treat yourself as a learner, you don't collapse into shame or guilt, but can try again with greater wisdom. Keep at it no matter how many times you blow it.

For those who are not executives, things that keep an individual from changing are:

1. It is too hard to remember to do the exercises
2. It is work and I am tired
3. I don't believe I can change
4. I want immediate change NOW
5. I don't care anymore attitude

Ways to change your brain:

1. Same 7 ways listed above
2. Do it One Day At A Time and don't worry about tomorrow
3. Be patient with yourself while changing
4. If you forget, don't sweat it, just begin again
5. Be persistent
6. Awareness plus action = change
7. Make it fun
8. As Nike says, "Just Do It"
9. Get support when you need it

Advice

- Look at ways you're sabotaging yourself and change them
- Freedom from Frenemies – get rid of non-supporting and negative people in your life
- Make yourself a priority and follow your advice to others who want change
- Focus on negative self- messages in your head and change those to positive messages
- Reframe negatives into positives – there is usually two sides to everything
- Seek a professional to help you when you need support
- Focus on happiness exercises and tools

The ability to a change of pace is one of our greatest capacities, particularly in these turbulent times. When you have the Hilarious Healing Project resources, training tools in your arsenal, you'll be empowered to bring anything you want into reality and be better equipped to help those around you change too.

REVIEW OF PROGRAM STRATEGIES

- Why we choose anger
- What we do with our anger
- Recognizing thoughts and keys to anger control
- 15 Tools to help you change
- Respond instead of React. How to present concept of difference between "reacting" and "responding" to anger/stress triggers. Concept that anger expression is a decision. Concept of finding other behaviors/ways to communicate needs, feelings or requests that are more effective than anger
- "I need to be right" and other thinking
- Progression of Anger buildup and how to handle stress
- Anger Addiction and other Signs and Emotions
- Change Self-Talk. Concept of how self-talk (cognitions) influence emotions.
- Assertive Communication - Harmful communication styles. How to be an assertive communicator. Strategies to handle and resolve interpersonal conflict
- Adjust Those Expectations. Moving anger responses to empowerment responses
- Anger sub-skills – Release anger in positive ways
- More ways to break out of anger (eating, sleeping, exercising and more)
- Empowerment self talk
- 10 things to say to help let go of anger
- Time Out -Retreat and Think Things Over. "Stop Light Method" (of anger control). Warning signs to heed. Rules to make this tool effective.
- Common errors that create a life time of misery
- Acceptance and forgiveness – ultimate keys to change and success

INTRODUCTION

THERE IS ONLY ONE PERSON ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH THAT HAS THE POWER TO MAKE YOU ANGRY AND THAT PERSON IS YOURSELF!!

If the same thing happened to 10 different people, they would all react differently. Some would get mad, some would get afraid, some would feel sad and some would blow it off. What makes the difference? Why do different people react differently to the same event?

The difference is the personal history of the person and how they have learned to deal with events, stressors, threats, or loss. It is not what happens to you – it is how you deal with it that matters.

Anger was given to us as a natural emotion to our “fright and flight” response to an event. The anger was a warning to us to “run away from” or “flee” from the act, threat, stressor, or event. The threat can be real or perceived and made up. To be human is to become angry some of the time. However, man changed the automatic response of “flight” when anger kicks in – to “attack” or “fight” when faced with a threat, stressor, event and/or act. We should be running as far away as we can until our emotional response settles down and we can think more rationally. It is important not to make anger bad or destructive but to make it a tool for building something and for survival.

You are the only one who can make yourself angry and you CHOSE how you respond to events that upset you. What you think about the event can determine whether you become angry or not. Your thoughts and beliefs can make your response positive or negative as well as your repeated behaviors.

The event ----- your thoughts of the event ----- consequent emotion

IT IS WHAT WE DO WITH ANGER THAT IS IMPORTANT

We can use anger to lash out at another

We can use anger to intimidate another

We can use anger to speak out with firmness and increase our self esteem

We can use anger to correct a situation that is wrong

We can use anger to motivate us to do something positive

All great social movements had their beginnings based in someone getting angry and using it as a tool for social, personal, and societal change.

YOUR KEY TO ANGER CONTROL

Recognize: Thoughts + body reactions/emotions = anger

Accept: You control the thinking

Choose: To pause and cool down, to take down your ruminating self “anger” thoughts. Breathe deeply and be in control, to choose a higher level of anger response. Time out is part of the take control phase here

Monitor: Your level of arousal, other emotions that accompany anger, what you tell yourself to keep yourself caught in anger (what purpose is it serving for you)

Learn: About how you react when you have stressors, risks to property, threats To self and self-esteem (being discounted, put down, rumors spread about you, teased, etc.)

Watch your thoughts and learn what triggers you. What do you tell yourself to make yourself angry? What ruminations are you participating in and be conscious of changing those thoughts.

Let's talk about changing attitudes and beliefs about our triggers.

15 WAYS TO CHANGE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS:

1. Alpha State
2. Journaling
3. Meditation
4. Relaxation/Visualization
5. Eat, sleep, exercise, and reduce caffeine along with sugar
6. Affirmations
7. Endless tape
8. Learn to separate the big deals from the little deals
9. Understand your anger and use it in ways that are helpful to you and others – not harmful
10. Don't hold on to anger. It doesn't serve a good purpose for you if your thoughts are negative and negative behaviors follow it
11. Balance negative emotions and replace with positive emotions when you can
12. Make your anger productive and not destructive
13. Stop Light Method
14. S.T.A.R. Method
15. O.A.R. Method

GETTING A HANDLE ON ANGER

Anger reactions to threat (real or perceived or imagined), stress or loss:

Body

Self Esteem

Values

Entitlement

We become angrier when we are stressed and our body has low resources and/or energy. We rarely are angry for the reasons we think and are often angry when we didn't get what we needed as a child. We often become angry when we see a trait in others we can't stand in ourselves. Often we have anger because the current issue brings up unresolved old issues from the past. We may feel a strong emotion when a situation has a similar content, words or energy that we have felt before.

Our brain is interesting in how it process's information and behaviors. If we repeat certain thoughts, behaviors and feelings over and over again, the brain creates pathways that give us the same emotion to that event so that our responses are similar. So if anger gives someone an adrenalin rush or a feeling of power and control, or an ability to "do something they wouldn't do otherwise," then it will seek out situations to repeat that feeling, rush, or ability. After a while this creates a "bond" to that anger and we can become addicted to it.

"I need to be right" thinking:

One of our biggest setups is living with the belief that your way is the only way. Entitlement to do what you want, behave as you want, and keep attitudes that hurt others because your way is the "right" way and everyone needs to agree with it. People who are constantly threatened when others question their actions live a limited life. They are always on the defense which is no fun. People who are prone to anger have a set of patterns, beliefs, attitudes, expectations and

behaviors. The more of the following characteristics you have, the more anger you will have:

1. An insatiable need to be right
2. A deep fear of being wrong
3. A high need to control others
4. An inability to say, "I don't know" or "I was wrong"
5. Fear of hearing new information that threatens your beliefs
6. Fear of letting go
7. Preoccupation with winning approval from another
8. The need to be tough, powerful, and strong so you bully others
9. Pride at always being rational and logical
10. Uncomfortable with expressing feelings
11. Fear of being vulnerable
12. Fear and severe discomfort about having bad feelings
13. Entitlement
14. Selfishness
15. Blaming others and no responsibility
16. Minimizing your negative attitudes, behaviors and beliefs

As you get more in touch with your feelings, you can learn to deal appropriately with things that upset you. You don't have to be afraid of feelings as they are just feelings and they come and go. The best thing to do with uncomfortable feelings is to just watch them and learn from them. Change the negative into positive. As you release your need to only see things in the way that you have seen them before, you open up new possibilities and adventures in your life.

Develop your intuitive, creative side, and relinquish self-centeredness and look to the needs of those around you. Develop intimacy and connectedness. As you let go of your need to be right, you will find that you have more of "self" and become more secure. You will be less upset when things don't go the way you want and life will become less threatening. You become happier.

Characteristics of an Angry Person

Many people know they have anger control problems and feel guilty, but they don't know how to fix it. Identify which of the following characteristics best describes you and start trying to make a change.

High levels of tension. These people describe themselves as 'uptight' and 'wound up'. They tend not to be able to defuse feelings of anxiety and stress, and so easily overreact to minor irritants. For these clients, identifying the reason they are "uptight" is the first step. Do they hold themselves to unreasonable standards? Are they trying to avoid rejection and thus placing unreasonable demands on themselves? Do they simply lack good coping skills? If they woke up tomorrow and they were not stressed out/wound up/uptight, what would be different? How can they start trying to make that change?

High impulsivity. People who are highly impulsive tend to say or do things without thinking. They may have significant difficulty identifying thoughts and feelings, and may also not recognize the existence of any factors leading up to an angry outburst: "It just happens." The key for this person is to develop a greater sense of self-awareness, not only of when they are getting angry, but also, what their anger triggers are. Once they do that, they can start evaluating their triggers and coping with them.

Poor empathy. People with poor empathy find difficulty in understanding how others feel. They may be dispassionate, detached and not show concern for others. For these people, 'understanding the effect of their behavior on others may help them to reflect on their behavior towards others. Empathy is difficult to learn once you have grown up, but it is possible. Through role-playing and intensive reflection, it is possible to learn to walk in another's shoes.

Low tolerance of frustration. These people are also likely to have high levels of tension, they are characterized by their inability to solve problems and their tendency to become easily irritated. Let's face it, when we are stressed out or overwhelmed, we often have a low frustration tolerance. Most of the time, the key here is not raising the frustration tolerance, but figuring out what is causing you to feel overwhelmed, stressed or anxious...hence producing a low frustration tolerance. If the key is reducing tension, see number 1 above.

Overstimulated Easily. Some people, especially children, introverts and people with ADD, get overwhelmed with too much stimulation. Many children are so excited about the world that they do not filter out stimulus—the fire engine driving by, the television, the dogs and they toy they are playing with are all bombarding their little senses at the same time. As adults, we learn to filter things out. Children have difficulty. My son was a micro preemie and experienced some neurological developmental delays. He is much more irritable and easily frustrated if he has too many options (i.e. a room full of toys everywhere). So much so that he ends up not doing anything except acting out and getting put in time out. Once we realized that the environment was overstimulating, we helped him learn to identify when he was getting overstimulated and "take a break"

before he would get in trouble and get put in time-out. We also made sure his room was, well frankly, boring—no toys (except his favorite stuffed animals), no books no stereo. In the playroom, we made sure to keep toys on the shelves, offer only one at a time and teach him to put it away before he got out the next one. It took about three months, but his behavior radically improved.

Adults with ADD often have difficulty filtering out the stimuli as well. It is exhausting for them to have to be in a room trying to focus all day. A friend of mine who had ADD once challenged our class to spend one hour at work or trying to write a paper with the television on, a disco light flashing in the background and people talking right next to us. By the end of the hour, I was irritable, frustrated, exhausted and had gotten virtually none of my work done. I had a new-found awareness and respect for people with ADD. Even with medication, you will have to make modifications to your environment to prevent unnecessary distractions.

Never take time to regroup. Finally, introverts are those people who need “down time” each day. Time by themselves to regroup. When introverts do not get this, they lose track of how they feel and get grouchy. If you are married to an introvert, don’t take it as an insult if they need down-time as soon as they come home. It has nothing to do with you. Extroverts de-compress after a long day by talking. Introverts may talk, but they need time to regroup and be quiet first. My husband and I are both introverts, which makes having multiple children and animals a challenge some days. We both love our family very much, but we both also need alone time each day to not get stressed out.

Self-defeating anger. These people present with a seeming inability to modify their behavior, even when they can clearly recognize the negative consequences of it: “My girlfriend threatens to leave me but I just can’t stop losing my temper.” These people are either afraid to look at and address their fears (usually the fear of rejection and the fear of not being in control) and/or there is clearly a benefit to the behavior. My first questions would be, what happens after you lose your temper? Do you get your own way? Do you gain power or control in some way? Is this person just a safe target to get angry at so you take your anger out on him/her?

Low self-esteem. Low self-esteem would be an expected characteristic of people who are lonely, isolated, have problems relating to others and are stigmatized. Low self-esteem may make a person vulnerable to threat. People with low self-esteem may also act aggressively because they lack effective communication and assertiveness skills. Children develop low self-esteem, they are not born with it. As parents, we can either enhance it, or destroy it. People with low self-esteem have been hurt, rejected and disappointed. They are often angry at the world—many for good reason. Often, when people start feeling better about themselves, they stop trying to tear others down.

Assertiveness problems. Those people who are unable to communicate clearly and appropriately in social interactions are likely to suppress their emotions or express them in an extreme or aggressive manner. Assertiveness is a skill and an art. You must be able to control your emotions while you effectively communicate to someone else your needs. People with poor assertiveness can be nasty, sarcastic, might expect you to read their mind and know what they need or might feel like they are always getting

walked on.

Difficulty coping with stress. People typically are unable to cope with stress and tend to avoid problems, which leads to their accumulation. These people also tend to worry excessively or to ruminate on their problems. Worry is energy tied up in the future and regret is energy stuck in the past. We need a little anxiety to motivate us to do something. It is when you just sit and worry, or worry over things that you cannot control it becomes a problem. Keep a diary for a week. In it, each night identify how much of the day you spent feeling the following emotions: anger/irritability/frustration, guilt/regret, depression, worry/anxiety/stress, happiness.. Make a pie chart to graphically represent how much time you spend in each. You notice I did not give you an option of feeling “nothing” or “blah” These are generally times we are actually feeling something but are not self-aware.

Disproportionate expressions of anger. People tend to greatly overreact to minor incidents which may be objectively seen as insignificant: for example, threatening someone who accidentally bumps into them. This type of person may also “save up” a litany of “done-me-wrongs” and suddenly just explode listing everything you have done wrong for the last 6 months.

Limited repertoire of responses. There is a tendency to use anger and aggression in the majority of situations, rather than other, more appropriate, strategies such as negotiation, compromise or withdrawal. These people are characterized by having few alternative coping strategies. Cognitive-behavioral therapy often works well to help this person rapidly develop some new skills.

A tendency to project blame. Aggressive people have difficulty accepting responsibility for their actions and often justify their behavior by placing responsibility on others: “They were winding me up.” This tendency allows the individual to continue using aggressive behavior because, by blaming others, they can convince themselves that it is not their fault and therefore they do not need to change. Projecting blame onto others also allows the individual to maintain some level of self-esteem. This does not fly with me. As adults, we are responsible for our actions and our emotions. If something makes us angry, anxious etc. it is our responsibility to either change the situation or change how we think or feel about the situation.

Negative bias towards others. People often have a tendency to distort the way they think about others. This can lead to suspicion, hostility and poor social relationships: “He is being very nice to me, he must want something.” If you assume the worst from others, that is what you will get.

The application of negative stereotypes. This is the tendency to make assumptions about others based on minimal information. People who apply negative stereotypes inevitably assume the worst in others. This leads to a difficulty making friendships and increases the likelihood of interpersonal conflict. A negative stereotype might be that people who have their hair cut short are looking for trouble.

Holding of irrational beliefs , such as that one's personal safety or security is threatened despite there being minimal evidence to support this. People who hold fixed irrational beliefs are likely to distort situations and react inappropriately. Read the article on irrational beliefs to find out more about which thought patterns might be keeping you angry.

Exaggeration of the significance of events. People who have a tendency towards exaggeration may blow up a situation out of all proportion. For example, being reprimanded for poor timekeeping might be interpreted by the individual as an indication that they are going to be fired.

A high expectation of themselves and others. People who are unrealistic about what they and others should achieve are going to be constantly disappointed and frustrated; Anger-prone people are likely to be unrealistically perfectionistic. People tend to set rigid rules for themselves and others, and are unable to live up to these rules. Many of the above behaviors are symptoms of poor coping skills, poor communication skills, low self esteem and a tendency to think in irrational, negative or pessimistic ways.

Low frustration tolerance - You do not tolerate even the most minor frustrations well. You are easily irritated. You have a short fuse. Some people with low frustration tolerance fume quietly, some explode verbally, and some resort to physical violence when provoked.

Judgmental and critical reactions – You can feel and react quite judgmentally and critically at times. You can be very competitive and may try to win at all costs in a conflict or debate. You may be adversarial and don't easily recognize the importance of other people's needs, feelings or opinions. You believe strongly that you know the way things are and expect other to agree.

Perfectionism - You can feel like what you accomplish is never quite good enough. You can put off actions or projects waiting to get them just right. Or there are aspects of your life where you feel you must give more than 100 percent or else you will be mediocre or worthless. If so, rather than working toward success over time, you may sometimes try to be perfect. You may also expect others not to make mistakes.

All or Nothing Thinking – This is the basis of dysfunctional thinking which leads to anger problems. It sets you up from the start to fail. And it is actually a childlike way to move through life. You see things in black or white categories, either right or wrong, which is what we are taught in childhood. But adult reality is not so clear cut...there are a lot of gray areas especially when it comes to relationships and lifestyle differences.

Possessiveness - Possessive behavior is a sign that you lack trust or are somewhat insecure. When you act possessively you are sending a clear message that you do not trust the other person and that you are handling that mistrust by being controlling.

Poor communication – You may have trouble staying focused on what someone is saying and it may be difficult for you to listen carefully. You may not believe that communicating with others is effective or you've given up on discussing things. Or, you may simply be a quiet person and have never developed your communication skills.

Punitive behavior – You may often feel like punishing others for various reasons. You have a belief that people 'should' do things the right way and if they don't, they 'should' be punished. You may also have been punished quite frequently as you were growing up.

Addictive Personality – You may have a tendency toward substance dependence, or once you 'start' it is difficult to 'stop'. This may include gambling, food, pornography, exercise, work, and even relationships. This often implies impulsive behavior and difficulty in delaying gratification.

Use Anger as a Way to Feel More Powerful – You automatically use the defense of your self-identity (ego) by becoming angry to avoid feeling vulnerable or 'small'. You cannot feel angry and 'small' at the same time; so you find yourself automatically feeling anger when you are challenged in some way.

*Remember "Anger is a **feeling** or **emotion**, and aggression is an **action** or something we do. Aggression is something a person does that may harm someone else*

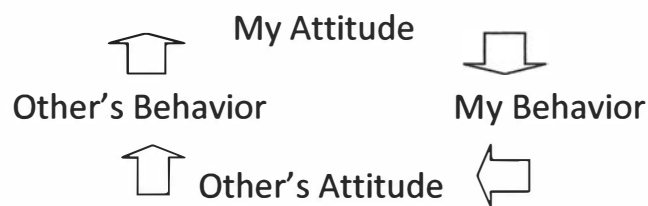
LINK BETWEEN ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR: THE CYCLE OF CONFLICT

Have you ever considered how your attitude and behaviors affect yourself and those around you?

Our attitude plays a big role in the behavior we display. When we are feeling happy, we laugh, we smile, we interact positively with others. We generally give off a more cheerful and positive appearance that makes it enjoyable to be around. People want to be around those you are positive and turn on those who tend to be negative which results in conflict.

THE BETARI BOX

The Betari Box model helps us understand the impact that our attitudes and behaviors have on those around us. It shows how the impact of attitude and behavior is a closed loop. ✓



Although the idea of the Betari Box is quite simple, understanding it can help us to learn to recognize when we're stuck in a negative cycle, and can also help to explain the behavior of others towards us. It can help us to break out of the cycle and make conscious changes to improve our attitude towards others resulting in improved behavior towards others, creating harmonious, constructive relationships.

Example: Imagine that you're stuck in traffic on the way home. The longer you sit in traffic, the more stressful and frustrated you become. Your frame of mind becomes negative and irritable resulting in anger.

Your attitude causes you to use inappropriate and negative behaviors. Your temper is short, so you yell at your significant other when you arrive home. This

behavior and attitude now affects your partner who gets upset by your unpleasant attitudes and behaviors. They mirror back to you negative attitudes and behaviors which spiral into an argument.

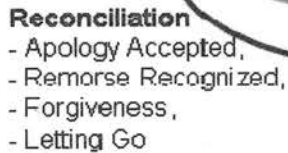
Now imagine another scenario. You are stuck in traffic on the way home. You are not happy about it but instead of becoming frustrated and angry, you decide to take the opportunity to listen to a book on tape, or music, or to plan an evening of fun with your family. The result is that your evening together with family will be one of positive, meaningful communication along with cooperative and positive attitudes and behaviors. You chose to impact yourself and others with relaxed and positive emotions, attitudes and behaviors. You used relaxation techniques and/or positive thinking to help you.

Breaking the cycle is up to us. We are in charge of our attitudes and behaviors which impact everyone.

How to apply this:

1. Remember your attitude, good or bad, affects everyone
2. Always assess your attitudes and behaviors. Stop the negative and replace with the positive
3. If your partner is stuck in a negative cycle, you have a choice in how you respond to it.
4. Explore reasons for negativity, consequences for negativity
5. Practice empathy and positive communication
6. Reset your negativity and make it positivity so that the “atmosphere” and/or energy you create is beneficial and good

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OK: This is the beginning or neutral state. It corresponds to two people who may be meeting for the first time, or who don't have a history of animosity between them. It also represents people who may have been angry with each other at some time in the past, but who have now resolved their differences. The green color represents safety, tranquility, equanimity, and growth potential.

Insult: We were OK until something happened to provoked our anger. We know the feeling; our heart beats faster, our eyebrows pull down together, we are somewhere between frustrated, annoyed, and enraged, and we have this almost uncontrollable urge to lash out and act now. Although the cause could be any number of things, perhaps we were humiliated, we will use the term “insult” to describe any of these provocations. After reflection and reappraisal, the offender who made the original insult may decide it was unjustified and could later feel shame or guilt for his attack.

Angry: Now we are angry, and we have to decide what to do about it. The importance of the choice we make here cannot be overemphasized. We can retaliate and take a path leading quickly to escalation and violence, we can remain resentful for days, months, or years, we challenge an advisory and ensure a destructive outcome, or we can carefully resolve the problem. If the message of anger is that “something has got to change” then it is essential to accurately determine what it is that has to change and what actions you can take to effect that change. If your actions, for example an anger display, will not cause the needed change, then that action is not a good choice. Do not take other action until you have a chance to cool off, calm down, and reflect. The yellow color indicates the need for caution in choosing the next path.

Retaliation: The most common, and most destructive, response to anger is some form of retaliation. This is too often in the form of the familiar “anger display” where raised voices, yelling, threatening, insulting, and even physical actions such as clenched or raised fists are used in some attempt to assert dominance and intimidate or coerce someone. The retaliation may be delayed and often escalated into some form of revenge, spite, or “getting even”. More subtle, but equally damaging forms include sarcasm, wise guy responses, mocking, tit-for-tat, and other verbal or psychological insults. The inevitable result is increased anger, shown here as the path leading from anger to enraged, from enraged to overtly violent, and from resentful to angry. Attempts to justify retaliation are often based on a mistaken belief that it is necessary to “let off steam”, “teach a lesson”, “get even”, or “save face”. We recommend you look at the map, decide where you want to go, and choose another path to get there. Although an “anger display” is not helpful, it is often important to describe to your advisory why you are feeling an urgent need for change. Describe your needs constructively, referring to factual evidence and recommending an effective course of action.

Enraged: Tempers are flaring. You are obsessed with anger. You are not thinking clearly and revenge, retaliation, getting, even, teaching a lesson, and other form of retaliation, revenge, and escalation are the only alternatives you can think of. You better calm down and think this through again. De-escalate the hostilities now and avoid further destruction. The orange color represents moderate to high danger levels.

De-escalation: Walk away, calm down, count to 10, or 100, or 1,000, take deep breaths, ask for help, hold your arms and hands down at your side, pray, apologize, fawn, or ignore the provocation. Do not continue an anger display, make threats, communicate insults, mock, retaliate, vent, use sarcasm, snipe, get in the last word, or provoke violence. When experiencing anger in another, acknowledge it and calmly help the person analyze and express it. These phrases may help:

- “I see you may be angry. I regret that. Please tell me if there is anything else I can do that would be helpful to you.”
- “I would be happy to talk to you now or at later time about how you feel about this.”

Overtly Violent: Ranging in intensity from a tantrum, to disrespectful or obscene gestures, verbal abuse, grabbing, shoving, slapping, hitting, biting, punching, destroying property, bar room brawls, road rage, terrorism, lynching, and thermonuclear war, this unfortunate violent condition is where too many anger paths lead. De-escalate now. The red color represents high to extreme danger levels.

Non-resolution: When you hear “Oh, its nothing, really it isn't” for the 100th time, it seems it must be something, really it is. Whether through inaction, avoidance, submission, or rumination, you have not taken action but you certainly have not forgotten the insult. You are holding tightly to a grudge and doing nothing to resolve it. You dream of revenge. Stop paying the price every day and learn from St. Augustine when he said: “Resentment is like taking poison and hoping the other person dies.” Take effective steps now to reconcile the grievance.

Resentful: Unresolved anger leads to resentment and often revenge. You are not over it, there is no denying it, you remain bitter and still harbor negative

thoughts, bad feelings, plans for revenge, and ill-will continues to fester. You are holding a grudge and are "hooked on anger"; The anger has become a destructive recurring pattern. It may even be affecting your health. Resignation is not a solution, so end your suffering with a reconciliation. St. Augustine said: "Resentment is like taking poison and hoping the other person dies." Take effective steps now to reconcile the grievance. The orange color represents moderate to high danger levels.

Resignation: You are resigned to resentment when you tell yourself: "Well I guess I'll just have to ignore it or live with it". But if you are still bothered by unresolved anger, you are resentful and not OK. Take steps toward a reconciliation.

Challenge: The slight could have been ignored or easily resolved, but instead it was used as an opportunity to create a show down, the classic "dominance contest" where someone has to lose. If I can prevail, I may be OK, although you are not. But if you prevail and I capitulate, then I become resentful, and the problem is not resolved. "It is often better not to see an insult than to avenge it".

Declined: When a challenge is offered you can often decline; just don't take the bait. If the gauntlet is thrown down, either ignore it or reach over, pick it up and simply say "you seem to have dropped your glove". Be careful not to smile, gloat, show sarcasm, or otherwise humiliate or insult your adversary here, or you will quickly escalate the situation.

Dominance Contest: This is also known as the "show down" or "stand off". A dominance contest either establishes or challenges the present dominance hierarchy. It is a public test, generally of fighting ability or some other form of power, to determine the relative ranking of the two contestants. It is often a form of rebellion. Rams butt horns, wolves may fight to the death, countries go to war, Coke and Pepsi spend millions on advertising. Don't play this costly game unless you know you can win, and if that is the case why even bother? The orange color represents moderate to high danger levels.

You Prevail: and I capitulate. You win and I have lost the dominance contest and run away with my tail between my legs. I am now resentful and my first thoughts are of revenge and retaliation.

I Prevail: and you capitulate. I win and you lose, but the problem is not resolved. Take time to empathize and understand how this feels to the loser. His first thoughts will be to retaliate. The only way to win is not to play this game.

Resolution: This is the difficult path to the only satisfactory solution. Anger is urging you to act on your sense of justice. Take the time to calm down, cool off, reappraise and revalidate the justice principle, gather evidence and share your viewpoint thoughtfully with your adversary, and plan a constructive path to change. The beginning of this web page describes the analysis steps that can lead to a satisfactory resolution and constructive change. It is likely that a resolution will require you to change.

Passive-aggression: Wanting to look good while doing bad is a popular response to anger. But this passive-aggressive behavior leads to a covertly violent state that can be as destructive over time as an overtly violent state.

Covertly-Violent: Who me? I didn't do a thing. Inaction can be as hostile as overt violence when it is done as a covert form of retaliation. Passive-aggressive behavior has been refined to a fine art form by some very angry and insincere people who work hard at appearing polite, kind hearted, and civilized. Stonewalling is an especially destructive form. Passive aggressive-behavior is particularly volatile when it is used in a relationship with an overtly violent person. The red color represents high to extreme danger levels.

Venting: You'll gladly tell anyone who will listen about your grievances, so why won't you take steps toward an effective resolution? Talking **about** your adversary is not helpful, unless you are developing a plan for a constructive resolution. Talking **to** your adversary can be very helpful.

Reconciliation: Remove your burden of unresolved anger. Ideally you will have the opportunity to accept a sincere, complete, and timely apology from the person you are angry with. Unfortunately a true apology may never happen, or may not happen soon. Short of an apology, perhaps you can recognize that the person you are angry with is truly remorseful even if they do not apologize. You may reappraise the situation and recognize that the insult was unintended, unfounded, trivial, meant in jest, or sincere and useful feedback. You can always take steps yourself to reconcile your anger. Why not forgive the grievance and let go of your anger; this is about you, not them. Let go and get on with your life.

Don't require that: 1) you teach them a lesson, or 2) they make the first move, or 3) they show true remorse, or 4) they change. Take responsibility for how you feel and how you live your life, forgive them and move on. St. Augustine said: "Resentment is like taking poison and hoping the other person dies." Take effective steps now to reconcile the grievance.

Shunning: Many years ago when people struggled to survive in small groups or tribes being shunned or cast out of the group was a very severe punishment that often resulted in death. Human nature and social customs seem to have held on to various forms of ostracizing as punishment. Severing communications, choosing a scapegoat, and withdrawal are common forms of shunning. Today it is counterproductive and dysfunctional approach to resolving differences. Problems are solved by increasing communication, not through isolation, transferring blame, severed communication, or withdrawal. The most important conversations may be the ones that are the most difficult.

Isolated: While communications are severed there is little or no chance of solving problems and reconciling differences. Open up the communications lines, perhaps through some peace offering. Don't make the mistake of replacing resentment with alienation. The blue color represents the coldness of isolation.

Peace Offering: Make the first move. Offer some small gift (e.g. olive branch) or courtesy (e.g. a sincere smile) to your adversary. Open up the communications channel and begin to reconcile the grievance.

Sniping: Poking and jabbing your adversary at every opportunity, including a barb or insult in every conversation, and constantly finding opportunities to renew the resentments will not resolve any problems. If you have an issue to resolve, or something to say, address the person directly and explicitly.

Display Rules

Display rules guide us in making the distinction between what you are feeling and what you are sharing. Most of us learn not to express anger visibly to those who hold power over us. Anger is also generally not displayed in polite company.

Facial Expression

An angry expression sends the clear signal: back off, I am prepared to attack.

Our mental mind set, our intentions, lead us in the direction we want to head. With a “smile” mindset you’ll find things that jump out at you which will make you smile.

REFRAMING

We will be discussing frames and how a frame provides a context or focus for your thoughts and actions. Just as a picture frame puts borders or boundaries on what you can see in a picture, the frames of reference that you choose as a result of your beliefs about yourself and others, your perceived role in life, your perceived limitations in skills/abilities, etc. can limit what you see as possible or can open up all sorts of possibilities. You (and if you allow them, others) are continually setting timeframes, boundaries, limits, etc. on what you can and can’t do - often without any real thought about the consequences or if the limitations are true.

Changing the frame of an experience can have a major influence on how you perceive, interpret and react to that experience. Being told that you have one hour to complete a task will most likely result in a different emotional state, approach and quality of work than if you are told that you have one week to accomplish the same task. This illustrates how a change in frame (in this case a timeframe) can have a significant impact on the choices you make. Changing the frame of reference is called reframing. The purpose of reframing is to help a person experience their actions, the impact of their beliefs, etc. from a different perspective (frame) and potentially be more resourceful or have more choice in how they react.

Reframing going on all around us:

Politicians are masters at reframing. It seems no matter what happens, they can put a positive spin on it for themselves or a negative spin for their opponents.

You may be frustrated at your wife for inviting the elderly gentleman next door for supper. Until she points out that if you were in his shoes, then you may find this simple act to be the highlight of your week.

Consider that old wooden table in the basement that you use as a temporary workbench for sawing wood, nailing things together, etc. Instantly, it is seen

differently if some tells you that it is a valuable antique.

Jokes are reframes - you are guided to think in one frame and then the frame (meaning or context) changes. How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Only one, and the light bulb must want to change!

Fairy tales often use reframes to help children see different perspectives or consequences - 'crying wolf'.

An excuse is a reframe that attributes a different meaning or context to your behaviors.

Some more notable reframes are:

During the 1984 campaign, there was considerable concern about Ronald Reagan's age. Speaking during the presidential debate with Walter Mondale, Reagan said "I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience." Reagan's age was not an issue for the remainder of the campaign!

There is a story about Thomas Watson Sr., the first President of IBM. A young worker had made a mistake that lost IBM \$1 M in business. She was called in to the President's office and as she walked in said, "Well, I guess you have called me here to fire me." "Fire you?" Mr. Watson replied, "I just spent \$1 M on your education!"

A father brought his head-strong daughter to see Milton Erickson - the famous hypnotherapist. He said to Erickson, "My daughter doesn't listen to me or her mother. She is always expressing her own opinion." After the father finished describing his daughter's problem, Erickson replied, "Now isn't it good that she will be able to stand on her own two feet when she is ready to leave home?" The father sat in stunned silence. That was the extent of the therapy -- the father now saw his daughter's behavior as a useful resource later in her life.

Content and Context Reframes

Content Reframe:

The content or meaning of a situation is determined by what you choose to focus on. An electrical power failure can be viewed as disruptive, a major disaster given all you have to get done. Or it can be viewed as an opportunity to spend some intimate time with your spouse or to have fun with your children finding innovative ways to manage the situation.

A content reframe is useful for statements such as: 'I get annoyed when my boss stands behind me while I am working.' Notice how the person has taken the situation and given it a specific meaning -- which may or may not be true - and in so doing limits her resourcefulness and possible courses of action. To reframe this situation, remember the NLP presupposition 'Every behavior has a positive intention' and ask questions such as:

What other meaning could the boss' behavior have? Or for what purpose does he do it? A possible reframe might be: 'Is it possible he wants to help and does not know how to offer his assistance in any other way?'

What is the positive value in this behavior? The positive value could be related to the boss' behavior (as above) or it could be related to the speaker's behavior. A possible reframe might be: 'Isn't it great that you know your boundaries and are not prepared to allow someone to violate them?'

If you are experiencing a physical problem (including phobias and allergies), you may ask yourself, 'Is this problem useful to me in some way?' For example, it may give you permission to say 'no'. If this is the case, you could ask yourself, 'Is there some other way that I can get this same result without having to have the physical problem?' And just maybe the physical problem will disappear.

Context Reframe:

Almost all behaviors are useful or appropriate in some context. Interrupting a speaker by standing up and offering your view in the middle of her lecture may be judged as

inappropriate. To do this same behavior at the end of the presentation in order to provide a different perspective may be welcomed by all present.

A context reframe is useful for statements such as: 'I am too pushy.' or 'I wish I did not focus on what could go wrong.' In this type of situation, your client has assumed that this type of behavior has no value. Your job is to discover when it is of value by asking yourself the question 'When or where would this behavior be useful or viewed as a resource?' A possible reframe might be: 'Isn't that a great skill to have when you need to get things done or to avoid potential problems?' Once you have your client more resourceful, you can then assist him to discover behaviors that may be more appropriate in other situations.

Children and Parenting

Children exhibit all sorts of behaviors - some appropriate and some not so appropriate. Focusing mainly on a child's inappropriate behaviors, may result in the child feeling overly criticized or attacked; resulting in an increase in problem behavior or the child becoming overly defensive. As an alternative, a parent may choose two courses of action:

Assuming every behavior has a positive intention, the parent may choose to discover the positive intention. Then the parent can discuss with the child other behaviors that would meet both the parent's and child's needs.

The parent may point out where or in what context that type of behavior is acceptable; thus validating to the child that his behaviors are useful in certain contexts.

You may believe your reframe is the best ever and yet it may not work for the other person -- simply because they have a different model of the world than you do. Remember - There is no failure, only feedback - and explore other possible reframes.

If you present the reframe in the form of a question or a metaphor (story), it will most likely be more fully considered than if you present it as a statement of fact.

MINDFULNESS

Mindfulness means maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment.

Mindfulness also involves acceptance, meaning that we pay attention to our thoughts and feelings without judging them—without believing, for instance, that there’s a “right” or “wrong” way to think or feel in a given moment. When we practice mindfulness, our thoughts tune into what we’re sensing in the present moment rather than rehashing the past or imagining the future. Though it has its roots in Buddhist meditation, a secular practice of mindfulness has entered the American mainstream in recent years, in part through the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn and his Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) program, which he launched at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in 1979. Since that time, thousands of studies have documented the physical and mental health benefits of mindfulness in general and MBSR in particular, inspiring countless programs to adapt the MBSR model for schools, prisons, hospitals, veterans centers, and beyond.

Studies have shown that practicing mindfulness, even for just a few weeks, can bring a variety of physical, psychological, and social benefits. Here are some of these benefits, which extend across many different settings.

- Mindfulness is good for our bodies: A seminal study found that, after just eight weeks of training, practicing mindfulness meditation boosts our immune system’s ability to fight off illness.
- Mindfulness is good for our minds: Several studies have found that mindfulness increases positive emotions while reducing negative emotions and stress. Indeed, at least one study suggests it may be as good as antidepressants in fighting depression and preventing relapse.
- Mindfulness changes our brains: Research has found that it increases density of gray matter in brain regions linked to learning, memory, emotion regulation, and empathy.
- Mindfulness helps us focus: Studies suggest that mindfulness helps us tune out distractions and improves our memory and attention skills.
- Mindfulness fosters compassion and altruism: Research suggests mindfulness training makes us more likely to help someone in need and increases activity in neural networks involved in understanding the suffering of others and regulating emotions. Evidence suggests it might boost self-compassion as well.
- Mindfulness enhances relationships: Research suggests mindfulness training makes couples more satisfied with their relationship, makes each partner feel more

optimistic and relaxed, and makes them feel more accepting of and closer to one another.

- Mindfulness is good for parents and parents-to-be: Studies suggest it may reduce pregnancy-related anxiety, stress, and depression in expectant parents. Parents who practice mindfulness report being happier with their parenting skills and their relationship with their kids, and their kids were found to have better social skills.

PRACTICING HAPPINESS HABITS

Happiness is a choice. It is something we choose to have for optimum living and longevity. We want to have more than “average” living in our lives – we want above average living. To have that we must decide to have happiness as an important factor and CHOOSE to act on that decision to create the happiness that creates:

Lower blood pressure
Increases productivity
Increases longevity
Increases joy

Our mental mind set, our intentions, lead us in the direction we want to head. With a “smile” mindset you’ll find things that jump out at you which will make you smile.

In a study called “Very Happy People” researchers sought out the characteristics of the happiest 10 % among us (Psychological Science. Diener and Seligman, 2002). Turns out that there was only one characteristic that distinguished the happiest 10% from everybody else – the strength of their social relationships. The more social support you have, the happier you are. And we already know that the happier you are, the more advantages you accrue in nearly every domain of life.

We have a biological need for social support, our bodies can literally malfunction without it (A General Theory of Love. Amini, Lewis, Lannon, 2001. Empirical example of how lack of social contact leads to decreased immune function. Cohen, Doyle, Skoner, Rabin and Gwaltney, 1997. Journal of American Medical Association). Lack of social contact can add 30 points to an adult’s blood pressure reading (Loneliness is a unique predictor of age-related differences in systolic blood pressure. Psychology and Aging.

Hawkey, Masi, Berry, and Cacioppo, 2006). Studies of 24,000 workers by Cacioppo found that men and women with few social ties were two to three times more likely to suffer from major depression than people with strong social bonds.

So when we have strong social support we can accomplish impressive feats of resilience, and even extend the length of our lives. One study found that people who received strong emotional support during the six months after a heart attack were 3 times more likely to survive (Emotional Support and Survival after Myocardial Infarction. *Annals of Internal Medicine*. Berkman, Leo-Summers, Horwitz, 1992). Another study showed that women with breast cancer who had a cancer support group actually doubled the women's life expectancy post-surgery (The Lancet. Spiegel, Bloom, Kraemer and Gotheil. 1989). In fact researchers have found that social support has as much effect on life expectancy as smoking, high blood pressure, obesity, and exercise.

Social interactions at work during the course of the day actually helps return the cardiovascular system back to resting levels – a benefit termed “work recovery” – and that over the long haul, employees with more of these interactions become protected from the negative effects of job strain. Each connection lowers levels of cortisol, a stress relieving hormone, which helps them better prepared to handle it in the future.

In the volatile world of work, this ability to manage stress, both physical and psychologically, is a significant competitive edge.

In a longitudinal study of men over the age of 50, those with a high rate of stressful life experience suffered from a far higher rate of mortality over the next seven years (Stressful life events, social support, and mortality in men born in 1933. *British Medical Journal*. 1993). This was true for all the men in the study except for the men who said they had a high levels of emotional support.

A lifetime of strong emotional support provides crucial protection against the dangerous effects of stress. All of us can invest in our crucial and most important defense with our offense of emotional support.

To make a difference in work performance and job satisfaction, social contact need

not always be deep to be effective. Organizational psychologists have found that even brief encounters can form “high quality connections” which fuel openness, energy, and authenticity among coworkers, and in turn lead to a whole host of measurable, tangible gains in performance. Jane Dutton, a psychologist who specializes in this subject at the University of Michigan Business School, states that “any point of contact with another person can potentially be a high quality connection. One conversation, one email exchange, one moment of connecting in a meeting can infuse both participants with a greater sense of vitality, giving them a bounce in their steps and a greater capacity to act.”

Positive emotions provide a swift antidote to physical stress and anxiety. So if leadership provides positives, encouraging words, reminders of strengths and not weaknesses, they would boost positivity and confidence in employees.

Happiness is not hereditary. It can be developed and scientists have found the following to be crucial to having it: pursuing meaningful life goals, scanning the world for opportunity, cultivating an optimistic and grateful mindset, and holding on to rich social relationships. Even the small, momentary blips of positivity that we find in each and every day of our lives such as a quick conversation with a friend, small gift of candy, telling a joke, has immediate boosts in cognitive power and job performance.

Here are some ways that have been proven to improve our moods and raise our levels of happiness:

- a. Listening to a song
- b. Talking to a friend
- c. Playing basketball or another game
- d. Petting a dog/cat
- e. Cleaning a kitchen or doing yard work or gardening
- f. Person activity that is personal to you can be a substitute for any of the above if none of them fit you. The goal is to lift your spirits and put you in a more

positive mindset to reap the benefits of happiness.

- g. Meditate
- h. Find something to look forward to
- i. Commit conscious acts of kindness
- j. Infuse positivity into your surroundings
- k. Exercise
- l. Spend money on experiences, especially ones with other people, produces positive emotions (Robert Frank, *Luxury Fever*)
- m. Exercise a Signature Strength: everyone is good at something

Everyone who incorporates at least one of these into your daily life creates happiness into it. You will not only start to feel better, but you'll also start to notice how your enhanced positivity makes you more efficient, motivated, productive, and opens up opportunities for greater achievements.

Scientists estimate that we remember only 1 of every 100 pieces of information we receive and the rest gets filtered out, dumped into the brain's spam file so to speak.

Positive affirmations can short circuit the Tetris Effect of negativity and jump start it into changing into experiencing, looking for, and applying the happiness advantage. Focusing on positives can improve our selective perception and we will begin to see what we are looking for everywhere. Have you ever noticed that if you want to buy a certain red car that all of a sudden you see lots of red cars? That is selective perception in action. When our focus changes so does what we look for.

Try this experiment: close your eyes and think of the color red. Really picture this in your mind's eye. Now open your eyes and look around the room. Is red popping out at you everywhere? Your heightened perception is due only to your change in focus.

Keep your eyes and mindset focused on possibilities, positives, and you will create a cognitive pattern that looks for happiness, joy, opportunities and good will. Happiness and Gratitude will be the joint outcome: the more joy you will have and the more grateful you will become which are integral for our well-being.

Research has shown that consistently grateful people are more energetic, emotionally intelligent, forgiving, and less likely to be depressed, anxious, or lonely. It is not that people are only grateful because they are happier; gratitude has proven to be a significant cause of positive outcomes.

Optimism is also an outcome of the positive Tetris Effect. The more your brain picks up on the positive, the more you'll expect this trend to continue, and so the more optimistic you'll be. The brain is pleasure seeking and repeats things that bring it pleasure.

Optimism is a tremendously powerful predictor of work performance. Studies have shown that optimists set more goals than pessimists and put more effort into attaining those goals, stay more engaged in the face of difficulty, and rise above obstacles more easily (Handbook of Positive Psychology, Scheier, Snyder, Lopez, Carver, 2005; Coping with Stress: Divergent strategies of optimists and pessimists. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, Weintraub, Scheier, 1986).

So let's look at some ways to have the positive Tetris Effect:

1. Make a daily list of the good things in your job, career and life
2. Write down a list of 3 good things that happened each day at the end of that day (your brain will be forced to scan for potential positives)
3. 5 minutes a day in focusing on positives trains the brain to become more skilled at noticing and focusing on possibilities for personal and professional growth, and seizing opportunities to act on them.

4. These exercises force out of the brain negatives. A study showed that those who wrote down 3 good things each day for a week were happier and less depressed at the one-month, three-month, and six-month follow-ups (American Psychologist, Seligman, Steen, Park and Peterson, 2005).
5. Write a short journal entry about a positive experience. If you do this 3 times a week for at least 20 minutes then a shift takes place in the brain.

LAUGHTER QUIZ

This quiz will show you how willing and able you are to laugh at life and its follies.

1. During the day I laugh out loud, snicker or giggle:
 - a. Once or not at all
 - b. Two or three times
 - c. At least once an hour
 - d. Constantly, I'm on medication
2. When I am alone and read, see, hear or think something funny, I"
 - a. Smile to myself
 - b. Laugh out loud but look to see if anyone saw or heard me
 - c. Laugh out loud and find someone to share the funny thing with
 - d. Take a cold shower
3. In the past year I can remember:
 - a. At least one time I spent laughing an entire minute
 - b. At least two to five times I spent at least a whole minute laughing

- c. More than five minutes I spent laughing a whole minute
- d. I can't remember – what was the question?
- 4. When I'm around other people they laugh and joke:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. I never hang around people, they might laugh at me.
- 5. When faced with a daily crisis, I respond with a laugh:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Only if it keeps me from crying
- 6. I do things intentionally to make myself laugh:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. That might hurt!
- 7. The people I spend most of my time with:
 - a. Leave me feeling drained and depressed
 - b. Don't really affect my attitude
 - c. Make me laugh a lot

- d. Usually steal my lunch money
8. I can name:
- a. One thing that almost always makes me laugh
 - b. Two things that almost always makes me laugh
 - c. At least three things that almost make me laugh
 - d. My closest relatives
9. I laugh at myself:
- a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Only when I am not in the room
10. I do silly things on purpose (wear strange buttons, make funny noises, wear funny type of clothing, etc.):
- a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. No one ever notices me
11. When I hear people laughing at work, I think:
- a. I wish I could get paid to goof off
 - b. They are laughing at me
 - c. I wish I knew what the joke is
 - d. It is Saturday and I shouldn't even be here

Give yourself the following points:

A = 0 B = 1 C = 2 D = 3

Add up your points. If you have less than 5 points, you have humor malnutrition and someone probably told you to “grow up and get serious.” You will need to convince yourself that humor is an acceptable emotion.

If your score is from 6-15, you occasionally have a good laugh but your life lacks humor regularly. You need to use a humor laxative and exercise regularly to find humor in stressful things.

If your score is 16-20, you are humorously fit! You approach life with the right amount of humor and benefit from it. You have the opportunity to become a friend and role model for people around you who need the healing power of humor but don't seem to use it in their lives.

If your score is 21--33, you are dangerously silly, aren't you? Don't stifle those childlike instincts. You are probably the former class clown. You can make money from your talent!!!!

HOW TO BE HAPPIER IN 21 DAYS:

*Choices/Habits to improve your life with happiness can dramatically change your life:

1. Say 3 things daily that you are grateful for that are specific and new each day. Add to this the “why” you are grateful while saying those things. Research shows that this stretches your brain and rewires your brains neuropathways towards happiness. If you share this with a partner or spouse it significantly improves your relationship and research shows that your partner reports that that partner becomes more attractive to them.
2. The Doubler: Think of a meaningful experience for 2 min a day and 21 days in a row write down your memory of it (visualization). Brain doesn't know you are visualizing it but thinks it is really happening at the moment creating meaning all the time. This is “doubling” for the brain. It happened once and you created it again.

3. Words: Words can affect us and if we surround ourselves with negative words, old age words like I feel sick, tired, older, etc. then we will live like that. The mind will follow.
4. The Fun Fifteen: add 15 minutes of conscious fun each day. Must be fun and energetically. Garden, exercise, laughing, etc. In 21 days you will eat healthier and be healthier in other areas. The brain creates a cascade of success – as it creates more fun and healthiness it will repeat it and want to create more. There was a study where one group was told work was fun and another group that work was just work. In 21 days – the group that thought work was fun improved their health and work performance than the other group whose mind set was focused on negativity.
5. The Ripple Effect: Consciously add 3 smiles to your day. It takes a second to do and little energy. So add 2 smiles to your day when we wouldn't normally smile. For instance, in an elevator where everyone is ignoring the other person – smile at someone in there. The ripple effect is 3 smiles create a happier brain. Dopamine is released. Short term gain. Another effect is that it changes people around you. People see you smiling and it is hard not to smile back at you. Eye contact and a smile are contagious. A hospital adopted this with doctors and nurses focusing this exercise and the hospital reports from patients improved and over time it changed the culture of the hospital. The brain lights up when it sees someone smiling at it “called a Mirror Neuron Effect” and the brain experiences what the other person is doing to you. Even though you are not smiling but someone is smiling at you – you unconsciously smile due to the brain “mirroring” someone else and the neurons fire making you smile. (Harvard Research) The brain gets confused with some decision making it has to do. So if you put a pen or pencil in your mouth and walk around with it – the brain responds to the corners of your mouth being upturned by the pen and responds to this as a “happiness” exercise and doesn't get as negative. For instance if you are upset with someone – put a pencil or pen in our mouth and walk around for a little bit with it in there – and your brain responds to the uplifted mouth and begins to feel better and happier (Harvard Institute research as reported in Happiness Advantage).

Resilience, Stress, Depression, Health, Transformation to Happiness, Habits, Attitude, Mistakes are Good, Motivation, How to impact others with more happiness, energy,

action plan, etc. (some of the topics for e-course). Give exercises to do: discussions around it with others, daily planning, etc.

6. Happiness fuel: Charge your battery with happiness. Research shows that the happiest people in the world have something in common – they all had meaningful social connections. People motivate others and meaningful social connections are very important. Reconnect to your social network for 2 minutes out of your day. So doing these 21 days in a row think about someone and write them a positive note or email and tell them how they impacted you. You become happier, more motivated and increase the ripple effect of feeling good about your social support and yourself. Social support is as predictive of your longevity as smoking, eating habits, etc. Your brain creates meaningful bonds to those people you are writing to and creates a good buffer against depression and other things that negatively affect you. Just think how you would feel if people took a minute to send you an email every day about how you positively affect or have affected them. It changes the level of your happiness every day. What an honor that would be to receive those types of emails from others.

You become more connected to others and they become more connected to you. Thus the ripple effect becomes contagious.

Bill Cosby stated, “If you can find humor in anything, you can survive it.” This is the beginning for you to “find the humor” and learn to laugh so that you can “survive it” whatever that “it” happens to be.

What is laughter? It is the manifestation of joy, mirth; an inward feeling that results in outward expression.

Our hope is that you remember those times when you use to laugh as a child (and hopefully you did) and bring back that youthful response to your life so that your emotional, psychological, spiritual and physical health are affected positively. Now let's begin to laugh.

Laughter and happiness are things that people want but don't always know the best way to get it applied into their lives. Most of us go around saying, “If I get that raise I will be happier,” or “If I get a good grade in school I will be happy, I'll be happy if I can

remove 20 lbs. from my weight” and so on. Success first and happiness second. The problem with that is that this type of thinking is flawed and this formula is broken.

If success causes happiness, then every person who gets a promotion, every student who receives a good grade and everyone who has ever accomplished a goal they have set should be happy. But with each achievement, our goalposts of success keep getting pushed out farther so that happiness gets pushed over the horizon.

The formula is also broken because it is backward. Years of research in the field of positive psychology and neuroscience has proven in no uncertain terms that the relationship between success and happiness works the other way around. We now know that happiness is the precursor to success. Research has also shown that happiness and optimism actually FUEL performance and achievement which is the competitive edge which we call the Optimum Happiness – Advanced Healing (OH – AHS) Secret.

Waiting to be happy limits our brains potential for success but positive psychology which is happiness and laughter living cultivates more positive living, resilience, creative, productive, motivating and optimal success in our lives. Our daily work performance, educational performance, life performance is improved by adding happiness to our lives as the Harvard research study on the 1600 students showed.

John Milton wrote in Paradise Lost the following: “The Mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.”

Our minds create heaven or hell for us. 75 to 78% of all messages a person receives in a given day are negative. We don’t counter those messages and are bombarded with negativity. We seek happiness and yet don’t know how to achieve it, receive it, and apply it due to our brain and what we tell it.

ENHANCING EMPATHY

Empathy is defined as a predominantly cognitive attribute that involves an understanding of experiences, concerns and perspectives of another person, combined with a capacity to communicate this understanding.

Empathy is a powerful tool in relating to other people. This mode of feeling allows you

to step into another's shoes and experience life as they do. Empathy encompasses both mental and emotional processes -- part of it is natural, but it also can be learned. Practicing empathy can lead to a greater connection with others in which you become more loving and less judgmental.

Components

To improve your empathy, you have to understand what it is. Empathy involves a way of thinking as well as a way of feeling, respectively cognitive and emotional empathy. You must be able to think about what it is like to be in another person's situation but also conjure that person's feelings within yourself. Cognitive empathy is accurately visualizing another's emotional state. Emotional empathy is the vicarious experience of someone else's feelings. Understanding these two elements is the first step to improving your own empathy.

Take Perspective

Taking perspective encompasses the cognitive component of empathy and helps you improve your own empathy. By imagining how others feel based on their situation, you better identify with them. For instance, when witnessing someone else's grief at the loss of a loved one, picture how you would feel losing someone close to you. While your experience is not the same as someone else's, you can get close to how they feel through the lens of your own grief, whether imagined or real. This process is a building block in empathizing with others.

Listening and Vulnerability

Connecting to the emotions of others requires the ability to listen and be vulnerable. Active listening requires that you engage yourself in the words of others -- with empathy, this means hearing others' stories without distraction. Once you listen, you must allow yourself to feel what others may feel. Vulnerability deconstructs the walls that exist between you and other people, giving you the opportunity to get closer to how others may feel. These two elements work together to increase your capacity to experience others' emotional lives vicariously.

Practice

To practice improving your empathy, you must take the perspectives of others. Pay attention to others and their verbal and nonverbal communication, including their tone, posture or expressions. Consider how they might be feeling and how you would feel in a similar circumstance by asking yourself what someone else's experience may be like. Think about what the other person wants. Each of these factors puts you deeper into someone else's world, allowing you to build your empathy by taking their

UNINHIBITED ANGER AND DISINHIBITED ANGER

Uninhibited anger is rage which is ineffective management of anger and will eventually cause difficulties. One out of five Americans has an anger management problem, including rage. Mismanaged anger is the major cause of conflict in both personal and professional relationships.

Rage and Brain Function:

Research repeatedly demonstrates that changes in functioning of the limbic system affect emotional responses as intense anger, fear, reasoning, and impulse control. The limbic system is housed deep in the brain's interior; when it does not function correctly, the result may be rage, **anxiety**, or **depression**.

The prefrontal cortex is vital to effective management of anger, as it represents a vital organizational part of the brain where critical judgments are formed. There is a delicate balance in the functioning between the limbic system, including the amygdala, and the prefrontal cortex. When any of these areas of the brain malfunction, the chemicals released to transmit electrical impulses in the brain from one neuron to another are affected. Thus, impulsive, uncontrollable, or even violent behavior can result.

There is also connection between the frontal lobes and emotions. Damage to the left frontal lobe can result in a lack of emotional expression; damage to the right frontal lobe can lead to uninhibited, uncontrollable or exaggerated emotional responses, including severe anger and violence. The frontal lobes appear to help us distinguish between different emotions and recognize and express emotions appropriately.

Disinhibited Anger: Disinhibition is a process, of whatever aetiology, which results in an individual having a reduced capacity to edit or manage their immediate impulsive response to a situation. Disinhibition is a common symptom following a physical injury to the brain, particularly to the frontal lobe and primarily to the orbitofrontal cortex. It may also be as a result of delirium, mania or drugs.

An individual experiencing disinhibition may not be able to disguise some of their emotional responses, sometimes at the expense of politeness, sensitivity, or

social appropriateness. – Individuals under the influence of alcohol, for example, exhibit disinhibition in view of the depressant effect of ethanol in the frontal lobe.

Within the realm of classical (Pavlovian) conditioning, *disinhibition* is a fundamental process of associative learning characterized by the recurrence of a conditioned response after extinction trials have eliminated said response elicited by the presentation of a novel stimulus.

Disinhibition is the temporary increase in strength of an extinguished response due to an unrelated stimulus effect.¹

Further information

Individuals who show disinhibited behavior tend to have this as part of a cluster of challenging behaviors including verbal aggression, physical aggression, socially inappropriate behavior, sexual disinhibition, wandering, and repetitive behavior.

Disinhibited behavior occurs when people do not follow the social rules about what or where to say or do something. People who are disinhibited may come across as rude, tactless or even offensive. For example, a person with a brain injury may make a comment about how ugly another person is, or a person with dementia may have lost their social manners and look as though they are deliberately harassing another person.

The reasons why these behaviors may occur include:

- Brain-related changes that occur from dementia; damage to the brain such as in brain injury, usually the frontotemporal or orbitofrontal areas, i.e. the frontal lobes (part behind the forehead)
- Difficulty thinking about the consequences of their behavior
- Misinterpreting social cues (e.g. someone's politeness might be read as the go-ahead for touching); poor social judgement
- Being unable to communicate in an appropriate way
- Response to factors in the environment, e.g. a young woman standing very close to an elderly demented man might touch his legs without telling him why (such as because she's changing his bed clothes)
- Being confused about where the sufferer is (e.g. thinking he or she is in the bathroom and starting to undress), who they are interacting with (e.g. care home staff may be confused with the sufferer's wife or girlfriend and then be touched)
- Feeling lonely

- Discomfort such as being too hot or cold may lead to undressing, or a urinary tract infection may lead to touching one's own genitals
- Provocations
- Other factors

Treatment approaches

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) is a treatment approach that looks at the best way to work with each individual with disabilities. A behavioral therapist conducts a functional analysis of behavior which helps to determine ways to improve the quality of life for the person and does not just deal with problem behavior.

PBS also acknowledges the needs of support staff and includes strategies to manage crises when they arise. The following model is a brief guide to staff to remind them of key things to think about when planning support for a person with disabilities. There are two main objectives reacting situationally when the behavior occurs and then acting proactively to prevent the behavior from occurring.

Reactive

Reactive strategies include

- Redirection: distracting the person by offering another activity, or changing the topic of conversation. Offer the person a choice of 2 or 3 things but no more than 3 because this can be overwhelming. In offering a choice, make sure to pause to allow the person time to process the information and give a response.
- Talking to the person and finding out what the problem is
- Working out what the person's behavior is trying to communicate
- Crisis management

Proactive

Proactive strategies to prevent problems can include:

- Change the environment: This can include increasing opportunities for access to a variety of activities, balancing cognitively and physically demanding activities with periods of rest, providing a predictable environment in order to reduce the level of cognitive demands on the person, trying to provide consistent routines (be mindful of events that may not occur, try not to make promises that cannot be kept, if unable to go out at a particular time then say

so), checking for safety in the home environment (e.g. changing/moving furniture).

- Teach a skill: These can include general skills development of useful communication strategies, coping skills (e.g. teach the person what to do when feeling angry, anxious)
- Individual behavior support plans: These involve reinforcing specific desirable behavior and ignoring the specific undesirable behavior (unless it is dangerous, the priority is to keep both people safe through a crisis plan which might involve removing sharp objects or weapons, escaping to a safe place, giving the person time to calm down), avoiding things you know upsets the person, strategies to increase engagement in activities.

Broadly speaking, when the behavior occurs, assertively in a non-judgmental, clear, unambiguous way provide feedback that the behavior is inappropriate, and say what you prefer instead. For example, "Jane, you're standing too close when you are speaking to me,

Most normal people experience anger a few times a week, says Kassinove. According to a 1997 study by him and his colleagues, 58 percent of anger episodes include yelling or screaming. And less than 10 percent involve physical aggression. Even then, the aggression is usually mild and consists of throwing small objects, such as pencils, or shoving. Anger can even be positive. But what characteristics define problematic or dysfunctional anger versus normal anger?

A study published last year by Kassinove, R. Chip Tafrate, PhD, and L. Dundin in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* (Vol. 58, No. 12) found that people with high trait anger have anger reactions that are more frequent, intense and enduring. They also tend to report more physical aggression, negative verbal responses, drug use and negative consequences of their anger. In general, their anger negatively affects their relationships, their health and their jobs.

Such anger that "disrupts or interferes with sense of self or normal routines" could warrant therapy, says Colorado State University psychologist Jerry Deffenbacher, PhD. Anger experts note, however, that unlike most clinical problems, there is no diagnostic category for anger. "The DSM doesn't have any diagnostic categories where anger is the presenting issue," says Deffenbacher. "We don't have any parallel diagnoses." So, he adds, the degree to which anger becomes a real problem is "a fuzzy call."

Some psychologists--among them Raymond DiGiuseppe, PhD--are working to fill this diagnostic need. DiGiuseppe, chair of the psychology department at St. John's University in New York, is conducting research to validate a set of criteria for an anger diagnosis. But that still leaves open the question of tailoring the treatment to the diagnosis. "Given all the different distinctions we have about anxiety disorders, they help us develop more treatments," says DiGiuseppe. "We have no such distinction for anger. Everyone gets the same treatment."

Though some experts believe an anger-related diagnostic category could be helpful, others argue against it. Some say it isn't necessary because anger may be a symptom of another disorder. Others argue that a distinct anger diagnosis could be used wrongfully in court, for example, to explain--and perhaps create a defense for--criminally violent behavior.

Techniques to reduce anger

Diagnostic categories or no, psychologists are still faced with treating anger in the therapy room. Yet how are they to do that?

"I think there are three strategies or combinations of them that have the most empirical research behind them," says Deffenbacher. The strategies--relaxation, cognitive therapy and skill development--are new applications of existing concepts, he says.

Since the 1980s, he and his colleagues have been studying whether cognitive and relaxation techniques affect anger. Angry college students and drivers in his studies reduced their anger levels from the 85th percentile to normal levels on Spielberger's

Trait Anger Scale, using relaxation. "You can't be calm and relaxed and pissed off as hell at the same time," Deffenbacher jokes.

Here's how the relaxation technique works: Clinicians train patients in progressive relaxation until they can quickly use personal cues, such as words, phrases or images--one woman learned to visualize a cross--to relax in an anger-inducing situation.

"We have people identify what makes them very angry. With drivers, for example, when people flip them off or go too slow," says Deffenbacher. "Then we have them visualize that intensely for a minute or two and then help them relax...so they get angry and then relax it away. We do that over and over again." By the end of approximately eight sessions, the patients should learn to relax themselves, without therapist assistance. "The analogy I like to use is it's like weight loss," he says. "They come in and get [rid of] a lot of anger. I don't want to see them angry again, so we shift the focus to maintenance and prevention eventually."

Cognitive therapy--in which psychologists help patients see alternative ways of thinking and reacting to anger--is another helpful treatment strategy, says Deffenbacher. "A lot of ways in which we think when we're angry make situations worse," he explains. "Suppose you're driving to work and you get cut off. You think, 'You idiot,' about the other driver. But you could think 'Whoa, that was an accident waiting to happen.'" He also recommends focusing on compatible and appropriate behaviors with patients. "If I'm an abusive parent, I may need parenting skills. If I'm an angry driver, I need safe driving skills," he says. Any of the three techniques, or any combination of them, takes "practice, practice, practice," says Deffenbacher.

The combination of techniques also seems to produce the most positive effect. For example, several of Deffenbacher's studies with angry college students, including one in 1996 in *Cognitive Therapy and Research* (Vol. 20, No. 6), using a cognitive-relaxation intervention showed that anger was lowered for most participants--with effect sizes of 1.0 generally, which is statistically significant.

Kassinove and Tafrate, co-authors of "Anger Management: The Complete Treatment Guidebook for Practitioners" (Impact, 2002), envision similar combinations of interventions in a model that incorporates four stages of change:

- **Preparing for change.** Deffenbacher agrees this stage is often overlooked but is key to success. Kassinove says clinicians need to start by helping patients increase their motivation and awareness of their anger.
- **Changing.** This stage includes assertiveness training, avoiding and escaping from anger-invoking situations, and a "barb exposure technique" that triggers patients' anger and then teaches them to relax.
- **Accepting and adjusting.** At this point, patients are taught how to reconceptualize their anger triggers, forgive others and avoid carrying a grudge against those who might anger them.

- **Maintaining change.** It's best to conclude treatment with a long-term plan. New triggers might re-ignite anger, so we try to include relapse prevention training, Kassonove advises.

The future of anger reduction

As researchers continue their search for effective treatments, emerging evidence suggests that some treatment types work better than others with problem anger. For example, most research now says that catharsis--"letting it all out"--isn't helpful and, in fact, may increase a person's hostility, according to a 1999 study by psychologist Brad Bushman, PhD, and colleagues, published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* (Vol. 76, No. 3).

And DiGiuseppe says that his own meta-analytic review has found group therapy to be less effective than individual therapy. "Group members tend to reinforce each other with their anger and antisocial attitudes of expressing it," he explains.

There are many other areas worthy of exploration, say DiGiuseppe and Deffenbacher, such as the use of motivational interviewing, readiness to change and the role of revenge in problem anger.

And though there is a growing body of literature on anger reduction, researchers need to step up their attention to anger treatment and diagnosis, according to Kassonove and Tafrate. The development of diagnostic criteria for anger won't happen until the experience of anger is better understood, they say.

Anger Management - Learning to Control Aggression

Anger can be normal and healthy emotion that helps us instinctively detect and respond to a threatening situation. More than this, when it is properly channeled, it can be a powerful motivating force – we all know how hard we can work to remedy an obvious injustice or achieve something because anger is the fuel to motivate us.

However it can also be an emotion that gets out of control, leading to arrest, stress, distress, unhealthiness and unhappiness. Uncontrolled anger can seriously harm your personal and professional life, because it can become incredibly destructive to yourself and the people around you. And in the workplace that often demands trust and collaboration, it can cause great damage to working relationships.

This article teaches an effective 12-step approach that helps you direct your anger constructively rather than destructively. The 12-step approach is based on the ideas of Duke University's Redford Williams, MD, who with his wife, authored the best-selling book *Anger Kills*. (In this book, Williams discusses 17 steps for controlling anger – these are often abridged to the 12 steps described here.)

*Understanding the Theory

Anger is a well-developed coping mechanism that we turn to when our goals are frustrated, or when we feel threat to ourselves or to people, things and ideas we care about. It helps us react quickly and decisively in situations where there is no time for a careful, reasoned analysis of the situation. And it can motivate us to solve problems, achieve our goals, and remove threats. Acting in anger can serve, therefore, to protect yourself or others. A positive response and constructive outcome can improve your self-esteem and self-confidence.

*The Danger of Anger – Foolishness...

On the other hand, a negative response can damage relationships and lead to a loss of respect and self-respect. This is particularly the case when we react instantly and angrily to what we perceive to be a threat, but where that perception is wrong. This can leave us looking very foolish. So we need to learn to use anger positively, and manage it so that it is constructive and not destructive. Where situations are not immediately life-threatening, we need to calm down and evaluate the accuracy of our perceptions before, if necessary, channeling anger in a powerful but controlled way. Anger management, then, is the process of learning how to "calm down" and diffuse the negative emotion of anger before it gets to a destructive level.

*A Subjective Experience

People experience anger in many different ways and for many different reasons. What makes you angry may only mildly irritate one of your colleagues, and have little to no effect on another. This subjectivity can make anger difficult to understand and deal with; it also highlights that the response is down to you. So anger management focuses on managing your response (rather than specific external factors). By learning to manage your anger, you can develop techniques to deal with and expel the negative response and emotions before it causes you serious stress, anxiety and discomfort.

Despite our differences in the level of anger we feel toward something, there are some common causes of anger:

- Frustration of our goals.
- Hurt.
- Harassment.
- Personal attack (mental or physical) on ourselves.
- Threat to people, things or ideas that we hold dear.

We commonly experience these potential anger triggers in our daily lives. An appropriate level of anger that is expressed correctly helps us take the right action, solve the problem that is presenting itself, or deal with the situation in a positive manner. If we can learn to manage our anger, we will learn to express it appropriately and act constructively.

Using the Tool

So when you're angry, use Redford Williams' 12 steps to calm down:

Step 1: Maintain a "Hostility Log"

Download our free Hostility Log **worksheet** and use it to monitor what triggers your anger and the frequency of your anger responses. When you know what makes you angry, you will be in a much better position to develop strategies to contain it or channel it effectively.

Step 2: If You Do, Acknowledge That You Have a Problem Managing Anger

It is an observed truth that you cannot change what you don't acknowledge. So it is important to identify and accept that anger is a roadblock to your success.

Step 3: Use Your Support Network

If anger is a problem, let the important people in your life know about the changes you are trying to make. They can be a source of motivation and their support will help you when you lapse into old behavior patterns.

Step 4: Use Anger Management Techniques to Interrupt the Anger Cycle

- Pause.
- Take deep breaths.
- Tell your self you can handle the situation.
- Stop the negative thoughts.

Step 5: Use Empathy

If another person is the source of your anger, try to see the situation from his or her perspective. Remind yourself to be objective and realize that everyone makes mistakes and it is through mistakes that people learn how to improve.

Step 6: Laugh at Yourself

Humor is often the best medicine. Learn to laugh at yourself and not take everything so seriously.

The next time you feel tempted to kick the photocopier, think about how silly you would look and see the humor in your inappropriate expressions of anger.

Step 7: Relax

Angry people are often the ones who let the little things bother them. If you learn to calm down you will realize that there is no need to get uptight and you will have fewer angry episodes.

Step 8: Build Trust

Angry people can be cynical people. They believe that others are going to do something on purpose to annoy or frustrate them even before it happens. If you can build trust in people you will be less likely to become angry with them when something does go wrong and more likely to attribute the problem to something other than a malicious intent.

Step 9: Listen

Miscommunication contributes to frustrating and mistrusting situations. The better you listen to what a person is saying, the better able you will be to find a resolution that does not involve an anger response.

Step 10: Be Assertive

Remember, the word is assertive NOT aggressive. When you are angry it is often difficult to express yourself properly. You are too caught up in the negative emotion and your physiological symptoms (beating heart, red face) to put together solid arguments or appropriate responses. If you learn to assert yourself and let other people know your expectations, boundaries, issues, and so on, you will have much more interpersonal success.

Step 11: Live Each Day as if it is Your Last

This saying may be overused, but it holds a fundamental truth. Life is short and it is much better spent positively than negatively. Realize that if you spend all your time getting angry, you will miss out on the many joys and surprises that life has to offer.

Step 12: Forgive

To ensure that the changes you are making go much deeper than the surface, you need to forgive the people in your life that have angered you. It is not easy letting go of past hurts and resentments but the only way to move past your anger is to let go of these feelings and start fresh. (Depending on what, or who, is at the root of your anger, you may have to solicit the help of a professional to achieve this fully.)

These 12 steps form a comprehensive plan to get control of inappropriate and unproductive anger. And the quicker you begin the better. Anger and stress are highly correlated and the effects of stress on the body are well documented.

Even if you are not at the point where you feel your anger is a problem, it is a wise idea to familiarize yourself with the processes listed. If you do not have the tools to deal with anger correctly, it has a way of building-up over time. Before you know it, you can be in a position where anger is controlling you and becoming a negative influence in your life. Being proactive with anger management will help to ensure it remains a healthy emotion that protects you from unnecessary hurt or threat.

When our clients are stuck and need motivators to get through the “stuckness” – we need to meet them where they are which means we focus on the “5 R’s”:

Relevance: Why is change important?

Risks: What are the risks of change? What are the risks of not changing?

Rewards: What will you gain from change?

Repetition: Review these elements at each session.

To help our clients get unstuck we can help solidify their motivation for change by exploring and defining and developing problem recognition skills: what defines a problem; nurturing mindfulness; creating an inclusive, nonjudgmental treatment environment.

Help them discover new stories and further increase problem recognition skills by:

Externalizing the problem: instead of “having” a problem or “being” a problem, have them view problems existing outside themselves. Have them take a problem and think of it as a (create) character in their story. They are NOT the problem it is just not recognized correctly yet and this will help them externalize instead of “being.”

Seek Exceptions: when building and sustaining problem saturated stories by ignoring times when the problem wasn’t in control. Seeking exceptions involves assisting clients to discover those ignored times as the exceptions hold the keys to change so details are important. One way to break stuckness in exceptions is to try something new. For example, explore music and art to release problem negativity or drumming or glass blowing, etc.

Remembering: once expectations have been discovered, clients can start remembering their problem-saturated stories. This remembering gives them opportunity to create new, more empowering stories with plans that focus on moving forward.

Expect Ambivalence: change is not easy. Ambivalence is common for all individuals who desire to fix their problems. So try the following:

- Normalize the process
- Explore the risks of change
- Foster self-efficacy
- Change rigid thinking patterns/habits
- Address concerns
- Become trauma informed
- Create connectedness
- Create group cohesion
- Create therapeutic alliance
- Remember everything is relational

THERE IS A PROGRESSION OF ANGER BUILD UP

Anger stages: Irritation, Frustration, Anger, Rage and Aggression

It makes sense to try to catch anger at the irritation and frustration stage before it builds up to huge emotions that cause anger, rage and aggression. Being in touch with and knowing your body clues will help you to know where your tension is on the “Stop Light” scale.

Picture a stop light: Green, Yellow and Red colors indicating when you can go, when you need to slow down and when you need to stop. Everyday emotions which we balance out without aggression, anger and stressors, we keep in the green light zone. But when we become irritated, upset, our body tenses, and our entitlement kicks in, we move up to the yellow. Our breathing may increase, our heart rate becomes faster, and before you know it, you have quickly moved into the red zone where the repeated behaviors of aggression take over and we say and do things that can be harmful to self and others. Our adrenaline rushes, body temperature gets hotter, muscles tense, knots develop in our stomach, jaw tightens, fists tighten, forehead tightens, and overall body agitation can begin and we can even shake.

Other emotions that can accompany these signs are:

Fears

Hurts

Guilt

Confusion

Overwhelmed

Startled

Restlessness

Envy

Hate

And more

Explaining the 4 Stages of Anger

I came across a section titled “The Stages of Anger” and how to deal with someone who is “bubbling toward the boiling point.” Immediately intrigued, I decided to examine. Here is what I learned about four “Stages of Anger”:

1. Annoyed
2. Frustrated
3. Infuriated
4. Hostile

STAGE 1: Annoyed

Translation: “I’m pissed off, but not for long.”

Description: The “pettily pissed off” stage happens when you are irked by an everyday incident but still rational enough to realize that though it’s bothersome, it’s also relatively unimportant and you’d look like a massive lunatic if you made a big deal out of it.

Triggers: Being interrupted during your lunch break, running on the treadmill next to someone who smells bad or hearing “Call Me Maybe” for the 67th time in a day.

Symptoms: Eye-rolling, a brief internal-monologue-of-what-you-would-like-to-say-but-realize-would-be-way-out-of-line-if-you-did-say-it, and potentially letting out a heavy-breathed “huff!”

STAGE 2: Frustrated

Translation: “I’m definitely angry, but I’m keeping it undercover until I receive further validation”

Description: Now we’re getting somewhere. When the “Undercover Angry” stage hits, you secretly begin to enjoy your anger. Though you may think you appear mature and under control, you are a mere tick away from going overboard – a tick away from back-flipping off the ship of reason into a sea of self-rage – and we all know it. Your grip on reality is quickly slipping and you are, in fact, bubbling toward the aforementioned boiling point.

Triggers: The most popular frustration triggers consist of a multi-pronged attack of petty annoyances in a short time-frame, your overbearing mother taking one too many jabs at your emotional psyche on the wrong day or your weird, craigslist roommate simply being present, yet again. Like, don’t they have anywhere else to be?

Symptoms: Talking about it. With everyone. Any way you can. You will lambast the situation to anyone on G-Chat who doesn't have an orange inactive symbol by their name and you will probably suffer from light perspiration at the very thought of someone not agreeing *enough* with you. It is also likely that you will indulge in some passive aggressive tweeting.

STAGE 3: Infuriated

Translation: "I have now knighted myself with the right to be furious"

Description: ...and anything you say or do will be held against you in the future and/or posted on YouTube, you big, hot-mess of an embarrassment. You have relinquished any hope for keeping this a private matter and are now openly sharing your endearing fury with the outside world. You, my infuriated friend, are toeing the line of a public-disturbance citation.

Triggers: Infuriated folk have most likely accumulated a week's worth of bad luck and, by this time, are hunting for a reason — any reason, to let somebody have it. So, triggers could include

anything from boss-drama to boyfriend-drama to someone getting your order wrong at McDonalds (there's always that one guy!).

Symptoms: Forget Twitter. Your wrath now deserves an upgrade to the entire Facebook network. Perhaps, a starring role in some anonymous hate-crime website, as well (doesn't everyone know by now that those sites are *never* really anonymous?). After you realize that social media outbursts aren't satisfying enough, you will feel inclined to take to the crowded streets for the sole purpose of shoulder-slaming innocent passersby before telling off your significant other, best friend, guy-at-the-coffee-shop, etc.

STAGE 4: Hostile

Translation: "GET OVER HERE!"

Description: Is it a coincidence that hostile and hostage have the same root word?

Triggers: Any thing. Every thing. *All the things.*

Symptoms: Annihilation

RESPOND DON'T REACT

This is our “mantra” as anger management clients and facilitators. When we master this “affirmation/mantra,” then our lives will be more manageable in the emotional aspects of life. When repeated a minimum of 50 times a day, we already know that change can happen within 27 days to 3 months, depending on how receptive our brains are. “Responding” gives us time to make a choice of action that can guide us to better outcomes if we make the right choice and apply the **3 anger-regulating principles of empathy, compassion, and assertion**.

Triggers set off emotions and can be a perception vs. reality. Triggers cause the emotion of anger through experience from our family, friends, and environment. For example, the perception or trigger that caused the person to become angry and exclaim, “I can’t do ANYTHING right” may come from years of learned response caused by parents who have unrealistically high expectations.

Anger is a secondary emotion and is preceded by other emotions or feelings such as pain or fear (Schiraldi, 2002). When we are unable to handle a situation – fear can emerge and our natural flight or fight response kicks in. Pain can also elicit the same response. If you have ever witnessed a child receiving a shot in the arm, most likely you have witnessed the response of anger and surprise to that pain.

Medical Conditions that stimulate anger or lead to uncontrollable anger:

1. Brain Injury
2. Neurological Problems
3. Mood Swings from sugar levels out of balance
4. Medications
5. Allergies
6. Special Needs

Anger that is caused not by perception and response but by medical conditions requires different techniques and guidance. For these conditions, one should see a doctor, psychiatrist, or other specialist in brain injury.

Angry people come from angry families. So family background should not be overlooked when doing an intake. People who come from families that are easily

angered, disruptive, chaotic, and not skilled at emotional communications, have not learned emotional control and knowing their background helps us to understand their anger and responses to it. So let's look at the foundation upon which anger in families is built:

- a. Experiences
- b. Learned attitudes
- c. Past reactions
- d. Physical stress
- e. Low Self-esteem
- f. Unrealistic attitudes and expectations
- g. Poor coping skills

If you don't control the anger then the aftermath of it will have these factors:

- a. Outburst that is of a magnitude that scares/frightens others
- b. Your body responds by getting physically ill
- c. Your emotions become overwhelming and can cause you to shut down and/or make bad decisions
- d. Your expressions are negative and scary to others
- e. People lose respect for you
- f. People don't want to be around you
- g. You have losses – job, partner, children, self-esteem and love
- h. You have negative consequences

So our goals are:

- a. Talk calmly
- b. Teach problem solving
- c. Remember anger directed at you is NOT about you so detach from it rather than engage it
- d. Release tensions
- e. Stop rumination
- f. Use intervention techniques
- g. Walk away
- h. Don't React
- i. Respond appropriately

STYLES OF ANGER

There are different “styles” of anger:

1. Exploder
2. Side Swiper or SideWinder
3. Stuffer
4. Joker
5. Two faced
6. Triangulator

EXPLODER: a person who erupts like a volcano all over those around them

SIDE SWIPER: a person who comes at you from your “blind side” unexpectedly

STUFFER: a person who holds everything inside and builds up anger like a pressure cooker

JOKER: a person who makes fun of everything and yet has anger building up due to covering it with humor and not using humor to de-escalate

TWO FACED: a passive aggressive type of individual who never confronts and blames

TRIANGULATOR: a person who has to get others involved in their lives to justify their position and who will side with them in an argument and turn away from the victim of their anger, etc.

Identifying Anger:

Anger is a strong emotion designed to send the clear message “something has got to change”. It is an urgent plea for justice and action. If we exercise enough self control to overcome our immediate impulse to lash out and do harm, we can calm down, reflect, and analyze the causes of our anger. Careful analysis can identify what change is needed and can lead us toward constructive and lasting change that fulfills our needs. When cooler heads prevail anger's energy is channeled in a positive direction, and the anger motivates constructive changes. When we act on our impulses in the heat of passion, the results are too often destructive and tragic. There are many myths and misconceptions about anger and how to cope with it. The most destructive misconception is that it is healthy or effective to display anger violently and “vent”. Contrary to this popular misunderstanding, the most healthy way to deal with anger is to stay in control, analyze the message it is sending, and harness the energy it provides for positive change. Another misconception is that revenge can lead to positive change. Unfortunately revenge usually leads only to a cycle of destructive escalation. Expressing anger with violence breeds more anger. I hope the information presented here helps channel anger into positive change.

Forms of Anger

Many words in our vocabulary describe forms of anger. They often differ in the intensity of the anger they express, but the basic archetype is the same. Here is a partial list, in approximate order from the most mild to the most intense: annoyance, irritation, aggravation, agitation, frustration, peeved, annoyed, miffed, sulking, offended, bitter, indignation, exasperation, incensed, pissed, outrage, hostile, spite, vengefulness, resentment, wrath, rage, fury, ferocity, and livid. Bitterness describes a long-lasting result of unresolved anger. Hate is a form of anger because you blame the other for your difficulties when you decide to hate them.

In addition to varying over a wide range of intensity, anger has a variety of forms. These include:

- Indignation: Self-righteous anger,
- Sulking: Passive anger,
- Exasperation: anger at having your patience unduly tried, and

- Revenge: A deliberate response to an offense, delayed until after a period of reflection

Definitions and Analysis

Many definitions of anger have been proposed. These include:

1. An unjust insult, an unfair slight, or
2. A conspecific threat, or
3. Response to thwarted goals, or
4. An agent causes loss of a goal, or
5. Loss attributed to an agent, or
6. An urgent signal to prepare for change, or
7. A plea for justice, or
8. A biological core related to combativeness, or
9. Judging another person as being wrong or deserving to be punished, or
10. Blaming another person for our own unmet needs, or
11. Displeased by the appraisal of an event while disapproving of another's action, or
12. an aroused, often heated state in combining a compellingly felt sense of being wronged or frustrated, or
13. Response to trespass

However, the definition that seems to be most precise, and provides the most insight is:

- Anger is an emotion,
- resulting from a perceived loss,
- attributed to a willful agent, and
- judged as unfair.

Let's examine this definition closely. Because anger is an emotion, it evokes a physiological response. In the case of anger, this is usually a strong arousal. Often the arousal is so strong it can lead immediately to an ugly, destructive, and unnecessary "anger display" of shouting, threatening, and even violence if it is unchecked. A wide variety of perceived losses can trigger anger. This may include having your possessions stolen, abused, or destroyed. It can also involve loss of stature or ego, such as when you lose a competition, suffer an insult, or are humiliated. The idea of "trespass" is important here, because the person

trespassed against often considered it as a form of loss. Sadness, as well as grief and depression, are other emotions arising from a loss. The distinction between anger and sadness is the role of the “willful agent”. An agent is someone who acted deliberately. For example, if you lose your pet because it dies of natural causes, you are sad, but not angry. If your pet is killed by a malicious or even a careless person, you are angry at that person. You are angry because you believe that person acted with the deliberate intent to cause you harm. Now it has become a deliberate act and a personal affront. Often the willful agent is yourself. Extending the previous example, you may blame yourself for the loss of your pet if you believe you did not take sufficient care of the pet, or if you believe you could have done more to protect the pet and prevented the loss. Finally, to result in anger, you have to judge the willful agent as acting unfairly. If you lose a tennis match, you may be sad. If you believe the opponent cheated, or the referee made a mistake, this is unfair, and you become angry.

This is a lot of complexity to incorporate into the split second assessments that so often lead us to anger. Perhaps the useful folk wisdom to “count to ten” recognizes these assessments can often be wrong. Fortunately we can analyze our anger rationally and learn a lot about ourselves.

Analyzing our anger can provide valuable insights into knowing yourself. To analyze the anger, begin by examining the perceived loss. Ask yourself:

- What have I lost? Is the loss real?
- What is its value to me?
- Why do I perceive this as important?
- Was this my loss or was it someone else's? What are their views regarding this loss? How do you know? Why do you care?
- Do I feel insulted? Why? Has my ego been attacked? Have I lost some dignity? Was I ridiculed or humiliated? Has my reputation been damaged? Do I feel less competent? Was I denied fair recognition or reward? Is the insult groundless or is it an accurate interpretation of my behavior? What is the asymmetry that bothers me so much?
- Do I feel powerless? Have I lost autonomy? Do I feel cheated? Was I taken for a sucker? Was a trust betrayed? Was privacy breached?
- Was I coerced into submission or obedience?
- Have I been threatened, injured, struck, abused, attacked, or intimidated?
- Has anyone trespassed on my territory?

- Have my goals been thwarted? Have my freedoms been abridged? Is my safety or security reduced? Is my legacy diminished?
- Have I lost power? Have I lost stature? Have I lost strength? Have I lost influence? Have I lost access? Has a relationship been damaged?
- From a rational point of view, how big is this loss? What impact will it have? How can I recover? Can I just ignore the issue?

Your answers to these questions will provide valuable insights into your values, beliefs, goals, and needs. Based on what you learn, complete the following sentence: I am angry because I have lost . . . This loss is important to me because I [value, believe, want to achieve, or need] . . . Then evaluate how strongly you still assess the loss.

Now identify the willful agent who is the target of your anger and examine their intent. Ask yourself:

- To what agent do I attribute this action? Who do I hold responsible?
- Did they act deliberately? How do you know? How can you check your assumption of intention?
- Do they consider themselves responsible for the action?

An agent is someone who acted deliberately. If you are angry because you stubbed your toe on the door your choice of agents is limited to: 1) the door, 2) the floor, 3) yourself, 4) someone who pushed you, or 5) Some innocent person who was not even in the room at the time. Note that the first two agents on the list cannot act willfully, and the last did not even act! The Fundamental Attribution Error—incorrectly attributing an action or intent to an agent—is a common mistake. If you find yourself blaming an un-willful agent (e.g. the door or the floor) for your anger, perhaps the change that is needed is that you need to take more responsibility for your own actions.

Finally, work to understand if the willful agent acted unfairly. Ask yourself:

- Why do you believe the action was unfair?
- What would you consider fair?
- What was the agent's point of view?
- How do they justify their actions? How do you know?
- If the willful agent had a strong sense of empathy, what would they have done? How do you know?

- What would a good friend have done in this situation? How do you know?
- What would you have done in this situation? How do you know? What did you do the last time you were in a similar situation?
- What is the basis for your sense of justice? What standard do you use to establish “fair and just”? Is it a well-founded standard? Is it a widely accepted standard? Is it a standard the willful agent would accept?
- How can you check your assumptions? What is the evidence?

Fairness and justice are remarkably difficult concepts to define. While we all have some inherent sense of right and wrong, attempts to write a comprehensive code of ethics, a set of rules, or a code of laws have eluded the best scholars, lawyers, theologians, ethicists, philosophers, and even parents over the millennia. I recommend using the standard of empathy—a deep appreciation for another's situation and point of view—as the basis for fair judgment, but you probably have your own standard for judging fairness. Certainly the principle of symmetry—apparent balance—is an important basis for fairness and justice.

Origins, Archetypes, and the Plot of Anger

Anger encourages us to act on our sense of justice. Anger may be interpreted in many of the following ways:

- A demeaning offense against me or mine.
- Interference with what we are intent on doing. Thwarted goals. Frustration,
- Intentional physical harm toward us; actual, threatened, or reasonably perceived,
- Intentional psychological harm toward us, including insult, humiliation, denigration, intimidation, or rejection,
- Disappointment in the performance of others we care about; we get most angry at the people we love the most,
- Witnessing the anger of another, especially when it is directed at you.

The message to others is “get out of my way” or “I want to hurt you”

Benefits and Dangers of Anger

The anger mechanism would not have survived millions of years of evolution if it did not provide important survival benefits. Here are some of those benefits:

- Anger tells us that something needs to change.
- Anger can provide the motivation to constructively change whatever it was that caused the anger. It can energize the fight for legitimate rights. It contributed to eliminating slavery and apartheid, and led to women's suffrage and civil rights. Anger can motivate us to overcome oppression and topple a tyrant.
- Anger can provide the motivation to constructively correct an injustice. It urges us to act on our sense of justice.
- Anger can provide the motivation to constructively teach offenders what they did to make you angry, and to learn to act differently.
- Anger can help to reduce or overcome fear and provide the energy needed to mobilize needed change.
- Anger sends a powerful signal that informs others of trouble. It notifies the offender that you have perceived an offense.
- Anger helps us to preserve our ego and think good of ourselves.
- Anger is a normal response to an external stimulus that needs to be addressed.

One of the most dangerous features of anger is that expressing anger increases the anger of others. This can lead to a rapid and dangerous escalation. We may try to harm the target of our anger. We often wish them harm. The impulse to harm is probably a central part of the anger response for most people. While anger can be dangerous and must be constrained, it cannot and should not be eliminated.

Anger as an Imperative for Change

Considering anger as an urgent imperative for change provides a useful point of view for analyzing our options, actions, and effectiveness. This viewpoint raises these questions:

1. Why am I receiving this signal for change? What does it tell me about my own beliefs, values, goals, judgments, sense of justice, and needs?
2. What has to change?
3. What steps are needed to carry out the change?
4. Who needs to act to make the change?
5. When does the change need to take place?
6. Will the change be effective?

7. Will the change be lasting?
8. Will the result be constructive?

Let's look at each of these questions and examine how thoughtful discipline and impulse control can overcome the strong impulse to lash out now.

Why am I receiving this signal for change? What does it tell me about my own beliefs, values, judgments, sense of justice and needs? Think this one through very carefully. At the deepest level of my consciousness, beliefs, values, and needs, what is it about myself that has caused this event to make me angry? Are my beliefs, values, goals, and judgments well founded and helpful? What is the basis for my sense of justice? What is it I need that I am not getting? Is the need valid? How can I form a request to best obtain what I need? What are the actions that are most likely to get what I most need? (Hint, revenge is not a need).

What has to change? and Who needs to act to make the change? Our viewpoint is intrinsically our own, and our impulse is to insist that *you* have to change *now* to accommodate *my* needs. But a constructive response to anger requires overcoming this self-centered impulse to allow a broader and deeper analysis of the information and options. Begin by focusing on the constructive steps you can take to move forward. If your actions in responding to anger, for example indulging in a dramatic anger display, will not cause the needed change then that action is not a good choice.

What steps are needed to carry out the change? Our attention is fundamentally limited. Because our experiences and point of view are self-centered and unique, our judgments will reflect this intrinsic bias. As a result of this inherent bias, the options for change we first see are limited and often require others to change to accommodate our preferences. Again, a constructive response to anger requires overcoming this impulse and allow a broader and deeper analysis of the information and options. Test the effectiveness of your planned changes by examining why you believe they will result in the needed change.

When does the change need to take place? Anger can be an immensely strong emotion with an almost overwhelming urge to act immediately. Although nearly every part of your being is screaming for you to act now, it is essential for you to find the strength to resist this powerful urge. Be patient. Calm down. Control your temper. Take three deep breathes. Count to ten, slowly. Allow the refractory

period to end, and allow reason to prevail. Take your time to accurately assess the situation. Be skeptical and take the time to verify your assumptions using thoughtful inquiry and rigorous evidence obtained from several reliable sources. Consider a variety of points of view, including an empathy based point of view of the person who provoked your anger. What would you have done? How do you know?

Will the change be effective? Will the change be lasting? Will the result be constructive? Keep in mind that acting in anger inevitably creates more anger. Understand what you can change and what you cannot. Create options for mutual gain. Invent more options for mutual gain. What are the best options for getting your needs met? What can *you* do?

Anger as Hurt, Hate, or Fear

A general feeling of anger may result from more specific feelings of hurt (due to loss, sadness, shame, or humiliation), hate, or fear. It can be helpful to examine your anger to see if has these more specific origins or meanings.

Related Moods and Traits

Irritability is the mood associated with anger. If you are in an irritable mood, you require less provocation to become angry. You may also be described as having a bad *temper*. This may also be described as grouchy, grumpy, or being in a bad mood.

Hostility is the personality trait associated with anger. Hostile people are more likely to become angry.

A *hot head* or someone with a *bad temper*, is anyone who has poor impulse control and moves quickly from anger toward rage, dramatic anger displays, and even overt violence. These people may also have hostile personalities. They often have a fragile self-esteem and are hypersensitive to criticism or disrespect. Privately they see themselves as weak, vulnerable, and not particularly strong, capable, or worthy. They fear humiliation. To bolster their own opinion of themselves they believe others should show them respect and acknowledge their high stature. If others fail to demonstrate respect they are dismissed as unfriendly, critical, and hostile.

Physiological Responses

You actually *feel* anger, partially as a result of these involuntary changes in your body:

- Increased heart rate,
- increased blood pressure,
- reddened face,
- tensed muscles,
- a tendency to move forward, toward the target of the anger.

Much of this is caused by activating the sympathetic branch of the autonomic nervous system as a primal survival strategy.

Myths and Misconceptions

The Hydraulic Model of Anger—describing the need to vent dramatically and “let off steam”—is unfounded. “Getting your anger out” almost always makes matters worse. There is no evidence that suppressed anger is harmful if we feel in control of the situation, and if we interpret the anger as a grievance to be corrected constructively. Unless the source of your anger can be corrected by expressing anger, don’t. Although anger itself does not accumulate, the urge for revenge can. It can be harmful to accumulate and intensify the urge for revenge without reconciling your feelings of injustice. Choose a constructive path to resolve your quest for revenge. Expressing anger is necessary; but do it by standing up for your rights clearly and assertively, not violently. Suppressing legitimate anger is unhealthy. Continually venting anger is also unhealthy.

The excuse “You made me do this, I had no choice” is always false. Self control is the difference between acting destructively in anger, and responding calmly, constructively, and rationally. You are always responsible for your actions.

It is false to believe: If I don’t act out the anger, I have given in, lost face, wimped out, become a coward, and disgraced myself. Actually the opposite is true. It takes greater strength, self restraint, introspection, and analysis to constructively resolve anger.

Expressions of Anger

- Shouting, raised voice, threatened or actual violence.
- Passive withdrawal, stonewalling, lack of cooperation, sabotage, revenge.
- Throwing a *tantrum*—a violent and objectionable demonstration of rage or frustration that is often considered quite childish.

Anger is distinct from *aggression*. Anger is an emotion and is most evident in how you feel, while aggression—an offensive action or attack—is how you choose to act.

The Paradox of Anger

If anger is so destructive, why is it so common? The enduring benefit of anger is that it urges us to act on our sense of justice. Unfortunately the powerful urge it provides is primitive and is too often dangerously misused. Carefully choose a constructive path for your anger, as described in this next section.

Paths of Anger

Events that can trigger our anger are common and frequent occurrences. How we respond to those provocations and the choices we make critically affect our peace of mind, well being, and our lives. The following figure illustrates choices we have and paths we can take to either inflame or resolve our anger. Use this like you would any other map: 1) decide where you are now, 2) decide where you want to go, 3) choose the best path to get there, and 4) go down the chosen path. If you can arrange a constructive meeting with your adversary, use this map to discuss where each of you are now and choose a path leading to resolution of your conflict. Keep in mind: as you walk you make your path.

THOUGHTS AND SELF TALK DETERMINES YOUR ANGER RESPONSE

Turning your anger on the other person makes you an aggressor. Thoughts of:

"I'll show him" or "It's not fair" or "That jerk #%^....." or "I hate him/her" or "I'll show him/her" cause us to act "out" on another.

Inner angers make you a "victim" and you allow yourself to beat you up and allow others to beat you up. These thoughts are:

"I'm devalued" or "I'm exposed" or "He doesn't care" or I'm wrong" or "I'm bad."

When you run and hide (withdraw) from a threat or stressor, these are some of the thoughts:

"I can't deal with this" or "This is danger" or "I'm being attacked" or "let me out of here."

Ways/thoughts to divert or diffuse/scatter anger energy - one may respond with:

"Let's joke" or "I need to divert attention" or "I feel sick."

We need to deal with our anger and stay focused on good thoughts and statements like:

"I need to take a deep breath, stay in control of myself and remember to say things constructively" or "I statements" (I feel.....when you.....), We can talk about this so "let's listen to each other and find resolution if we can" or "I need to take a time out because my thoughts and head feels pressure. I will come back and resolve/solve this with you once I have calmed down" or "I'm safe and it's okay to have a difference of opinion" and so on. These words are "resilient" words and help you to stay in the position of "mutuality" in your relationship with the person you are interacting with.

MOVING YOUR ANGER RESPONSES TO SELF EMPOWERMENT RESPONSES!

Tactics used to intimidate others are the most harmful:

1. Physical assault to intimidate
2. Verbally abuse, scold and lecture others
3. Holding grudges because it serves a negative purpose
4. Engage in revenge thoughts and behaviors
5. Displace your anger on people who are weaker
6. Criticize and put the blame on others. Refuse to see your part.
7. Use “silent treatment” or “eye rolls” or “cold stares” or “sighs”
8. Cuss and call names
9. Use sarcasm in statements
10. Manipulate other to get what you want
11. Audible sounds and sighs

Turn you anger on yourself:

1. Physically harm yourself
2. Self blame and “thoughts that beat you up”
3. Deny anger and stuff feelings
4. Numb out (shut down mind)
5. Use drugs/alcohol/food/sex to deal with issues
6. Hit things like a wall and other intimidation techniques
7. Drive recklessly
8. Run away from important issues
9. Never get closure and keep storing up anger

Empower self by using positive tools to deal with anger:

1. Use humor appropriately to defuse tension
2. Get rid of anger through physical exercise or sport activities like basketball, etc.
3. Use movement like dance to release anger

4. Write down negative thoughts and feelings and then replace those written negatives by writing positive thoughts and feelings
5. Affirmations
6. Share feelings and talk things out with “mutuality” and “positive regard”
7. Set boundaries and confront appropriately
8. Problem solve
9. Leave unhealthy situations and take time outs
10. Take constructive action. Change the word “mad” to “make a difference”
11. “Breath” and center yourself
12. Observe your thoughts and actions. Awareness + Action = Change
13. Reframe and change the power and meaning you gave the anger event

These reactions increase self-worth when applied and practiced over and over until they come naturally. You will be in control of your anger.

What is Bullying?

Bullying includes behaviors that focus on making someone else feel inadequate, or focus on belittling someone else. Bullying includes harassment, physical harm, repeatedly demeaning speech and efforts to ostracize another person. Bullying is active, and is done with the intention of bringing another person down. It is important to realize that there are different kinds of bullying:

Physical Bullying: This is the most obvious form of bullying. In this type of bullying, the instigator attempts to physically dominate another teen. This usually includes kicking, punching and other physically harmful activities, designed to instill fear in the one bullied, and possibly coerce him or her to do something.

Verbal Bullying: When someone verbally bullies another, he or she uses demeaning language to tear down another's self-image. Bullies who use verbal techniques excessively tease others, say belittling things and use a great deal of sarcasm with the intent to hurt the other person's feelings or humiliate the other teen in front of others.

Emotional: This is even more subtle than verbal bullying. Teenage bullying that includes emotional methods aims at getting someone else to feel isolated, alone and may even prompt depression. This type of bullying is designed to get others to ostracize the person being bullied.

Cyber Bullying: Electronic bullying is becoming a very real problem for teens. This type of bullying uses instant messaging, cell phone text messages and online social networks to humiliate and embarrass others. This can be especially devastating to the people being bullied, since they cannot even find a safe place in the virtual world.

Is teenage bullying common?

According to statistics from Family First Aid, about 30 percent of teenagers in the U.S. have been involved in bullying, either as a bully or as a victim of teenage bullying. Data suggests that teenage bullying is more common among younger teens than it is among older teens. However, it may be that young teens are more prone to physical bullying, which is easier to identify, and that older teens are more sophisticated in methods of bullying that are not always exactly identified as such.

Physical bullying is more common among boys, and teenage girls often favor verbal and emotional bullying. Indeed, while boys report that they are more likely to be involved in physical altercations, girls report that they are often the targets

of nasty rumors - especially involving sexual gossip. Additionally, girls are more likely to use exclusion as a teenage bullying technique than boys are.

What are some of the effects of teenage bullying?

There are a number of effects that come with teenage bullying. First of all, there are the obvious physical problems and injuries that can result from physical bullying. However, emotional, verbal and cyber bullying can deeply affect teens as well. These activities can lead to depression (and even suicide), drug use and stunted social development. These are problems that can affect a person well into adulthood.

Another problem can be that of retaliation. In some cases, bullied teens have violent fantasies of attacking their tormentors. There are instances in which these teens become violent, turning on their classmates in order to get revenge. This can be a cause of heartbreak and difficulty.

Reducing teenage bullying

It is very difficult to address teen bullying. However, there are some things that can help discourage bullying situations. Teens should be encouraged to seek friends, in person and online, who are supportive and kind. They should try to move in groups if possible, since bullies most often single out those who are alone.

Also, it is important to have teachers and other adult authorities present when possible to discourage bullying behavior. You can also talk to bullies about more appropriate behavior, and hope that they are willing to listen.

In the end, it is difficult to totally prevent teenage bullying - especially if it is verbal, emotional or cyber bullying. You should encourage good efforts to reduce bullying, and let victims see that you are involved in these efforts. The best thing you can do is be encouraging to bullying victims and try to help them get through this tough time as unscathed as possible.

Cyber bullying affects many adolescents and teens on a daily basis. Cyber bullying involves using technology, like cell phones and the Internet, to bully or harass another person. Cyber bullying can take many forms:

Sending mean messages or threats to a person's email account or cell phone

Spreading rumors online or through texts

Posting hurtful or threatening messages on social networking sites or web pages

Stealing a person's account information to break into their account and send damaging messages

Pretending to be someone else online to hurt another person

Taking unflattering pictures of a person and spreading them through cell phones or the Internet

Sexting, or circulating sexually suggestive pictures or messages about a person

Cyber bullying can be very damaging to adolescents and teens. It can lead to anxiety, depression, and even suicide. Also, once things are circulated on the Internet, they may never disappear, resurfacing at later times to renew the pain of cyber bullying.

Many cyber bullies think that bullying others online is funny. Cyber bullies may not realize the consequences for themselves of cyberbullying. The things teens post online now may reflect badly on them later when they apply for college or a job. Cyber bullies can lose their cell phone or online accounts for cyber bullying. Also, cyber bullies and their parents may face legal charges for cyber bullying, and if the cyber bullying was sexual in nature or involved sexting, the results can include being registered as a sex offender. Teens may think that if they use a fake name they won't get caught, but there are many ways to track someone who is cyber bullying.

Despite the potential damage of cyber bullying, it is alarmingly common among adolescents and teens. According to Cyber bullying statistics from the i-SAFE foundation:

Over half of adolescents and teens have been bullied online, and about the same number have engaged in cyber bullying.

More than 1 in 3 young people have experienced cyberthreats online.

Over 25 percent of adolescents and teens have been bullied repeatedly through their cell phones or the Internet.

Well over half of young people do not tell their parents when cyber bullying occurs.

The Harford County Examiner reported similarly concerning cyber bullying statistics:

Around half of teens have been the victims of cyber bullying

Only 1 in 10 teens tells a parent if they have been a cyber bully victim

Fewer than 1 in 5 cyber bullying incidents are reported to law enforcement

1 in 10 adolescents or teens have had embarrassing or damaging pictures taken of themselves without their permission, often using cell phone cameras

About 1 in 5 teens have posted or sent sexually suggestive or nude pictures of themselves to others

Girls are somewhat more likely than boys to be involved in cyber bullying

The Cyberbullying Research Center also did a series of surveys that found these cyber bullying statistics:

Over 80 percent of teens use a cell phone regularly, making it the most popular form of technology and a common medium for cyber bullying

About half of young people have experienced some form of cyber bullying, and 10 to 20 percent experience it regularly

Mean, hurtful comments and spreading rumors are the most common type of cyber bullying

Girls are at least as likely as boys to be cyber bullies or their victims

Boys are more likely to be threatened by cyber bullies than girls

Cyber bullying affects all races

Cyber bullying victims are more likely to have low self esteem and to consider suicide

Parents and teens can do some things that help reduce the cyber bullying statistics:

Talks to teens about cyber bullying, explaining that it is wrong and can have serious consequences. Make a rule that teens may not send mean or damaging messages, even if someone else started it, or suggestive pictures or messages or they will lose their cell phone and computer privileges for a time.

Encourage teens to tell an adult if cyber bullying is occurring. Tell them if they are the victims they will not be punished, and reassure them that being bullied is not their fault.

Teens should keep cyber bullying messages as proof that the cyber bullying is occurring. The teens' parents may want to talk to the parents of the cyber bully, to the bully's Internet or cell phone provider, and/or to the police about the messages, especially if they are threatening or sexual in nature.

Try blocking the person sending the messages. It may be necessary to get a new phone number or email address and to be more cautious about giving out the new number or address.

Teens should never tell their password to anyone except a parent, and should not write it down in a place where it could be found by others.

Teens should not share anything through text or instant messaging on their cell phone or the Internet that they would not want to be made public - remind teens that the person they are talking to in messages or online may not be who they think they are, and that things posted electronically may not be secure.

Encourage teens never to share personal information online or to meet someone they only know online.

Keep the computer in a shared space like the family room, and do not allow teens to have Internet access in their own rooms.

Encourage teens to have times when they turn off the technology, such as at family meals or after a certain time at night.

Parents may want to wait until high school to allow their teens to have their own email and cell phone accounts, and even then parents should still have access to the accounts.

If teens have been the victims or perpetrators of cyber bullying they may need to talk to a counselor or therapist to overcome depression or other harmful effects of cyber bullying.

Sources:

Richard Webster, Harford County Examiner, "From cyber bullying to sexting: What on your kids' cell?" [online]

i-SAFE Inc., "Cyber Bullying: Statistics and Tips" [online]

Cyberbullying Research Center, "Summary of our cyberbullying research from 2004-2010"

Steps to prevent bullying before it starts can address the problem from several directions. Prevention can be aimed at creating a situation in which bullying is not tolerated, in giving potential bullies outlets and behavior suggestions so that thoughts and feelings that could end up in bullying are channeled in different ways, and in helping potential victims avoid becoming the victim of bullying behavior. This article explores some of the current thoughts about how bullying can be prevented.

Prevent Bullying With Policies

A clear definition of bullying and a policy that disallows it and lays out the consequences is one means to arm a school or school district against this problem. For one thing, when bullying is clearly defined, then it can be more easily recognized and separated from constructive criticism, discipline, and motivation, all of which are bordering areas. It is important that the policy be clear and research-based in order to not be so broad that students and teachers are fearful of being perceived as bullies at every turn when what they say is not praise. And it is different, though still potentially painful, if a child is picked last for games because he or she has an objectively poor skill set as opposed to being picked last due to an explicit campaign to ostracize him or her.

Policies to prevent bullying may explicitly mention major types of bullying, including verbal, social, physical, pack and cyberbullying, and racist, religious,

homophobic bullying, along with bullying of people with disabilities. But it is important that policies should be worded so as not to exclude the bullying of mainstream victims, nor victims who are teachers, staff, administrators, or school board members, rather than students.

As of September, 2009, most states have bullying laws. Bullying laws do not exist, however, in Alabama, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Prevent Bullying With Consequences

With a carefully written and precise bullying definition in place, there is a need to follow up with appropriate and fair consequences when bullying occurs, whomever the perpetrator and victims are. Victims must know that they will get a fair hearing in order to be persuaded to come forward. Bullies must not be perceived as immune on account of longevity or position. Consequences need to be applied consistently in order for a policy to prevent bullying to be effective.

In states in which there are bullying laws and the bullying involves physical altercations or damage to or theft of property, the consequences of bullying may include criminal prosecution, as well as school sanctions. In addition, bullies, both students and teachers, not to mention schools, school districts, and parents of bullies have been sued for damages.

Prevent Bullying with Family Education

Perception of bullying has changed over time, and while a bullying policy can touch organizations such as schools, it is harder to reach families. People who come from families in which bullying was the norm have been exposed to behavior models that are not considered acceptable today. These people, whether teachers or students, may need explicit models of how to act on thoughts and feelings that could lead to bullying and/or they may need greater assistance to learn new behavior patterns and break old models, such as counseling, rather than simply punishment.

Community education is difficult and takes time: many people feel that what happens behind their closed front door is their business and is private and resent and reject suggestions for change. But if dad bullies mom, or vice versa, and the children take this behavior as a model, what's behind closed doors can flow out into the community.

Within the home, parents can prevent bullying both by modeling alternative behaviors as well as explicitly pointing out behaviors that fall into the category of bullying and differentiating ways of acting and sharing behaviors that are acceptable within a family - in which people often know more about each other's

characteristics, faults and failings, for example, because of how space is shared rather than because someone has "outed" someone else - from what is acceptable in school and other public settings.

Other Means to Help Prevent Bullying

Supervision and appropriate intervention can help stop bullying that is in progress.

Teach appropriate assertiveness to those who are, or may be, targets of bullying. If the bullying is linked to something that can be changed - such as an article of clothing or a lack of skill or training in some area - discuss various responses with the person, including changing the behavior, by making a different choice or by working to improve in the area that is lacking if this is an appropriate response, or learning to assert his or her right to be different, if this is appropriate. For example, if a student is ridiculed because his or her desk or locker is a mess with things falling out of it, some assistance in creating and maintaining order could both be beneficial and remove the reason for the bullying. If, however, the student wants to continue to wear a Yankee baseball cap in Red Sox territory, a different approach will be needed to prevent bullying.

Staff training can help make sure that the school (and state, if applicable) bullying policies are widely understood.

Some bullying occurs at the rate of "almost every day" according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2007 data. Head off repeat offense by encouraging reports of bullying and making sure reports are dealt with expeditiously. A victim who has accepted another student's derision as "jokes" up to a point, should be able to report the derision without feeling complicit or guilty for the bullying being ongoing.

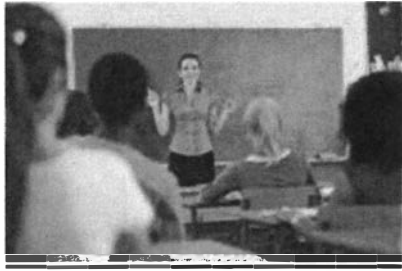
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Bullying can threaten students' physical and emotional safety at school and can negatively impact their ability to learn. The best way to address bullying is to stop it before it starts. There are a number of things school staff can do to make schools safer and prevent bullying.

Getting Started

Assess school prevention and intervention efforts around student behavior, including substance use and violence. You may be able to build upon them or integrate bullying prevention strategies. Many programs help address the same protective and risk factors that bullying programs do.

Assess Bullying in Your School

Conduct assessments in your school to determine how often bullying occurs, where it happens, how students and adults intervene, and whether your prevention efforts are working.

Engage Parents and Youth

It is important for everyone in the community to work together to send a unified message against bullying. Launch an awareness campaign to make the objectives known to the school, parents, and community members. Establish a school safety committee or task force to plan, implement, and evaluate your school's bullying prevention program.

Create Policies and Rules

Create a mission statement, code of conduct, school-wide rules, and a bullying reporting system. These establish a climate in which bullying is not acceptable. Disseminate and communicate widely.

Build a Safe Environment

Establish a school culture of acceptance, tolerance and respect. Use staff meetings, assemblies, class and parent meetings, newsletters to families, the

school website, and the student handbook to establish a positive climate at school. Reinforce positive social interactions and inclusiveness.

Educate Students and School Staff

Build bullying prevention material into the curriculum and school activities. Train teachers and staff on the school's rules and policies. Give them the skills to intervene consistently and appropriately.

The numbers continue to rise every month...

- It is estimated that 160,000 children miss school every day due to fear of attack or intimidation by other students. Source: National Education Association.
- American schools harbor approximately 2.1 million bullies and 2.7 million of their victims. Dan Olweus, National School Safety Center.
- 1 in 7 Students in Grades K-12 is either a bully or a victim of bullying.
- 56% of students have personally witnessed some type of bullying at school.
- 15% of all school absenteeism is directly related to fears of being bullied at school.
- 71% of students report incidents of bullying as a problem at their school.
- 1 out of 20 students has seen a student with a gun at school.
- 282,000 students are physically attacked in secondary schools each month.
- Those in the lower grades reported being in twice as many fights as those in the higher grades. However, there is a lower rate of serious violent crimes in the elementary level than in the middle or high schools.
- 90% of 4th through 8th graders report being victims of bullying
- Among students, homicide perpetrators were more than twice as likely as homicide victims to have been bullied by peers.
- Bullying statistics say revenge is the strongest motivation for school shootings.

- 87% of students said shootings are motivated by a desire to “get back at those who have hurt them.”
- 86% of students said, “other kids picking on them, making fun of them or bullying them” causes teenagers to turn to lethal violence in the schools.
- 61% of students said students shoot others because they have been victims of physical abuse at home.
- 54% of students said witnessing physical abuse at home can lead to violence in school.
- According to bullying statistics, 1 out of every 10 students who drops out of school does so because of repeated bullying.
- Harassment and bullying have been linked to 75% of school-shooting incidents.

WHAT DOES RATIONAL EMOTIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY AND ANGER MANAGEMENT HAVE IN COMMON?

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) is a form of psychotherapy and a philosophy of living created by Albert Ellis in the 1950's. It is based on the premise that whenever we become upset, it is not the events taking place in our lives that upset us; it is the beliefs we hold that cause us to become upset, depressed, anxious, enraged, etc. The idea that our beliefs upset us was first articulated by Epictetus around 2,000 years ago: "Men are disturbed not by events, but by the views which they take of them."

The vast majority of us want to be happy. We want to be happy whether we are alone or with others; we want to get along with others – especially with one or two close friends; we want to be well informed and educated; we want a good job with good pay which is fulfilling; we want to enjoy our leisure time.

Of course life doesn't always allow us to have what we want. When our goals are blocked we can respond in ways that are healthy or unhealthy. So when our goals are blocked our beliefs cause our emotional reactions and responses:

- A. Something happens
- B. You have a belief about the situation
- C. You have an emotional reaction to the belief

Example: (A) Your employer falsely accuses you of taking money and threatens to fire you. (B) You believe, "She/he has no right to accuse me. She/he is a jerk"
(C) You feel angry

If you held a different belief, your emotional response would have been different.
(A) Your employer falsely accuses you of taking money (B) You believe, "I must not lose my job. That would be unacceptable." (C) You feel anxious.

The outcomes will be different in the later example.

3 Basic “Musts” or Irrational Beliefs

The beliefs that upset us are all variations of 3 common irrational beliefs. Each of the three contains a demand, either about us, other people, or the world in general. These basic beliefs are known as “The 3 Basic Musts.”

1. I must do well and win the approval of others for my performances or else I am no good.
2. Other people must treat me considerately, fairly and kindly, and in exactly the way I want them to treat me. If they don’t, they are no good and they deserve to be condemned and punished.
3. I must get what I want, when I want it; and I must not get what I don’t want. It’s terrible if I don’t get what I want, and I can’t stand it.

Goal of REBT:

The goal of REBT is to help people change their irrational beliefs into rational beliefs. Changing beliefs is the real work of therapy and is achieved by the facilitator disputing the client’s irrational beliefs. So we ask open ended questions and provide reframing techniques. Example: Why must you win everyone’s approval?” “Where is it written that other people must treat you fairly?” Disputing is the **D** of the ABC model above.

Even though we think irrationally, it is unlikely that we can ever entirely eliminate the tendency to think irrationally. But we can reduce the frequency, the duration, and the intensity of our irrational beliefs by developing 3 insights:

1. We don’t merely get upset but mainly upset ourselves by holding inflexible beliefs
2. No matter when and how we start upsetting ourselves, we continue to feel upset because we cling to our irrational beliefs
3. The only way to get better is to work hard at changing our beliefs. It takes practice, practice, practice

Acceptance:

Emotionally healthy people develop an acceptance of reality, even when the reality is highly unfortunate and unpleasant. So we strive to help our clients develop three types of acceptance:

1. Unconditional self-acceptance
2. Unconditional other-acceptance
3. Unconditional life-acceptance

Each of these is based on three core beliefs:

1. I am a fallible human being; I have my good points and my bad points
2. There is no reason why I must not have flaws
3. Despite my good and bad points, I am no more worthy and no less worthy than any other human being

Unconditional other-acceptance:

- a. Other people will treat me unfairly from time to time
- b. There is no reason why I must not have flaws
- c. The people who treat me unfairly are no more worthy and no less worthy than any other person

Unconditional life-acceptance:

- a. Life doesn't always work out the way I'd like it to
- b. There is no reason why life must go the way I want it to
- c. Life is not necessarily pleasant but it is never awful and it is nearly always bearable

The Feeling Part of Thinking - breaking it down to the mind-body-emotion link

I want you to think about someone you love for a moment. Really think about them. You can think about an experience with them, or just about them. Notice how you FEEL when you THINK about them. Now think about the fact that our minds are thinking and feeling constantly and we can see how powerfully our thoughts, images and feelings are interconnected.

Now this doesn't just mean that this creates our inner world, this also creates our outer world. Think about someone you love and notice how it changes your mood. Now that good mood will affect your day and if you choose to stay in a good mood, it will continue to affect your day.

Now think of someone you are really frustrated with. Notice how that frustration is connected to your thoughts, feelings and the images you get

Notice as well that you have a PHYSICAL representation that occurs when you are thinking something. That's the mind-body link we all talk about.

So what if you could affect this link? What if you could, in fact, change every aspect of it?

If that is your wish, to learn to do this, then you are going to love my book "Emotional Addiction – A Bitter Sweet Truth" and my coaching on mind-body-emotion links because ALL of them, focus on these sorts of integrative changes from different perspectives and ALL of them are focused on the integration of self-empowerment, self-acceptance and integration.

You can order Emotional Addiction A Bitter Sweet Truth on Amazon.com and contact Dr. Kathie at 818-419-1178 or got to her website at www.drkathiemathis.com.

ANGER AND THE BRAIN

Understanding how the brain and anger work together is important to laying the foundation for controlling anger. We can teach our brains how to respond to the triggers of our anger and our response to them.

The Cerebral Cortex is the “thinking” part of the brain where logic and judgment reside. It is the outer portion of the brain and it divides the lobes. It is also the “strategy” center of our brain.

The Limbic System is the “emotional” center of our brain. Located in the lower portion and is more primitive than the Cortex. When a person is in “anger” they are not using the “thinking” or Cortex part of their brain – but the Limbic Center.

The Amygdala lies within the Limbic System and stores emotional memories. It is also responsible for our “fright and flight” reactions. Data comes into and passes through the Amygdala where the decision is made to send the data it receives into the Limbic System or Cerebral Cortex. If the incoming data triggers enough of an emotional charge, the Amygdala can override the Cortex, which means the data will be sent to the Limbic System causing the person to react using the lower brain.

During the overriding event – the Amygdala goes into action without much regard for consequences since this area of the brain is not involved in judging, thinking or evaluating. When the Amygdala does this it floods the brain with hormones that cause a physical and emotional alarm. A “surge” of energy follows, preparing for fright or flight responses. The impact of this is an “emotional flush” that lasts for several minutes during which time a person is usually out of control and may say and do things that they will later regret. Further, an additional, longer lasting hormone is released – its impact can last several hours to several days.

Having a long lasting hormone in the body can explain why someone has an initial, powerful, angry reaction then seem to calm down, but then later flair up again disproportionately to the situation.

On average, **it can take 20 minutes for a person who has experienced an angry state of arousal to calm down** – to move functioning from the emotional area to the thinking area of the brain. ✓

These facts are important to know in anger management:

- a. Anger involves a trigger to the emotions “charging” us up to “lose it” (but this can be controlled)
- b. It will take approximately 20 minutes before we can become more logical after this “charging” up
- c. Triggers often result from core beliefs and values being challenged or violated
- d. Anger exists on a continuum
- e. Anger ranges from mild frustration to outright rage

The University of New York did research using MEG (Magneto Encephalo Graphic) scanners testing responses in the brain to facial expressions and sounds. Outcomes showed that the brain showed a “supra addictive response” to fearful sounds and facial expressions. It showed that the hemispherical laterization of neural responses to facial expressions develops by age of 6 months. (Natl. Institute of Physiological Sciences, 2010).

This is important in showing that babies learn from a very early age to respond to the sounds and facial expressions of anger in their parents and siblings. This supra addictive response can be the first step in creating anger addiction in some people.

COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

Simply put, this means changing the way you think. Angry people curse, swear, or speak in highly colorful terms that reflect their inner thoughts. When you are angry, you’re thinking can get exaggerated and overly dramatic. When we replace those thoughts with more rational ones things don’t seem so bad. So we want to eliminate the words, “always, should, have to” and “it’s the end of the world” mentality. Anger doesn’t fix anything if we attack and become aggressive. Remind yourself that anger won’t make you feel better and may even make you feel worse.

Logic defeats anger, because anger, even when justified, can quickly become irrational. So cold hard logic is to remind yourself that the world is “not out to get you,” but that you are experiencing some of the rough spots of daily life.

Ways to improve our anger:

1. Problem solve: make a plan, check your progress along the way. Resolve to give it your best, but also not to punish yourself if an answer doesn't come right away. Approach it with best intentions and efforts. Use patience.
2. Better Communication: Slow down and don't react but respond. Take some deep breaths, take a time out, do whatever you need to slow down and think carefully about what to say and how to respond. Listen also.
3. Use Humor: "Silly humor" can defuse rage in a number of ways. It can help you get a more balanced perspective. It can see things from a different and humorous perspective like a visual of a donkey's head on the person triggering you. It will take a lot of the edge off your anger if you can use humor.
4. Change your environment: Walk away, take "personal" time when you know you are stressed or realize that certain times of the day are your "stress" inducing times; pervade "quiet" times for yourself to reflect, distress, rejuvenate, and laugh.
5. Timing: If you tend to fight when you are tired, distracted, then try changing times when you talk about important matters. Always ask the other person if they have time to talk to you or if another time is better, knowing that they may also be tired, distracted, etc. When we ask "I have something I would like to discuss with you. Is not a good time or is another better?" we leave open communication and timing to its optimal use.
6. Avoidance: If a messy child's room bothers you – then close the door. Why look at something that is going to increase your anger?
7. Finding alternatives: Learn a different response or alternative. In the child's room scenario you could close the door and not look at it or you could look at the alternative of having the child clean the room every Friday so it is clean for the weekend when you are home but gives them the ability to have their room however they want it during the week.

There is now overwhelming evidence that during times of strong and powerful emotions, our brain becomes flooded with chemicals, such as adrenaline and norepinephrine that short-circuit and interfere with the parts of the brain effecting judgment, reasoning and logic. Specific parts of the brain become

smaller and less biochemically active. So the wisdom of the advice to count to 10, taking deep breaths, sleeping on it, or walking away helps you think more clearly.

POSITIVE ANGER SKILLS

We all would like to keep calm even when we are angry so that we come out of that event with dignity, respect, and with positive outcomes. We can analyze our own skill level when anger comes our way by the way we deal with uncomfortable feelings. Most of how we react when angry is learned behavior. So we can unlearn negative behaviors and replace with good and positive behaviors.

Our anger feelings are complex for sure, but can be broken down into many sub-skills that you can practice daily. The more skill you have to deal with your anger feelings, the better equipped you will be to live in an angry world.

Take the following quiz and find out how many positive anger skills you have and use. Practice the skills you do have until they become a part of your daily life.

To release current and old anger in effective ways:

I displace anger symbolically when it is not safe to express it directly: Y N

I use positive displacement of anger and refrain from negative displacement: Y N

I break self-angering thoughts and replace with positive self thoughts: Y N

I stand up and speak assertively when threatened: Y N

I say “no” and state boundaries, bottom lines and leave if boundaries are not respected: Y N

I shield against the negative energy of name calling and ridicule: Y N

I take care of myself when others fight and let them resolve their issues without being triangulated: Y N

I don’t use “numbing out” techniques: Y N

I use self positive soothing techniques when upset: Y N

I discriminate between big and little deals: Y N

I understand and accept that I don't always have to get my way: Y N

I learn to identify irrational thoughts that fuel anger: Y N

I use positive thoughts and cool down techniques: Y N

I learn to analyze and correct mistakes instead of beating myself up: Y N

I keep cool when others try to push my buttons: Y N

I take time outs when needed: Y N

I observe rather than over react: Y N

I identify my body reactions to stressors: Y N

I use observation of physiological cues to break anger: Y N

I express sadness, confusion, hurt feelings which can be under anger: Y N

I analyze the threat event and identify to break triggers: Y N

I stay "present" in the situation and don't lash out or stuff: Y N

I work on unresolved childhood and relationship issues: Y N

I use resilient and self empowering statements: Y N

I challenge anger into constructive actions: Y N

I use "I" statements: Y N

I speak feelings appropriately when feeling threatened: Y N

I stop blaming others and accept responsibility for my anger: Y N

I refrain from sarcasm, name calling, put downs and bullying: Y N

I try and do see things from another's perspective: Y N

I observe the effect of my actions on others and try to not harm another: Y N

I treat others with respect and "mutuality": Y N

I know what Unconditional Positive Regard means and apply it: Y N

BE A “STAR”

During an episode of anger or conflict, it is useful to know how to analyze the situation. The “STAR” technique is one that will help you to stay successful in handling the situation. It will prepare you to think about the proper response and keep you from getting into trouble when used.

STAR stands for STOP, THINK, ACT, AND REVIEW!!

STOP: Take time out to clear your mind and cool off. What do you need to do to stop your anger and calm down? What will help you stop? Think of ways to make this a reality for yourself.

THINK: Focus on positive’s instead of negatives. During a current “event” you can think and reframe the issues. Is there something you can let go off, learn from, and otherwise see from another perspective.

ACT: Choose to act appropriately in any situation. CHOICE is important here. What is a suitable way to act and what situations in the past can help direct you to the correct choice of behavior desired? Stay within your own “power” by behaving appropriately and not stooping down to another person’s level of anger.

REVIEW: After an “event” you can review your behavior and judge as to whether or not you responded appropriately. If you act properly during your current conflict, how will you feel when you later review your behavior? Do you feel you behaved well? If not, what could you do differently the next time?

Now use this to review an incident that happened to you:

Incident:

S :

T :

A :

R

TIME OUT!

A good tool to use to interrupt the escalation of anger is a “time out.” You can’t be physically abusive, verbally abusive, emotionally abusive (or any other type of abuser) if you take a time out. Why? Because a time out means you choose to not be in the presence of another individual when you are escalating. If you are not there, you can’t abuse anyone, plus by walking away – you get to de-escalate and cool down so that you can see the situation more clearly and without anger and its tunnel vision. You take time outs because you care about yourself, the other, about safety and good communication. To make it effective with another person, you will need to explain what it is and why you both need to use it and accept it when it is called for.

Time out is simply done by saying “I can feel myself escalating and getting tense so I need a time out” and reassure the other person that when you have calmed down you will be back to resolve the issue without anger. A time out is not an abandonment or power play. Then you simply leave. You go for a walk, listen to music, go play a sport activity, or exercise. You do not drink or use drugs during a time out, nor do you ruminate over the conversation trying to justify your anger. You remind yourself of your being in control of your anger, that you love the other person and that you want to relax and calm down.

When you have calmed down, you go back to try to resolve calmly, with respect and unconditional positive regard, the issue or problem. If you begin to escalate again, then you take another time out. You may have to schedule the discussion at another time until you can be in control of self and your anger. But be sure to ask for a time that is good for the both of you.

This is a very effective technique if you use it when you first feel the signs of an argument coming on or your body tensing up.

MORE WAYS TO BREAK OUT OF ANGER

Your peace of mind is where you put your energy. Identify your “self angering” metaphors:

1. I’m as hot as a firecracker
2. I’m an emotional yo-yo
3. I’m a time bomb ready to explode
4. I’m coiled and ready to spring
5. I have a short fuse
6. I am a volcano ready to go off
7. I have a ball of fire in my belly
8. I’m at the end of my rope
9. I’m at the breaking point
10. I’m a prisoner of my anger
11. I’m a pressure cooker ready to blow
12. I have a fire consuming me
13. I have an uncontrollable temper
14. I need to be right over being happy
15. I’m an emotional roller coaster
16. I’m stuck and can’t change
17. I live by the river – Denial
18. I have “red outs”
19. I allow people to push my buttons

Stress leads to anger so having stress management in your life will reduce anger. Here are some coping skills to deal with threat and feeling overwhelmed:

1. Deep breathe
2. Relaxation and/or visualization
3. Meditation/Prayer
4. Alpha State
5. Talk to friends
6. Listen to tapes

7. Listen to music or play
8. Exercise
9. Play or listen to music
10. Problem solve
11. Confront nicely others/share feelings
12. Stay in the “present” and not the past or future
13. Distract by doing pleasurable things like attending an event or working on a hobby
14. Go camping
15. Identify Triggers
16. Confront negative self talk and change to positive self talk
17. Write/journal
18. Set boundaries
19. Find humor in situations
20. Read books that will help you
21. Go to self help groups
22. Gain social support
23. Get more sleep
24. Ask you unconscious mind to see things differently and reframe situations consciously
25. Take a vacation

Remember that when you are feeling stressed, your priority is to take good care of yourself.

Not so healthy ways to cope with stress and anger:

1. Become immersed in excessive violent television/movies
2. Ignore the problem and do not confront the person(s)
3. Hang out with negative people and/or triangulate others into your problem
4. Allow irritability to build up
5. Withdraw into silent treatment
6. Explode on other and mistreat them
7. Deny the problem

8. Internalize anger
9. Personalize anger
10. Dwell on negative thoughts
11. Stuff feelings
12. Eat/binge
13. Drink/drugs
14. Push your body into fatigue
15. Excessive work or other activities that lead to negative consequences

Remember to use empowerment statements to change from negative thoughts to positive thoughts which leads to positive behaviors/actions.

For example:

1. I will get through this!
2. I'm in charge, not my anger!
3. I choose to take care of myself!
4. I remain calm when I am stressed!
5. I choose to deep breathe and take a time out!
6. And so on

The One Thirtieth of a Second – Time it takes to react to Anger!

Anger is a chain of reactions which are simultaneously connecting our body and mind. It happens quickly to the perceived threat or stressor. It takes one thirtieth of a second from threat to reaction for the chain of mind and body reactions to take place!

The anger response can serve many different functions. Some people with low self worth automatically substitute anger during threatening experiences due to their fears of being seen as vulnerable. They have learned that acting tough and macho makes them feel important. Often negative emotions serve to manipulate, control or intimidate others. You may even substitute an inappropriate emotion for another response out of fear. Getting angry when frightened or crying when frustrated are examples of misguided emotion.

There is the event itself and there is our perception and interpretation of the event that takes us into that one thirtieth reaction and prior negative emotional associations and experiences. How the event is interpreted depends on old triggers, buttons being pushed, and red flag words.

People who flare up at the slightest incidents have been hurt deeply and hold on to beliefs of injustice. They make rigid judgments around situations of how things “should” be which contribute to their angry thoughts. Don’t “should” on yourself. The rigid patterns of thinking with ought to’s, musts, etc. hold them in justifications and entitlements.

Threats and resulting anger can happen to the individual in one or more of five areas:

1. Threat to body
2. Threat to personal property
3. Threat to self worth
4. Threat to values and beliefs (where the sense of what is fair and right has been violated)
5. Threat to not getting what you want

When the meaning of the event is interpreted to be negative, your body can go into an instantaneous hormonal and neuromuscular reaction. This primitive response of “flight and/or flight” prepares the body to move fast.

Typical body responses are:

1. Adrenalin release
2. Shortness of breath
3. Pulse rate drops or increases
4. Flushing of skin and body temp changes
5. Tightening of skin, hands, shoulders, stomach and head
6. Rigidity of muscles

Angry people have negative thoughts and some of the most common thoughts are:

1. Name calling which is giving the person a negative label (Stupid, dummy)
2. Making judgments and “should” statements
3. Revenge and getting even statements
4. Assuming the other person “meant” to harm you deliberately
5. Making mountains out of mole hills
6. Making rigid judgments that wimps and weaklings need to be punished
7. Beliefs of “entitlement” and “I have the right” thinking

The type of emotional response that comes out of someone depends on their beliefs, past history with aggression, and the demands of the social situation. If you come from a violent home, you may have to suppress your anger in order to be safe around an explosive person. When negative emotions are suppressed over a period of time and built up, they may manifest as depression, illness, or in an explosive rage.

Repeating behaviors, attitudes and patterns over and over again, one develops a locked-in automatic response to threat. The way to break this reaction is to slow down the reaction by slow breathing, time outs, and substituting another more healthy response. We are what we think. Break the chain of negative thinking and use more constructive anger responses.

Projection, Blaming, Grudge holding, Doomsday thinking, Revenge thoughts, Black and White thinking – Keeps Anger!

Irrational thoughts keep us caught in anger and neurotic behavior. Erroneous beliefs and defenses we build up and replay with anger so we don't have to know the truth about our self are called “errors of thought” or “cognitions.” These errors in thinking are defense mechanisms that we learned at an early age, but do not work as we grow older. When people impose rigid expectations on themselves, other people, and the world because of their beliefs, they are likely to experience unnecessary emotional distress.

Irrational thoughts are crazy making!!!! They keep us in victim mode and chaos. They cause us to avoid responsibility for our own actions. Happiness in life can be achieved when you learn to break into your negative thinking. Errors in the way you think perpetuate depression, helplessness and anger keeping you from being at peace.

Catching yourself saying things that are illogical. Talk about your inaccurate ways of thinking with your family. Show them how happier your family would be if you break these bad habits of thinking and talking. Then you can challenge your children to point out crazy making words. Tell them, “you can catch me in my own words when I think in absurd ways and I’ll catch you so that we can all be aware of change we need to make in that absurd thinking.”

Here are the most common errors in thinking that add to a lifetime of misery.

1. Over generalized thinking. These are statements of exaggerations. “He NEVER considers my opinion” or “You ALWAYS interrupt me.” Watch out for those NEVERS, ALWAYS, SHOULD, OUGHTS, AND CAN’T words.
2. Making an Assumption and Running with it. What you assume is only what you assume. Assumptions may or may not be true. There may be other reasons why you think something has happened. Check out your assumption with others to get to the facts of the issue. Jumping to conclusions is another form of making an assumption and acting on it as if it were true. Remember what the old saying is about assuming – it makes aout of you and me.
3. Fortune Telling. This is when you project your assumptions on future events based on what happened in the past. Fortune telling is assuming that what happened in the past will happen in the future. When you say, “I bet that this will happen,” then you are predicting the future. You may or may not be right.
4. Focusing on the Other Person’s Behavior in the Past not the Present. Some people live so much in the hurts of the past that they do not realize that another person has changed or is trying to change. They keep an old

version of the person in their mind. Sometimes people do change, so do an update in your mind about them.

5. Piggybacking is bringing up old issues from the past during an argument, which diverts the argument into old unresolved hurts and pain while avoiding the current issue. "You may have been doing this to me for years. Last year you did this hurt to me so, I must bring it up again and again." This way of fighting brings in everything but the kitchen sink to be angry about. Piggybacking spreads the argument so thin with so many accusations, that the main thing you are fighting about does not get solved.
6. Closed Mind Thinking. These statements sound like this: "Don't tell me anything. I know best for me" and stubborn insistence on one's own opinion without taking in information from others can be a set up for rigidity in life.
7. Black and White Thinking. This is a very rigid way to look at things. There is no gray or middle ground and everyone is either good or bad. Situations are either/or. There is no understanding of where the other person is coming from, only staunch judgment. This ends up in lose-lose endings.
8. Preoccupation with Right and Wrong and Perceived Injustice. Blaming others is a way of life for some people. If you find yourself continually saying, "It's not fair!" then you are focused on the negative instead of going into problem solving. Much of life really isn't fair! Keeping score of slights from others and dwelling on them creates a climate of hurt and suspicion. Having a list of "shoulds" for the partner or other, which are inconsistent with his/her personality, will undermine a relationship. Focusing on unfairness keeps them caught in anger, resentment and grudges.
9. Grudge Holding is a habit that is hard to break into. People who harbor grudges have deeper issues of mistrust. Grudge holding is a learned behavior and is prevalent in some families. Grudges fan the fire of anger as a way of trying to feel safe by feeling powerful in fantasy. Grudge holding appears to be a way to attempt to control negative situations by retaining the angry feelings. Grudges are a habit of feeling self righteous and distance one's self instead of dealing with the real problem.

10. Revenge Thoughts are grudges plus wanting to get even with the other person. Revengeful thoughts are basically selfish in nature with the belief of “I have the right to hurt....because they injured me” which is based on beliefs of “It’s not fair.” Revenge is negative, creates pseudo self esteem and harms. Vengeful thoughts can actually trigger endorphins in the brain which associate hurting others with feeling good. Grudges fan the fire of anger as a way of trying to feel safe by feeling powerful in fantasy. It puts up guards and walls to guard from self hurt. It invites thoughts of entitlement and takes away any opportunity for change.
11. Catastrophe Thinking. People who engage in this error take the problem to the worst case scenario. It is also called Doomsday thinking where one lives with the possibility that something bad is going to happen all the time. This thought process escalates during times of fatigue and depression.
12. Egocentric Thinking. Taking things personally is a good way to create unhappiness. Thin-skinned people usually have a big pool of hurt inside. If your feelings get hurt more than others, get into therapy and find out why and what to do to toughen up.
13. Entitlement thinking. This way of thinking has one viewing the world with “my way is the only way.” If others do not agree with you, anger comes up. You have no empathy which is the ability to see things from the perspective of another person and feel compassion. The only person we can change is our self – to dwell on how others do not meet our needs keeps you in anger and depression.
14. Irrational Emotional Reasoning. Fear beliefs and accompanying emotions need to be checked out. Much fear is irrational having no basis in danger. Feelings are important but if we interpret all feelings as truth, then we are at the mercy of our fear and anger thoughts.
15. False Consensus Effect. They are in error when they assume that others think the same way that they do. Gullible people cannot understand how devious others can be, because they do not have that negative framework in their brain. Angry and manipulative people make up the worst about

others in their minds. They see others as bad while excusing the same traits as “normal” and overestimate the best of the worst in others.

16. Minimalizing One’s Own Contribution to the Problem. Some people belittle the problem and say it is not important or that it isn’t as bad as it is. They deny personal understanding and remorse regarding their actions.
17. Projection. A common defense mechanism where a person gets upset with a trait in someone else that he wishes to deny in himself/herself. They suppress the knowledge that they have the same trait and externalize blame on the other person.

ANGRY WORDS AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE

There is an old children's saying that goes "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never harm me." If only that was correct, but it's a fable that needs to be corrected. Words can and do hurt – a lot!!! In fact words can hurt more than sticks and stones. They devastate, wound and can even kill. Words ruin reputations and destroy relationships.

Judging, cruel, and hateful words are verbal abuse at its worst. They leave long lasting emotional cuts, bruises and scars on a person's soul. When someone hurts us, we play that tape over and over. No matter how many times we try to dismiss hurtful words, sometimes those words are with us forever.

What words were told to you as a child that you still remember today that were of a cruel nature? Discuss that now

Have you used some of those words on your own children?

Some people are so angry and bitter that they strike like a cobra at everyone. Their words are a reflection of their souls. The tongue only speaks what comes from the heart. Anger, bitterness, and resentment and lack of accountability for taking charge of their lives adds to the misery of themselves and others. There is NO excuse for rudeness or cruelty when speaking with others.

Discuss ways to stop being verbally and emotionally abusive. Here are some things to discuss:

1. Taking time to think before speaking
2. When feeling a discussion is escalating – take deep breaths to calm down
3. Listen to the tone in your voice when speaking
4. Watch for attitude when speaking

How do you feel when someone is talking negatively to you with tones of disgust, condemnation, anger, etc?

Visualization for stopping angry words and emotional abuse:

All you really need to do right now is take a few moments just to relax, for you, to help you feel relaxed and calm. It feels good to relax. After this short relaxation session is over, you can proceed with your day, and react in a way that you choose.... relaxing for a moment now will help you to react calmly, rather than acting out of emotion.

It's okay to be angry. Just allow yourself to feel however it is you are feeling right now, noticing this feeling, but not reacting just yet. All you're doing is observing. Emotions are neither right nor wrong... they just are.

Take a deep breath in. Hold for a moment, and now breathe out.

... hold that tension.... and now breathe out.... feeling the tension release with your breath.

Breathe in.... and out.....

in..... out.....

Keep breathing like this, slowly.... deeply.... and let your body relax a little.

Turn your attention again to how you are feeling. Notice the physical sensation of anger. Where in your the anger stored? Some people notice that they tighten their shoulders when they are feeling angry. Others who deal with anger notice clenched fists or tight jaws. Anger may be experienced as a feeling in the stomach.... the neck.... any one or a number of places in the body demonstrate physical symptoms of anger.

Many of these physical symptoms are uncomfortable. Some of these symptoms can be relieved right now, if you like, by relaxing your muscles. Let's relax a few areas to begin this process to deal with anger by relaxing your muscles.

Starting with your hands and arms, first tighten your hands into fists. Feel the tension in your hands and arms. Hold.... tighter.... tighter.... and relax. , allowing your hands and arms to be relaxed, loose, and limp. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

Now see if you can create a feeling of relaxation in your shoulders. Take a moment to relax your shoulders now. You may choose to tighten the muscles, and then

relax, or you can simply relax your shoulders without tensing them first. Do whatever seems to work the best.

Focus now on your face and jaws. Relax your face and jaws, tensing first if you want to. Let all the tension leave your face..... let the tension leave your jaws.... leaving your face and jaws limp, smooth, and relaxed.

Scan your body now, for remaining areas of tension. Relax each area that feels tense.... scan your body from head to toe.... relaxing each part of your body.

(pause)

Take note of how you are feeling now. Physically. Emotionally.

You are controlling anger right now, just by the fact that you have not yet reacted with angry behaviors. You have chosen to relax, to deal with anger in a healthy way.

To increase the control you have over anger, you may want to repeat some to help create realistic, rational thinking.... also called self-control thoughts.

Here are 5 affirmations for anger management to help deal with anger:

I acknowledge that I am feeling angry right now, and accept the way I feel.

I have the power to control my reactions and my words.

I can fully experience this anger, yet wait before I take action.

I can feel angry, but calm and in control at the same time.

It's okay to feel angry but I chose not to behave inappropriately.

Notice again how you are feeling. Physically, how are you feeling? Let your body relax a little more... relaxing any tense areas.

Emotionally, how are you feeling? See how emotions come and go.... anger can come and go.... it will not last forever. There is a limited time where you exercise self-control, before the anger is no longer an issue.

To deal with anger that may remain, you may need a way to express it appropriately.

You can let anger out by breathing deeply.... breathing in relaxation, and breathing out anger.... letting anger go with each breath.

There are other ways to express anger, too. You can do any of these activities after this script to allow yourself freedom to express the anger you experienced. , journaling, talking to someone you trust.... there are many ways to express yourself.

After the anger has decreased and you are feeling calm, you might want to address the situation that was upsetting by taking action to change the situation, or speaking to the person you were upset with. Or you may just choose to let the situation go.

Once your anger has decreased you can choose whatever option seems best. You have the right to feel a range of emotions, including anger, and to express these emotions in healthy ways that you choose.

I'll conclude with some breathing.

Take a deep breath in.... and out.....

in..... out.... relaxing with each breath

in..... out....

in..... out....

Keep breathing deeply to deal with anger and feel relaxed and calm.

Congratulate yourself for dealing with anger with relaxation.

I'll count now from 5 to 1. Imagine that right now, you are at a 5, and that when I reach 1 you will be feeling awake and , yet calm, peaceful, and relaxed.

5

4

3

2

1

Open your eyes and feel centered, relaxed, in control of negative words and feelings.

You can do this visualization any time you want and remember to **CHOSE** not to strike out with angry words which cause emotional abuse. Chose to think, choose and behave appropriately and with respect.

“ANGER ADDICTION”

Some individuals become addicted to anger just as individuals become addicted to love, drugs, alcohol and other things. Anger is a very powerful emotion, which releases chemicals into the brain and body, which overwhelm us with feelings of power, motivation, as well as give us a “tunnel vision” regarding the person with whom we are angry at. Each time we get angry and we combine that emotion with behaviors fueled by it, we create “pathways” in our brain that are repeated over and over again. Some people don’t want to feel fear, sadness, depression, or inadequate, so they replace those feelings with anger. Others have huge entitlement attitudes and feel justified in using anger to “fill a void” as well. No matter what fuels the fight response – anger is a powerful emotion that creates action, drama, power reactions, and adrenaline rushes. The more we use it – the more the addiction process takes over and we want more and more of it. I know some couples who must have anger in their relationship because it makes the relationship “excitingly dramatic” even with the negative responses and outcomes they experience.

Ask yourself the following:

1. Do you like how anger makes you feel?
2. Do you use anger to have power and control over someone else?
3. Does your anger keep you from listening to someone else’s opinions, Emotions or feelings?
4. Do you use anger to keep from looking at how you should live?
5. Do you use blaming and justifications to fuel your anger?
6. Do you reject others constructive criticism by becoming angry?
7. Can you say things when you are angry that you can’t when you aren’t angry?
8. Does anger keep you from changing because it hides your fears?
9. Do you use anger behaviors and attitudes so that you don’t have to be responsible for your actions?

10. Have you been in some dangerous situations because of anger or made some dangerous choices because of anger?
11. Do you use drugs/alcohol to self medicate?
12. Describe some negative or dangerous choices you have experienced due to alcohol/drugs and anger?
13. Do you enjoy the “drama and trauma” of anger? Describe:

We are responsible for all the choices we make in our behaviors. Attitudes of entitlement, justifications and blaming techniques keep us stuck in anger and dysfunctions. Be aware of the effects on your children and significant other when you don't take responsibility.

The losses one has due to lack of anger control can be financial, physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, not to mention the loss of relationships, children, and employment.

Communication, nonverbal communication, reducing stress, watching for rumination and other self talk, along with attitudes, behaviors, beliefs about self and anger will help you avoid bad choices and negative experiences.

ACCEPTANCE IS THE WAY TO HAPPINESS

All issues and disturbances, all conflicts can be handled by understanding what the problem is and accepting it, then changing it. As the saying goes, we are either part of the problem or part of the solution. When we are disturbed about something or someone, it is because we do not understand on a higher level but view it through our personality which is attached to our need to control things and see ourselves in a positive light.

If some facet of our life is unacceptable, and we have been up front in dealing with it to no avail, sometimes the only way through is to accept that this is so. We cannot find serenity when we are at war with someone or with ourselves. Unless we accept our situation and learn from it, we cannot be happy. If we learn from it, then we need not beat ourselves up.

Nor do we need to beat up others with blame words. We need only concentrate on our part of the situation; what needs to be changed in our way of thinking and having done so, happiness will follow.

More Ways to Release Anger, Avoid Depression and Remain Calm

We don't want to forget that making sure we stay in control of our anger and stress is to be more healthy. Getting a good night's sleep is paramount to handling our emotions. Avoiding caffeine, sugars and alcohol/drugs is also important as these can be accelerants to our negative emotions due to the chemicals in them that react to our body chemistry. Eating good food with a balance of vegetables, fruits, and nuts helps our body to maintain its strength and own balance which assists us in avoiding feelings of negativity and diseases.

TEN THINGS TO SAY TO HELP LET GO

1. I refuse to take this issue into my central nervous system
2. I turn this over to forces greater than myself
3. I am not giving this issue free rent in my brain anymore
4. I forgive myself for being angry and I let it go
5. Oh well.....whatever!

6. This too will pass
7. I choose to learn something from this experience
8. I surrender this to the greater good and to the universe
9. I accept the fact that I am in “process” working towards progress
10. I accept responsibility and will reframe to see it from another’s view point

Forgiveness means giving up all hope for a better past. It can never be imposed, willed, or insisted upon by self or another. Holding onto anger or a past hurt serves to block energy hidden in the body and holds us in the past. Those who have power and control issues like to hold onto anger because it “fills” them up and allows them to feel justified.

Another meaning of forgiveness is this: forgiveness is a benefactor act by one person towards another who does not deserve that benefactor act so that all bonds of power and control can be broken. This version of forgiveness is one that should be used when we want to keep someone in the position of being our tormentor and we won’t let go.

Forgiveness is not an easy thing for many people to do. There needs to be full understanding and acceptance of our anger at self and others to be able to move into the forgiveness portion of letting anger go.

A tool that can be used to help with forgiveness is the writing of a forgiveness letter. This can be mailed or kept; can be burned in a “ceremonial” ending of a hurt or pain. Below is an example of how to write this empowering, freeing and happiness producing letter:

HOW TO WRITE A FORGIVENESS LETTER

A forgiveness letter is a powerful tool in recovery. Here are some tips on how to write a forgiveness letter and a sample is provided as well.

A forgiveness letter is written when someone is ready to let go of the idea of having a better past. It releases power and control in one’s life that might be keeping them from moving forward in recovery from a trauma and/or negative experience.

Components:

Salutation

Purpose

Hopes and Dreams that are gone due to trauma

Resilience portion (thank you's for lessons learned)

Hope/healing/positive conclusion

Ending

Example:

Dear :

I am writing this letter to express some feelings I have regarding our relationship (or former relationship). I want to let you know that, as I write this, my purpose in sending it to you is for you to hear my story of lost dreams, hopes and desire's, and at the same time it is for my healing and moving forward as well.

When we first met, fell in love, and married, I had dreams of us growing old together. I had dreams of happiness in our lives but instead, anger became the center of everything. Your desire to have power and control over me has kept that from being a possibility. Your refusal to control your anger, abusiveness and addiction to _____, created a family dynamic that was hurtful and harmful to me. I will never have with you what I desired to have with you - and for that I was disappointed.

But I did have some times with you that I will always remember. First, when you and I did _____ it brought joy/happiness to me. The gift of our children is the

most wonderful gift and without your participation, I would not have this amazing gift.

When you hurt me physically, mentally, and emotionally, I was devastated and hurt. But I also learned from those experiences and received another gift. The gift of finding out what my strength is, what my courage is, and what I can do under trauma, stress, and odds that a lot of people would crumble under. I thank you for making it possible for me to get this gift even though that was not your intent when you tried to harm me. I am a VERY strong woman who has taken a journey to find her “self” and to love her “self”. I love me and would not have realized how much, without going through what I have been through.

My life’s journey so far has been interesting. I am resilient, loveable, a wonderful woman and mother who loves her children. I am a woman who can take on the challenge of something negative and overcome it with a positive ending.

Thank you for the lessons taught me directly and indirectly. I forgive you for the things you did to me. I didn’t like them, deserve them, nor want them – but I am better today for having worked my way through them. I want you to know that any influence you think you might have in my life – well – it just isn’t there and is gone along with my dreams regarding “us”.

I wish you happiness in your life. I am so blessed to have happiness and love in my life today and thank you for reading this letter.

Signature

Forgiveness is the ultimate key to true change and recovery. It can’t be forced, but by studying this humbling process of release, it comes, sometimes out of the blue, to take you to a place of higher consciousness. Forgiveness happens gradually for some as there is realization. Forgiveness is three fold: forgiveness of self, others and whatever you call your higher power, who forgives you. This process when applied daily brings overall acceptance and surrender of the injustices and betrayals that happened in your life to come to a place of calmness.

LAUGHTER - THE HILARIOUS WAY TO HEAL AND FIND HAPPINESS!

Don't you just love being around someone who laughs or who can make you laugh? Have you found yourself at work and co-workers are standing together, talking and laughing hysterically at something, and you want to walk over and ask them to include you in the conversation and laughter? Of course you have. It is natural for us to be attracted to laughter and those laughing. Our brains are pleasure seeking organs and laughter releases chemicals that cause pleasure so it seeks to find more laughter to receive the pleasure it desires.

Daily life **can** be made happier. It is a matter of choice. **It is our attitude that makes us feel happy or unhappy.** It is true, we meet all kinds of situations during the day, and some of them may not be conducive to happiness. We can choose to keep thinking about the unhappy events, and we can choose to refuse to think about them, and instead, relish the happy moments. All of us constantly go through various situations and circumstances, but we do not have to let them influence our reactions and feelings.

If we let outer events influence our moods, we become negative instead of positive. We are not in control of our health and mental health because we "blow in the wind" with moods and emotions. We lose our freedom. We let our happiness be determined by outer forces. However, we can free ourselves from outer influences. We can be in control and **CHOOSE** to be happy, and we can do a lot to add happiness to our lives.

What is happiness? It is a feeling of inner peace and satisfaction. It is usually experienced when there are no worries, fears or obsessing thoughts, and this usually happens, when we do something we love to do or when we get, win, gain or achieve something that we value. It seems to be the outcome of positive events, but it actually comes from the inside, triggered by outer events.

For most people, happiness seems fleeting and temporary, because they allow external circumstances to affect it. One of the best ways to keep it, is by gaining inner peace through daily meditation. As the mind becomes more peaceful, it becomes easier to choose the **happiness habit**.

Laughter has been found to have many positive side effects like reducing blood pressure, relieving stress, helping people breath better, increasing endorphins and more.

Here are some tips for increasing your happiness every day:

1. Endeavor to change the way you look at things. Be positive and try to find the things that seem or feel negative and reframe it to find the lessons needing to be learned or the humor that might be in it that emotions/feelings hide.
2. Listen to relaxing and uplifting music. Certain music brings anxiety, stress, and anger into our lives so be aware of what you are listening to.
3. Watch funny movies and/or comedies and laugh out loud.
4. Devote some time to reading a funny book or inspiring article.
5. Watch your thoughts. Rumination are those endless “voices/messages” we are having in our head all day long. 75% to 78% are negative so we need to change then to positive.
6. Be aware of your accomplishments and focus on the good job done and not on what you haven’t finished. You can add the unfinished to the next day and do it first and move on to what you want to accomplish that day. Don’t do more than what one can do in one day so not to overwhelm yourself and expect more than you can deliver.
7. Each day do something good for yourself. It may something small or something large – that is up to you. But your are important so enjoying a personal pleasure and smiling is healing. When you make someone happy, you become happy.
8. Always expect happiness.
9. Be happy for others success and happiness.
10. Associate and be with other happy people – happiness is contagious.
11. Laugh and smile every day as a habit.

Laughter is strong medicine for mind and body

“Your sense of humor is one of the most powerful tools you have to make certain that your daily mood and emotional state support good health.”

Laughter is a powerful antidote to stress, pain, and conflict. Nothing works faster or more dependably to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good

laugh. Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert.

With so much power to heal and renew, the ability to laugh easily and frequently is a tremendous resource for surmounting problems, enhancing your relationships, and supporting both physical and emotional health.

LAUGHTER QUIZ

This quiz will show you how willing and able you are to laugh at life and its follies.

1. During the day I laugh out loud, snicker or giggle:
 - a. Once or not at all
 - b. Two or three times
 - c. At least once an hour
 - d. Constantly, I'm on medication
2. When I am alone and read, see, hear or think something funny, I"
 - a. Smile to myself
 - b. Laugh out loud but look to see if anyone saw or heard me
 - c. Laugh out loud and find someone to share the funny thing with
 - d. Take a cold shower
3. In the past year I can remember:
 - a. At least one time I spent laughing an entire minute
 - b. At least two to five times I spent at least a whole minute laughing
 - c. More than five minutes I spent laughing a whole minute
 - d. I can't remember – what was the question?
4. When I'm around other people they laugh and joke:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. I never hang around people, they might laugh at me.

5. When faced with a daily crisis, I respond with a laugh:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Only if it keeps me from crying
6. I do things intentionally to make myself laugh:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. That might hurt!
7. The people I spend most of my time with:
 - a. Leave me feeling drained and depressed
 - b. Don't really affect my attitude
 - c. Make me laugh a lot
 - d. Usually steal my lunch money
8. I can name:
 - a. One thing that almost always makes me laugh
 - b. Two things that almost always makes me laugh
 - c. At least three things that almost make me laugh
 - d. My closest relatives
9. I laugh at myself:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Only when I am not in the room
10. I do silly things on purpose (wear strange buttons, make funny noises, wear funny type of clothing, etc.):
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. No one ever notices me

11. When I hear people laughing at work, I think:
- a. I wish I could get paid to goof off
 - b. They are laughing at me
 - c. I wish I knew what the joke is
 - d. It is Saturday and I shouldn't even be here

Give yourself the following points:

A = 0 B = 1 C = 2 D = 3

Add up your points. If you have less than 5 points, you have humor malnutrition and someone probably told you to "grow up and get serious." You will need to convince yourself that humor is an acceptable emotion.

If your score is from 6-15, you occasionally have a good laugh but your life lacks humor regularly. You need to use a humor laxative and exercise regularly to find humor in stressful things.

If your score is 16-20, you are humorously fit! You approach life with the right amount of humor and benefit from it. You have the opportunity to become a friend and role model for people around you who need the healing power of humor but don't seem to use it in their lives.

If your score is 21-33, you are dangerously silly, aren't you? Don't stifle those childlike instincts. You are probably the former class clown. You can make money from your talent!!!!

Laughter can be beneficial to us because it heals and connects. It offers a universal form of communication that takes away barriers of language, age, race, and creed. When people laugh together, they feel closer.

Laughter can also be used to hurt. Jokes and teasing have power to injure others based on ridicule and tickling can be hurtful if the person tickling has overpowering control issues. Some find everything funny as long as it is happening to somebody else.

Some think they can't laugh and bond through laughter because they weren't born with a "funny bone" or "sense of humor." We are here to tell you that we are not born with a sense of humor but we are born laughers. Laughter changes

attitudes and perspectives – and from that we develop our sense of humor. It allows us to play with situations that are stressful instead of allowing the stress to play with and on us.

So let me ask those of you here today – how many of you would rather be somewhere else? (pick out some of them and ask where they would rather be and listen to the laughter. Then let them know that they are laughing at their common plight and with each other and not at each other). Now have them chant, “What on earth am I doing here?” (now they should be ready to talk about what is actually on their minds. Tell them it is difficult to witness human degradation without becoming hardened, to be mistrusted and caught between policy and intuition and reactions. Get them to focus back on the pleasures and benefits of their work).

There is a saying “you can’t hold a man down without staying down with him” (Booker T. Washington). So let’s not do that and begin getting up off the floor and “lift ourselves up” by investing in our humor.

Did you know that scientists are studying pigmies because it has been observed that all pygmies fall down on the ground when they laugh? Did you know that the Plains Cree Indian leans on something when he/she laughs? Do you know that the statement “I laughed so hard I pee’d my pants” is an outcome from those of us who let all inhibitions go when we laugh? We lose muscle control.

On March 27, 2011, I was watching the news on ABC television. The headline teaser said that laughter was the best medicine for keeping a serious illness at bay. So of course I had to wait for the commercials to end so that I could hear the story. Here is what they said:

Laughter and music lowers blood pressure. One hour of laughter lowers blood pressure and stress according to three study groups. So find someone to laugh with and lower the blood pressure and increase your life span.!!

LAUGHTER EXERCISES

"Oh, no, you DIDN'T!"

This is also known as argumentative laughter. Sounds an awful lot like an oxymoron, doesn't it? It's not as hard as it sounds, and in a stressful workplace, it's a gem.

Face each other in lines or in a circle. Shake your finger as if the other person did something wrong and laugh with a smile at the same time. You can lean forward, wiggle your hips and shake your head at the same time. This feels GOOD when there's a stressful workplace or a stressful boss. Management will see the morale of the workers rise with the "laugh breaks." Perhaps they'll join in.

Lion King

This promotes blood flow to the thyroid gland, exercises the face and neck muscles and definitely inspires more laughter.

Stand with your feet shoulder width apart. Raise your hands like paws. Open your mouth as wide as you can, stick your tongue out as far as it will go and open your eyes as wide as you can. Now laugh as hard as you can. Walk around laughing like this and move your body like lion. Do this for about a minute, then let your face relax. Get the kids to join in and enjoy yourself even more!

Lottery Winner

Imagine you just won the 20 Million Dollar Lottery! Only ONE set of numbers hit, and they were YOURS! Laugh, howl, jump up and down, wave your arms, hug each other and celebrate. Try to keep it up for a minute each day, then two minutes the following week. This is truly energizing.

Choo Choo

It sounds cute, and it's fun. Using the sounds of the vowels, start out with ha-ha-ha-ha, while taking a step and holding your arms at a 45 degree angle, imaging

you're a train. Hee-hee-hee-hee a little faster. Go through all the vowels and travel like a train, finally cracking up laughing at the end. Get the entire group to go in a circle or travel around the work building. People will join in just because it's fun.

If people come up to see "what's so funny," laugh again. It's funny to see people confused when all you're doing is laughing, and they expect to hear a rational explanation for the guffaws and giggles. Get them to join the group. Laughter is infectious and doesn't need a vaccine.

1. Find out what's funny. Something's funny when you snort milk out of your nose—but what makes you laugh? Absurd humor replaces the familiar with the unexpected. Wile E. Coyote chases Road Runner after being smashed by a piano. Superior humor—like lawyer jokes—rearrange life's hierarchies. In dark humor, you laugh at what scares you.

2. Laughter without a joke. Laughter may also be about relationships, says Robert Provine, professor at the University of Maryland. In fact, you may be "tuned" for laughter from family and culture. It helps you cope with life—or a rude in-law—by relieving mental and physical tensions.

3. Immerse yourself in humor. Check out comedy books, movies, and tapes at the library or stores.

4. Trigger laughter. Our mirror neurons trigger humor by hearing others laugh. Just like yawning, but more fun. *Ha*. Start smiling when you listen to laugh sounds from the Bachorowski Lab. *Ha ha*. Or buy a laughter CD—60 minutes of chuckles. *Ha Ha Ha*. great background noise for a party.

5. Read the comics in your newspaper or online. From the traditional to the old—Baby Blues, Betty, or Bizarro, they're a daily dose of humor.

6. Try laughter meditation, consisting of stretching, laughing, and silence. It can transform your energy and mood.

7. Join a laughter club or a laughter yoga class. Participants playfully imitate breathing and sounds of laughter, until simulated laughter turns into the real

thing. They receive healing, company, humor, and the physical sensation of deep laughter.

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

Motivational Interviewing began by two collaborators, William R. Miller and Stephen Rollnick. It is a person centered, directive counseling method for addressing ambivalence about behavior change and for addressing common problems. It is designed to strengthen a person's motivation for and commitment to a specific goal by exploring the person's own reasons for change within the atmosphere of compassion and acceptance. This type of directive counseling has been around for a long time but not given the name "Motivational Interviewing" and under different counseling modalities and was usually called "Client Centered Counseling."

Motivational Interviewing evolved from experiences in counseling with problem drinkers but is used in many different of concern with healthcare concerns. It recognizes the fact that the client's approach their need for change at different levels and accepts that they need to be a part of the decision to change – in fact without that partnership in counseling – probably will have no desire to change; they may have never even thought about changing the behavior in question.

So MI is collaboration rather than a confrontation, evocation rather than education, autonomy rather than authority, and exploration rather than explanation. Effective processes for positive change focus on goals that are small, important to the client, specific, realistic, and oriented in the present and/or future.

SPRIT OF MOTIVATION INTERVIEWING

While there are variations in technique as there are clinical encounters, the spirit of the method, however, is more enduring and can be characterized in a few key points:

1. Motivation to change is elicited from the client, and is not imposed from outside forces
2. It is the client's task, not the counselor's, to articulate and resolve his/her ambivalence
3. Direct persuasion is not an effective method for resolving ambivalence
4. Counseling style usually quiet and elicits information from client

5. It is client centered and focused
6. The counselor is directive, in that they help client to examine and resolve ambivalence
7. Readiness to change is not a trait of the client, but fluctuates
8. The relationship is a “partnership” and “supportive” interaction between counselor and client
9. Style of counseling is non-judgmental, non-confrontational, and non-adversarial

The MI approach attempts to increase the client’s awareness of the potential problems caused, consequences experienced, and risks faced as a result of the behavior in question. Counselor’s help clients envision a better future and become motivational partners to help them achieve that better future. MI approach is to help a client think differently about their behavior and ultimately to consider what might be gained through change. It is critical toward change when they have not expressed a desire to do so.

FOUR PRINCIPLES OF MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

MI has four key principles or aspects:

1. Express empathy: empathy involves seeing the world through the client’s eyes, thinking about things as the client thinks about them, feeling things as the client feels them, and sharing in the client’s experiences. Expression of empathy is critical to the MI approach. When clients feel that they are understood, they are more able to open up to their own experiences and share those experiences with others. In short, the counselor’s accurate understanding of the client’s experience facilitates change.
2. Develop discrepancy: this guides counselors to help clients appreciate the value of change by exploring the discrepancy between how client wants their lives to be versus how they currently are. Counselors work closely between their deeply held values and their day-to-day behavior. Counselors work to develop this situation through helping clients examine the discrepancies between their current behavior and future goals.
3. Roll with resistance/reflect discord: an evolving concept in MI has to do with resistance. It talks about “rolling with resistance” and reframing it in terms of discord. From this new perspective, discord is a disturbance in the

relationship and is the responsibility of the counselor to address, frequently by the use of reflection. Discord often occurs when a client feels pushed in some way and often stems from the “righting reflex” on the part of the counselor. The righting reflex is the natural inclination most people have to want to make things better, which often is characterized by an assumption that we know what is right for the client and have the answers. Discord occurs when the client is lectured to, given unsolicited advice, asked to move toward change before indicating readiness/willingness, shamed and blamed, etc.

4. Support self-efficacy: this guides counselors to explicitly embrace client autonomy (even when clients choose to not change) and help clients move toward change successfully with confidence. As clients are held responsible for choosing and carrying out actions to change in the MI approach, counselors focus their efforts on helping the client stay motivated, and supporting clients’ sense of self-efficacy is one way to do that.

LISTENING FOR CHANGE TALK

Change talk is defined as statements by the client revealing consideration of, motivation for, or commitment to change. MI counselor's listen for these expressions of importance, confidence, and readiness/commitment and seeks to guide the client to elaborate on these expressions of change talk as the pathway to change. Research shows that the more someone talks about change, the more likely they are to change. Different types of change talk can be described by the use of mnemonic DARN-CATS:

Desire (I want change)

Ability (I can change)

Reason (It's important to change)

Need (I should change)

Commitment (I will make changes)

Activation (I am ready, prepared, willing to change)

Taking Steps (I am taking specific actions to change)

MI INTERVIEWING SKILLS AND STRATEGIES

The practice of counseling requires skillful use of certain techniques. In MI, it is the same for bringing to life the “MI Spirit” demonstrating the MI principles and guiding a client for change and commitment.

OARS

OARS is a brief way to remember the basic approach used in MI. These are the core strategies used to move the process forward by establishing an “alliance” in the counseling setting and eliciting discussion about change:

Open ended questions

Affirmations

Reflections

Summaries

Open-ended questions are those that are not easily answered with a “yes” or “no” response. They invite elaboration and thinking more deeply about an issue. Open ended questions create forward momentum used to help the client explore reasons for something and possibility for change.

Affirmations are statements that recognize client strengths. They help train the brain to do what is needed plus encourages clients to see themselves in a more positive light. To be effective, they must be congruent and genuine and done a minimum of 50 times a day to have the optimum outcomes in 27 days to 3 months. Affirmations can help a client feel that change is possible – they just need to get their brain on board.

Reflections or reflective listening is perhaps the most crucial skill in MI. It has two primary purposes: to bring to life the principle of “expressing empathy.” When the counselor utilizes careful listening and reflective responses, the client comes to feel that the counselor understands the issues from their perspective. Reflective listening is also a core intervention toward guiding the client toward change, supporting their goal. The counselor guides the client towards resolving

ambivalence by a focus on the negative aspects of the status quo and the positives of making change.

Summaries are a special type of reflection where the counselor recaps all or part of a counseling session and or topic. Summaries communicate interest and understanding, and call attention to important elements of the discussion. Summaries can also highlight both sides of a client's ambivalence about change and promote the development of discrepancy by strategically selecting what information should be included and what can be excluded or minimized.

Here are some definitions for MI "talk":

1. The righting reflex: the natural inclination in helping professionals to want to make a situation better for another person which leads them to tell their clients what to do.
2. Spirit of MI: working in partnership with a client as opposed to being the expert who tells people what to do.
3. Challenge of Change: change is not your personal experience but the clients. How does he/she feel about change and what has helped them in the past when they changed something. What are some of the obstacles and some of the benefits to change.
4. Importance: in making a change how important is it to the client. If you were in his/her shoes, do you think you would guide him/her in the exploration of their own perspective?
5. Confidence: focusing on confidence as the second area of attention, after clients have decided that making a change is important to them. Have confidence building skills, words, and exercises to clients to use.
6. Commitment: (Are you, will you and when) ask the client if they are committed to change. If the answer is yes, then ask them "will you change?" and if they say yes then respond with "when will you change? Can they begin the change process today? If they say yes, then follow up with each day you need to make the commitment to whatever the change is so it doesn't feel so overwhelming to the client.
7. Values: a client's personal values need to be considered when asking them to make a change. How do the client's values effect what is needed and keep your values out of their process of change.
8. The language of change: sustain and change talk: listening for change talk and responding to it makes sense and reinforcing a client's change talk is

- important. Listen for it, respond to it and watch for expressions of “desire” for the change.
9. Subtle and strategic: the right of each person to make their own decision, while also teaching and guiding clients in the direction of change.
 10. DARN CATS: the ingredients for change: desire, ability, reasons, need, commitment, activation, and taking steps.
 11. Engaging: emphasizing the relationship between client and counselor and letting the client know you are really interested in them and their success.
 12. Focusing: establishing goals and an agenda/agreement for discussion to keep the client focused on their desire for healthier lives.
 13. Asking permission: the emphasis of asking permission to provide information to a client before simply offering it.
 14. Evoking before planning; fully engaging clients in conversations about importance, confidence, and commitment before guiding them into the planning phase.
 15. Autonomy: helps the client to make a decision that is right for him/her.
 16. Discord: similar to resistance but where the client is seeking understanding. Use reflection and empathy and keep the relationship as a partnership. If discord happens between you and the client it is the counselor’s responsibility to return to the partnership.
 17. OARS: open question, affirmations, reflections and summaries.
 18. Ruler exercise: measuring importance, confidence, and commitment when working with a client.
 19. Reflection: simple reflections, complex reflections, double-sided reflections and summaries.
 20. Ratio: we strive for more reflections than questions by a two to one ratio. Stay tuned in to your client so you can reflect on what they have said and ask open ended questions.
 21. Complex reflections: imagining what other people might be experiencing as you assist them and coming up with ways/ideas to provide them for the process of change.
 22. Exercises: techniques in which to challenge the client and to practice.
 23. The model: Motivational Interviewing and the approach and aspects of it.
 24. Personal reactions to counselors: being mindful of a client’s reactions to you and the alliance you want to build with them. Are you effective or are you not effective: knowing when to refer before it is too late.

USING 12 STEP PROGRAMS INAPPROPRIATELY

Some of the participants may be going to 12 step programs but not following the principles as the organization meant them to be. Participants may be using those 12 step meetings to meet and pick up women they see as vulnerable. These types of group members can be dangerous and have huge entitlement in their thinking of “I get credit for not drinking and rewards” and so their distorted thoughts keep them from working both the 12 step program and the anger management program. They may distort the 12 step philosophy, such as telling other participants how to live or overusing “lingo” or phrases instead of honestly responding to group. They sometimes tell their partners that the 12 step program told them to stay sober by any means possible, which includes abusive and controlling behaviors that help them maintain sobriety. They will use the program rather than “work” on their own personal program of responsibility taking, no blaming, minimizing, justifications, etc. Facilitators must watch, listen, and hold them accountable should they be doing this inappropriate behavior. Also be aware that 12 step programs don’t work for everyone and detox or inpatient programs may be a better choice for an individual.

TERMINATION

Participants are terminated when they refuse to admit to any anger, when they are abusive to the facilitator or co-facilitator, when they stop attending, when they don’t follow the group rules, when they miss and don’t call in or break any other expectation for proper behavior and attitudes in group. If they just show up for group, don’t contribute each week, lack responsibility taking, don’t work on goals, etc., then termination is expected and acted upon by the facilitator. The expectation of the anger management program can be compared to a job where completion of work is not merely a condition, but also requires active participation, completion of tasks and learning along with sharing with co-workers.

MOTIVATION

The facilitator has an opportunity to keep the group participants motivated every group session through different modalities. Our philosophy is that a facilitator ends each group session of 2 hours, at least 5 to 15 minutes early. That time is taken solely by the facilitator to verbally encourage the group, motivate the group and thank the group for the hard work they are putting into creating better lives for themselves. No matter what the topic is, the group members should leave the group in a positive mind set with motivation and positive affirmations ringing in their ears and resonating in their minds. This creates a “safety” factor for the facilitator when leaving and for any victims the participants are returning home to. Remember we are to have safety of victims as our priority and this method helps to keep them safer when the abuser has been working on difficult issues in group. NEVER let a group participant leave angry, out of control emotionally or any other way, and it is the facilitator's job to de-escalate and motivate before the participant ends that weekly group session.

Here are some ways to help motivate:

10 Action Steps to Motivate for Success in Life

1. Positive Affirmations for Success

Our subconscious mind is a wonderful tool for success or failure. It will do what we tell it to do. It all depends on what thoughts we feed it. So why not feed your inner mind with only positive thoughts. The following are some examples of positive affirmations you can feed your inner mind for success:

§ *“Today, I will stop ruminating because my thoughts are positive.”*

§ *“I see failure only as a signpost on my road to success.”*

§ *“When I feel stress, I will relax and release my stress before I take on my next task.”*

§ *“I always write down my priorities, thinking of my success. I will do the most productive thing possible at every given moment.”*

§ *“I am a winner at behavior and attitude change.”*

§ *“Today, I will see opportunity for positive change in every challenge offered to me.”*

2. Positive Language for Success

Recent research has come out that 75% of daily conversation is negative. Whether it is the words we use or the body language, we need to communicate in a positive manner all the time.

The following are some examples of how you can turn negative words into positive communication:

§ Instead of saying “problem,” call it “opportunity.”

§ Instead of an action being a “failure,” describe it as a “learning experience.”

§ Instead of “I have to,” say “I choose to.” This gives control for your actions back to you.

§ Instead of saying, “There’s nothing I can do,” say, “Let’s look at our alternatives.”

§ Instead of saying, “That’s just the way I am,” say, “I choose a different approach.”

§ Instead of saying, “He makes me so mad,” say, “I control my own feelings.”

If you notice, by using the positive response, **you** have control over your actions and life.

3. Exercise for Success

A Gallup survey found the following among men and women who have taken up exercise recently:

§ 66 percent report a more relaxed life

§ 62 percent a new surge of energy

§ 55 percent less stress

§ 51 percent better looks

§ 46 percent more confidence

§ 45 percent better love life

§ 44 percent greater job satisfaction

§ 37 percent more creative on their jobs

These are great motivators to exercise! Next time you feel demotivated, give your body a workout. Recent research reports that as little as fifteen minutes three times a week has profound effects. Get moving. Get motivated.

4. Take Risks for Success

We all live our lives in comfort zones, avoiding risky situations, avoiding the potential to fail. It's real safe for us. But in order to get ahead of your competition and master the ongoing change in your life, you must go out of your comfort zone. Start one step at a time. Try that little new thing, that different approach. It could be as simple as taking different routes to and from work. Once in a while I like to "take the road less traveled" to stir up my creative juices. Then, keep stepping out of your zone. It may seem uncomfortable at first. But the more you do it, the more it will seem natural and you will see an increase in your creative juices and opportunities you never thought about before.

5. Positive Reading for Success

Read about the lives of successful people. Make sure you read only those people that embrace the timeless values that make them truly successful through the ages. Not the "success today, scandal tomorrow" success stories that we are experiencing today. People like Herb Kelleher of Southwest Airlines, Fred Smith of Federal Express, Mary Kay Ash of Mary Kay, Benjamin Franklin, Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. are good examples. These are people who overcame enormous challenges, created real value for others, or changed other people's lives for the better.

6. Positive Visualizations for Success

Condition yourself to paint your vision for success. One of the best ways to do this is the following:

- § Go to a quiet place in your home or elsewhere. Turn off all radios, televisions, etc.
- § Find a comfortable chair and get into a relaxed state of mind.
- § Start thinking about one goal you want to accomplish. Remember, visualize as if you are already accomplishing this goal.

§ Visualize taking all the necessary steps to successfully complete these goals. The better your visualization, where you can actually see, feel, hear, and touch your vision, the more real it is to you.

§ Visualize any challenges to your successful completion of this goal and how you will eliminate this challenges.

§ Visualize how good it feels to complete this goal. Visualize what benefits it will bring to you, your family, friends, co-workers, etc. Enjoy the moment!

Important: If you don't take time to see it, it won't happen!

7. Think Big for Success

See the big picture in everything we do. So much of our time is wasted dealing with the unimportant things in our lives (what that person said or did, the driver who cut us off this morning, and activities which don't add value to our lives, etc.) that we forget about the big picture. We were put on this earth to make a difference. We make a difference for our families, our communities, our organizations, and for ourselves. All of our actions must be put into action with this concept in mind. Think a little bigger today than yesterday, and you'll create a better future tomorrow. Thinking big leads to great actions. Thinking small leads to small results. **So Think BIG!**

8. Set Goals for Success

The fastest way to fail in life is to not set clear goals. Set goals in the financial, family, health, spiritual, and career areas. Your goals must incorporate the SMART techniques or else it's just a "conversation in the park."

§ **S for specific**

§ **M for measurable**

§ **A for attainable**

§ **R for realistic**

§ **T for time-based**

For example, you might have a goal of achieving \$2 million for retirement in twenty years. After doing your research, a SMART goal would be the following:

"I will acquire \$2 million dollars for retirement by 2024. I will do this by contributing \$20K, or \$1667 per month, to my various retirement funds

each year. Of the \$20k each year, \$2k will go to my IRA, and \$18K will go into my organization's retirement program."

Remember the most detail you can add, the more realistic your goal becomes.

9. Positive Appearance for Success

Super achievers are very careful about their appearance and their movements. They know that looking good translates into feeling good. Billy Crystal, of *Saturday Night Live* and movie fame, once played a character that was known for saying, "It is better to look good than to feel good." What he was really implying was the "fake it until you make it" concept. In other words, if we are feeling down, then think positively and your mind will tell your body to follow suit and act positively. Also always dress the part of an achiever. Model the dress, actions, and behaviors of someone who is successful and embraces the long term values of successful people. This will also tell your mind that I am an achiever.

Don't let that be the deciding factor on being motivated. You can easily distinguish those who are motivated from those who are not motivated just by looking at their appearance and their movements. The motivated move forward, onward and upward with confidence.

10. Helping Others for Success

Develop an obsession to help others. Share your special talents without expecting a reward, payment, or commendation. And above all else, keep your good deed a secret.

Another way a facilitator can help keep motivation going with group participants is to "reward" them for positive change that is genuine positive change. Giving them stickers, candy lollipops, or other "tokens" of one kind or another, each time they share a positive change in behavior, attitude, time out taking, etc. The reward system is a positive, outward, affirmation to them that their hard work is not going unnoticed and encourage them at the same time to keep working on the changes they need.

HAVING FUN IS MOTIVATING!

One of the important things we want to include in our motivating the group members section is this: creating fun, trust, teamwork, and less stress in the life changes of the members. One of the most effective tools to accomplish all of that is to add humor to the process. If you can remember some of the times in your past when humor helped you through difficulties, made you feel closer to someone, helped you bond faster to someone, made a class more interesting in school, etc. then you know the importance of humor.

It has been one of the author's most important tools in unifying group participants, creating trust faster between participants and facilitator, "lightening" the atmosphere when the topics are stressful and anger triggers go off, as well as helping to "reframe" some negative experiences into positive, fun perspectives. We all like to laugh – it makes us feel better so we encourage you to enjoy motivating others and to think of some ways to bring fun into the group process.

Here are some ways that you might find helpful that have worked for others:

I've found there are five excellent ways for leaders to build trust into their teams, and five quick ways to lose it. First let's consider how to **create** it.

1. *Establish and maintain integrity.* It is the foundation of trust in any group. Integrity must begin at the top and then move down. This means, among other things, keeping promises and always telling the truth, no matter how difficult it might be. It means being authentic in who you are so you must know your self – strengths and weaknesses. If facilitator's have integrity, they can be believed.
2. *Communicate vision and values.* Communication is important, since it provides the artery for information and truth. By communicating the group's goals, expectations and vision for change, one defines where the group is going. By communicating its values, the methods for getting there are established.
3. *Consider all participants as equal partners.* Trust is established when even the newest rookie participant feels important and part of the team. This

begins with the facilitator not being aloof, but warm, friendly, setting the tone for inclusiveness and participation from everyone. This should be followed by the facilitator seeking opinions and ideas (and giving credit for them) for ways to change and handle anger, and treating one and all with genuine respect.

4. *Focus on shared and personal goals.* When group participants feel everyone is pulling together to accomplish a shared vision, trust results. This is the essence of teamwork. When a team really works, the players trust one another. They can focus on personal goals in a safe environment that are shared, showing trust of each other, the process, and commonalities which empowers them as a group to support each other through the process.
5. *Do what's right.* We all know intuitively what's "right" in nearly every situation. Following this instinctive sense, and giving consequences will nearly always create respect from those around us. From this respect will come trust.

All right, that's the positive. But what about the negative - the five fastest ways to **lose** trust from our group participants.

1. *Act and speak inconsistently.* Nothing confuses people faster than inconsistency. And if confusion due to contradiction is the only constant, trust is sure to fall victim.
2. *Seek personal rather than shared gain.* Facilitators who is out only for him or herself (have your own power and control issues), especially in a team environment, quickly loses the respect and trust of others.
3. *Withhold information.* When the facilitators own communication to the participants shut down – due to “personal triggers going off,” or “personality issues,” or transference/counter transference, etc. - rumors start by participants and misinformation is believed to be real. Then come denials and trust falls apart.
4. *Lie or tell half-truths.* Facilitators model truth. Untruthfulness is a quick way to break a bond of trust. People may accept it once, even twice, but as the old saying goes, "twice burned..."

Be closed-minded. An unwillingness to consider other ideas and points of view, and/or to create an atmosphere of, "it's going to be my way or the highway...", will certainly cut-off communication and eventually shatter trust. Sometimes facilitators need to take control of a particularly negative member of the group and do the "my way or the highway" speech. However, all other methods of correcting someone's negative behaviors and attitudes must be explored and this "my way" method is used a last resort. Facilitators must be creative in our methods and stay open minded to learning as well.

When we look at the truly successful groups, we find their facilitator's fostered these five principles of creating trust. Consider the great military leaders of history (Augustus Caesar, Oliver Cromwell and George Washington), as well as the genuinely beloved political leaders (yes, there actually have been some: Joan of Arc, Peter the Great and Gandhi). And then there are the highly respected industrial leaders (Henry Ford, Lee Iacocca and Jack Welch). All of these great leaders built trust among their superiors, peers and subordinates, and it was this that spurred success and greatness for themselves, their units, alliances and companies. We want successful group members who stop their abuse of family members and become "great" in healthier, happier, relationships.

ANGER MANAGEMENT WORKBOOK

CURRICULUM

WITH WEEKLY CLASS MATERIAL

The Anger Management Repeating Activity Curriculum

All group exercises have a purpose: to identify types of anger, angry behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs, see how they affect family members, and to address changes needed and build positive attitudes, behaviors and beliefs for lasting change. This (Change) is a PROCESS – not an event. Responsibility taking, getting rid of entitlement and attitudes of “how dare they” is a challenge for facilitators. But with patience, perseverance, passion and consequences for angry behaviors – change will take place.

This is an evidence based curriculum that has been shown to improve a client’s ability to manage their anger, be aware of their triggers, realize the impact of their anger on others and family.

Remember that Awareness plus Action = Change!!!

Motivate
Empower
Support
Sustain

Anger Management Repeating Activity Curriculum for a 52 Week Program

All group exercises have a purpose: to identify anger styles, angry behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs, see how those effects family and others, and to address changes needed and build positive attitudes, behaviors and beliefs for lasting change. Change is a PROCESS – not an event. Responsibility taking, getting rid of entitlement and attitudes of “I am right and everyone needs to think like me” will be a challenge for facilitators. But with patience, perseverance, passion and consequences for anger behaviors – change will take place. Awareness + Action = Change!!!

Group Activity 1. What is Definition of Anger and why we have anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of their anger power and control techniques and behavior
2. Provide consistent definition of anger behavior
3. Educate on physical, psychological, emotional abuse & how power and control is used with anger
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their own acts of abuse due to anger
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their own anger power and control behavior and to change it

Group Activity 2. Time Outs and When to Use Them

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify anger pressure building signs and then help participant deal with difficult conflicts before they become an event
2. Describe what a “time out” is and how to use it
3. Educate on constructiveness of time out
4. Motivate participant to follow rules of time out
5. Educate them on when to use it and how to use it appropriately

Group Activity 3. Cycle of Anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify different stages of cycle
2. Describe how victim feels vs. what anger perpetrator is experiencing
3. Educate them on intervention happens in the first “stage” or “phase” of the cycle

Group Activity 4. Grooming

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what grooming is
2. Describe how it is used during the “honeymoon” phase/stage after anger event
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their grooming techniques
4. Increase awareness on grooming techniques and replace them with better techniques for equality, mutuality, and relationship building

Activity 5. Rumination

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To make participants aware of this going on in their heads
2. Broaden participants understanding of how this contributes to an “anger event”
3. Identify ways to stop this through Alpha State, Relaxation Techniques, Yoga, Meditation, Journaling, S.T.A.R method, etc.
4. Identify negative self-talk and ways to stop it and practice positive self-talk

Activity 6. Responsibility and Accountability

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To make participants aware of lack of responsibility in behaviors and abusiveness
2. Broaden participants understanding of their poor parenting skills
3. Identify ways they don’t take responsibility and then identify ways to take responsibility

4. To give a definition of accountability
5. Increase abuser's accountability and responsibility for past, present and future behaviors
6. Address ongoing efforts in accountability and responsibility and create a "accountability plan"

Accountability Plan Sample:

*Detail what my anger abuse has been (describe all major events of abuse and types)

*Accept her/him not being with me because I am angry; not blaming her/him

*Speak respectfully of her/him to my children and family/friends

*Explain to everyone that I am responsible for what has happened

Pay for the damage I have done to partner and children (property, emotional, crazy making techniques, lies, manipulation, grooming, etc.)

Letting my family know that I was angry and that it is my fault we are having problems

Explaining to my children why I'm really out of the house (if applicable)

Completing the 52 Week Program and implementing what I learned

Staying away from house, workplace, etc. if I have a restraining order

Leaving the scene if we are both at the same place at the same time whether I have a restraining order or not. She/he may not want to see me so I take responsibility to leave

Trying to find friends who support my responsibility taking for my anger

Activity 7. Characteristics of an Angry Person and Entitlement

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Educate participants on attitudes, behaviors and beliefs of angry individuals
2. Encourage anger abusers to look at using entitlement to abuse and/or control
3. Identify participants characteristics and contributions to anger and violence
4. Help participants see that the belief of entitlement leads to abuse and objectification

5. Create awareness on positive expectations in relationships vs. negative expectations and entitlements and to critically examine each

Group Activity 8. Justifying, Blaming and Minimization

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Create awareness of how participant uses justification, blaming and minimizing to keep from taking responsibility.
2. Call them and hold them responsible every time you hear them doing this
3. Address ways to change so these three things don't keep them stuck in anger abusive behaviors

Group Activity 9. Possessiveness

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what Possessiveness is
2. Describe how it is used and why it part of anger mentality
3. Educate and expect responsibility taking on their learned attitude on possessiveness
4. Increase awareness on techniques and replace them with better techniques for equality, mutuality, and relationship building

Group Activity 10. Verbal and Emotional Abuse

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify why verbal abuse is so damaging to its victims (name calling, criticism, accusations, and threats)
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it leads to other abuse's (physical, emotional, psychological, etc.)
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their use of negative/abusive words
4. Increase awareness on verbal abuse and replace abuse words with appropriate communication. Help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of relating to their partners

Group Activity 11. Psychological Abuse

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what psychological abuse is how anger contributes to it
2. Describe how it is used as part of negative attitude, behaviors and beliefs
3. Educate and give techniques on how to stop their use of psychological abuse by using anger management techniques
4. Increase awareness on their anger abuse techniques and replace them with better techniques for equality, mutuality, and relationship building
5. Recognize connections between verbal and physical violence and psychological abuse

Group Activity 12. Jealousy

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify the differences between love and jealousy
2. Describe how it is used during the “honeymoon” phase/stage
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their “attitudes” causing jealousy
4. Increase awareness on negative use of jealousy and replace with better techniques for equality, mutuality, and relationship building
5. Identify damaging and undermining effects of this

Group Activity 13. What Counts as Violence and Intimidation

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what counts as anger violence and intimidation
2. Describe how it is used in abusive relationships
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their intimidation techniques and how violence is accepted in our society but has consequences despite society
4. Increase awareness of how often they use this and replace with better techniques for equality, mutuality, and relationship building
5. Identify damaging and undermining effects of this form of abuse
6. To give everyone in the group a common understanding of what constitutes anger violence and intimidation

Group Activity 14. Culture and Anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify how culture connects to learned anger abusiveness
2. Describe how social culture and family culture contribute to anger abuse
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their learned techniques
4. Increase positive change to replace negative learned attitudes, behaviors and beliefs
5. Identify damaging and undermining effects of this form of abuse and the loss's they have had because of it

Group Activity 15. Gender and Anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify why socialization is so damaging to its anger responses in men/women (name calling, criticism, accusations, and threats)
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it leads to abuse's (anger, verbal, physical, emotional, psychological, etc.)
3. Educate and expect responsibility taking on ways to overcome what they were taught that was wrong and to replace with better information
4. Increase awareness on daily basis. Help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of relating to their partners

Group Activity 16. Anger and the Brain

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what "being a man" is to them vs. what it really means and "being a woman"
2. Describe and sensitize them on how their thoughts on male/female roles is affecting their relationships
3. Educate and implement ways to be a better man/woman
4. Increase awareness and help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of relating to their partners
5. Show them about how being a "man/woman" creates fear (failure of not being "enough" or "weak" or undesirable).

Group Activity 17. Stereotypes and Myths

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify stereotypes and myths regarding what women/men want in a relationship vs. what they really want and how these myths and stereotypes are damaging
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it leads to anger and poor relationships
3. Educate and correct their poor thought process on women/men; drugs/alcohol; sex and other things
4. Increase awareness and help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of thinking and relating to their partners

Group Activity 18. Effects of Anger Abuse on Family

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify short term and long term effects of anger on the family
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it leads to other behaviors
3. Educate and expect responsibility as they develop understanding and empathy for their partners and children
4. Increase awareness on all abuse and replace abuse so help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of relating to their partners and family
5. To identify negative and abusive attitude, behavior and beliefs that create a constant negative emotional atmosphere in their home 24/7 and to change that atmosphere

Group Activity 19. Respect

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what respect means to them vs. what it really is
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it is given and received
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their new techniques for respectful relationship
4. Increase awareness on respectful communication, attitudes and behaviors. Help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of relating to their partners

Group Activity 20. Anger Abuse

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify why angry people come from angry homes
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it leads to being an anger abuser or non-abuser
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their choices made by parents modeling anger for them
4. Increase awareness on recognizing that they may be passing on negative messages due to their anger.

Group Activity 21. Child Abuse

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what constitutes child abuse
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it affects children (physical, emotional, psychological, etc.)
3. Educate and expect responsibility for long term and short term effects on their children
1. Educate men on the effects of violence at different stages of children's development
2. Increase awareness on all abuse and intimidation used on children. Help them recognize cooperative, supportive, and respectful ways of relating to their children

Group Activity 22. Parenting

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify what being a parent means
2. Describe and teach them parenting techniques that are based on mutuality
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their efforts to change negative parenting into positive parenting skills
4. Increase awareness on what they learned from their parents that was negative and abusive so that they can change the attitude of "well I turned out okay with what my parents did"
5. Model and educate appropriate parenting communication, attitudes and behaviors.

6. Teach expectation and consequential parenting skills

Group Activity 23. Instilling Self Worth in Children and Self

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Identify why children need them to increase self-worth
2. Describe and sensitize them on how it leads to positive outcomes in children's lives
3. Educate and expect responsibility as a parent to instill worth
4. Increase awareness to help them recognize their own self-worth and how it affects them as, parent, and partner

Group Activity 24. Reframing. Giving up Hope for a Better Past and Focusing on Better Futures

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To encourage them to identify how they focus on the past and use bargaining, minimizing, "it happened to me when I was a child" and other excuses
2. Describe how "giving up all hope for a better past" is the most important step in moving forward and focusing on what they can do "today"
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their past abusiveness and current change
4. Increase awareness on present accountability, learning from the past but focusing on creating better futures

Group Activity 25. Couples Counseling

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Describe how they need to focus "inward" for recovery but they are living with their partner they focus "outward"
2. Educate and expect responsibility on individual counseling vs. couple counseling giving them increased awareness to how they use the counseling sessions as "tools" or power and control information sessions to use against partner
3. Increase awareness on present accountability and individual counseling needs

Group Activity 26. Physical Anger Signs and Stopping Escalation

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To encourage abusers to identify how they physically “show” anger (clinched jaws, fists, tightening forehead, etc.)
2. Describe how anger causes destructive behaviors and introduce the Stop Light Method for de-escalation and awareness
3. Educate on benefits and losses of anger
4. Increase awareness on daily use of Stop Light Method, relaxation/visualization, time outs, exercise, etc.

Group Activity 27. Anger and Abuse

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To show that anger does not cause abuse. They are two separate things.
2. Describe the correlations between anger and abuse but how the abuser can keep from experiencing both simultaneously
3. Educate and expect responsibility on cessation of anger and abuse by techniques they have been introduced to. Ask them for examples of how they are using those techniques
4. Increase awareness on present accountability and continued accountability and the benefits of stopping anger and abuse

Group Activity 28. Relaxation and Visualization – How it can help

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To encourage abusers to use simple relaxation/visualization techniques for change
2. Describe how they take responsibility on self-care
3. Educate on Alpha State and how to make it work for change
4. Increase awareness benefits of using these techniques for positive change

Group Activity 29. Roadblocks to Communication

Purpose of Exercise:

1. To look at how communication is used to control and monitor victim
2. Describe why listening and focusing on victims feelings is important
3. Educate and expect responsibility on their behavior and their feelings getting in the way of focus on partner's state of mind, attention that the partner deserves, and what is "fair" vs. what they think is "fair"
4. Increase awareness on giving up "account keeping" and have them participate by the following exercise: on a sheet of paper they should set up 3 columns: Negative Communication, Effects on Partner, and New Positive Behavior. This will help them recognize negative communication patterns and evaluate them to develop their ability to interact more positively with their partners.

Group Activity 30. Time Line

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of their anger techniques and behavior over a time period
2. Provide consistent "proof" of escalation of anger and hold them accountable
3. Educate participants that anger abuse increases over time and consequences increase as well
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their own acts of anger abuse and the triggers they have
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their own power and control and anger abusiveness

Group Activity 31. Power Triangle and Anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of the power triangle and control techniques and behavior used with the power triangle
2. Provide visual definition of triangulation in anger relationships vs. normal relationships

3. Educate on physical, psychological, emotional abuse & how power anger is used within their family power triangle
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their own rigid systems and attitudes
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their own anger power and control issues and to change it from “rigid triangulation” to “equality triangulation”

Group Activity 32. Handling Difficult Situations Effectively

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding difficult situations don't call for anger
2. Provide consistent and clear ways to handle difficulties
3. Educate participants by role playing how to handle a variety of situations people find difficult
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their own acts of anger abuse
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their choices

Group Activity 33. Stress and Anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding self-care and stress
2. Provide information on a personal self-care plan for participants
3. Educate participants about the benefits of taking care of themselves, both for themselves and their family
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their total well-being: physical, emotional, social, and spiritual
5. Motivate participants to develop their self-care activities

Group Activity 34. Drugs/Alcohol and Abuse

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of how drugs/alcohol accelerate anger, power and control behaviors
2. Provide consistent definition negative physical and emotional effects of drug/alcohol use

3. Educate connection of both anger and abuse's
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their responsibility for abstinence and recovery for drug/alcohol consumption
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their anger addictions and how it relates to other things like drama, love, sex along with drug/alcohol and to get recovery for them

Group Activity 35. Ego vs. Self Worth

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of ego and self-worth
2. Provide consistent definition of both and where we get ego and self-worth
3. Educate participants on how they can increase their self-worth or decrease ego if necessary
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for helping children with their self-worth
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their ego in power and control and to change it

Group Activity 36. Acceptance = Responsibility = No Bullying

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden participant's view of what acceptance means and is.
2. Provide consistent definitions of what acceptance, responsibility means in stopping bullying behaviors and attitudes
3. Educate participants on how acceptance and responsibility taking improves one's life
4. Increase recognition and responsibility so bullying can stop
5. Motivate participants so that acceptance is what they want to do and to increase happiness in their lives

Group Activity 37. Forgiveness

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of forgiveness in one's life
2. Provide consistent definition of both descriptions of forgiveness

3. Educate on physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual benefits to applying forgiveness in their life
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for forgiving self and others
5. Motivate participants to do forgiveness work in their lives

Group Activity 38. Boundaries

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of what a boundary is
2. Provide consistent examples of boundaries that are positive vs. negative boundaries
3. Educate participants on why boundaries can improve relationships
4. Increase recognition and responsibility
5. Motivate participants

Group Activity 39. Grief and Loss and Anger

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of the loss's due to anger and proper grieving process
2. Provide support to participants and suggest support groups if applicable
3. Educate on physical, psychological, emotional signs and symptoms due to grief and loss from anger behaviors
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their loss's
5. Motivate participants to participate in grief and loss exercises for healing

Group Activity 40. Safety Plan

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of victims anger escalating while they are changing and a safety plan is needed
2. Provide support as they practice the safety plan verbalization and actions which are mutuality based and non-abusive
3. Educate on when to use their safety plan and how to create a safety plan
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for using the safety plan

5. Motivate participants to think critically about their own power and control which has caused victim to feel angry and how that creates the need for a safety plan for participants

Group Activity 41. What is Love vs. Love Confusion

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of love and love confusion
2. Provide examples of love languages, behaviors and attitudes
3. Educate participants on how love confusion develops and how they create it in their children
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for creating loving family system
5. Motivate participants to think critically love vs. manipulation, jealousy, possessiveness, love confusion and entitlement

Group Activity 42. Dishonesty

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of how lying affects others
2. Provide participants opportunities to take inventory on the various ways in which they lie and to discuss alternatives to lying
3. Educate on the two different forms of lying, passive and active.
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their lying and discuss drawbacks of each type of lying (passive and active) they have used
5. Motivate participants to think critically about their lying and to create atmospheres of truth telling in their lives and in their family system

Group Activity 43. What Does a Good Relationship Look Like

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of positive and healthy relationships
2. Provide information on what a normal relationship looks like without power and control and what components make up a good relationship
3. Educate on unconditional positive regard
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for the "relationship" winning so that both in that relationship win and not "I win" attitudes they have

5. Motivate participants to think critically about good relationship and the components of that relationship and to apply those to their lives

Group Activity 44. What are the “shoulds” that keep you angry

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of the positive aspects of their current or past relationships
2. Provide open sharing for each participant to identify positive aspects that initially drew them to their partner
3. Educate on participants who continue to anger focus on what they see as negative aspects of partner and relationship and to change that negative process
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for focusing and striving to be non-anger behaviors which means no excuse making.
5. Motivate participants to identify positive ways to approach their partners and not to distort their thoughts about the partners

Group Activity 45. Knowing your Love Language and Your Families

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of the 5 Love Languages
2. Provide them the opportunity to discover what their love language is (are)
3. Educate importance of knowing one’s own love language and each family members love languages so needs can be met
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for responding positively to the needs of self and others in family system
5. Motivate participants to think “inclusively” by meeting needs of family members

Group Activity 46. Spirituality and Recovery. Why is it important.

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants understanding of how having a spiritual component in their life enhances it and relationships
2. Provide connections via exercises or psycho-educational materials of recovery and spiritual enhancement

3. Educate on physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual healing are all connected
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for choosing what works for them in spiritual connectedness
5. Motivate participants

Group Activity 47. Listening, Speaking, Communicating Effectively

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participant's awareness to communication – tones, words, facial signs, body signs, etc.
2. Provide group role playing on negative tones, facial expressions, etc. vs. respectful and positive communication
3. Educate on how communication improves relationships or destroys them
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their own styles of communication
5. Motivate participants to think positive communication helps with personal self-worth and increases family self-worth

Group Activity 48. Awareness + Action = Change. Applying it.

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants awareness to anger in all its aspects
2. Provide group role playing, cognitive behavioral information, where they have been and the consequences for past anger behavior, where they are and how far they have come in their change of anger responses and what else they need to be doing – action steps
3. Educate participants that awareness is good but without action it is nothing. So help participants with action and goal setting
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their awareness and action to achieve the change desired
5. Motivate participants to apply what has been taught to date and to continue to apply positive awareness and positive change techniques for better relationships

Group Activity 49. Counseling after the 52 Weeks

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants awareness that the 52 week program is just the “beginning” of the work they need to continue doing for positive change
2. Provide group participants resources for therapists and psychologists especially trained in anger management for continuance in behavior change
3. Educate on how 52 week has opened awareness for them in areas of their life that need continued counseling for full recovery
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their individual counseling needs to assist in non-anger relationship building skills and recovery from past childhood issues
5. Motivate participants to think positively about more recovery and healing

Group Activity 50. Consequences for Arrest

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participant’s awareness of benefits of giving up anger and control, which the participants lose sight of because of habits, choices and difficulty in making non-anger behavior choices.
2. Provide information on what consequential thinking is and how they got arrested because they do not have it
3. Educate on how consequential thinking happens and how to apply it everyday
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their own thoughts and behaviors which led to their arrest
5. Motivate participants to think “consequentially” so they will not get arrested due to improved attitudes and behaviors

Group Activity 51. A Victim of Anger Story (their story) or Movie

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants awareness to what they have done to their family by having a speaker who is a victim of anger speak
2. Provide group with the opportunity to show empathy to victim who shares his/her story

3. Educate on how destructive their anger tactics and techniques are
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their anger abusiveness
5. Motivate participants to take responsibility and to share with family their acknowledgement of her/his courage in sharing their story of anger

Group Activity 52. What you learned and Graduation

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Broaden the participants awareness by having a or the graduate (s) share his/her/their experience in the 52 week program
2. Provide group with positive enforcement by graduate (s) as they share what worked for them and what made the most impact on their behavior change
3. Educate participants on the 52 week program being a “process” for change that is not over and goes on after the end of the program
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for anger behaviors and attitudes
5. Motivate participants to think positive about themselves completing the program and how personal self-worth, goal setting, and reframing can help them improve their lives and relationships
6. Have a party for the graduate (s) the last 30-45 minutes of the group. Give them an “Honor Ceremony” along with a certificate of completion

Group Activity 53. Exit Interview

Purpose of Exercise:

1. Provide participant the opportunity to evaluate program, self, and process of change
2. Educate on other resources available to them
3. Increase recognition and responsibility and have them take exit interview
4. Motivate participants to remember what they have learned, continue to implement techniques taught, to stay connected by mentoring new members and continuing as a mentor (free group attendance if they mentor), and acknowledge the good work they have done in group

Extra Group Activity topics can be used at the facilitator’s discretion

Counseling after anger management

Purpose:

1. Broaden the participants awareness that the anger management program is just the “beginning” of the work they need to continue doing for positive change
2. Provide group participants resources for therapists and psychologists especially trained in anger management for continuance in behavior change
3. Educate on how program has opened awareness for them in areas of their life that need continued counseling for full recovery
4. Increase recognition and responsibility for their individual counseling needs to assist in non-abusive and non-angry relationship building skills and recovery from past childhood issues
5. Motivate participants to think positively about more recovery and healing

ANGER MANAGEMENT RECORD AND SIGN IN SHEET TEMPLATE

Name: _____

Client File# or address: _____

[illegible]

EXIT INTERVIEW SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

EXIT INTERVIEW TEMPLATE

Client:

Interviewer:

Date:

Instructions: The exit interview should be completed on the client's last day of the program. An exit interview should be performed by the group facilitator with the client.

It should be explained to the client that exit interview notes are taken to enable the program to monitor issues in the program and to improve the program. The notes are kept on a confidential basis.

Questions:

What is your reason(s) for achieving the success of completion of the anger management program?

Is there anything that we could have done differently that would have influenced you to understand the program better and to change negative attitudes, behaviors and beliefs faster?

Do you remember receiving an intake/orientation pretest and information on the program, its rules, and other pertinent program information?

How would you rate your orientation/intake? (1-10) Why?

Do you believe you received adequate support from facilitator?
If yes please explain; no, please explain.

Did you find your work in group challenging and rewarding? Why?

What helped you the most during the anger management program?

What did you feel was least helpful to you?

Were group policies and procedures explained to you?

Did you feel safe in group and that things were held in confidence? Why or why not?

Did you feel that you were treated fairly by your facilitator?

Did you receive support for the issues you were going through while in the program?

Would you like a referral to a therapist/psychologist to continue the work that you have begun in the 52 week program since we know ongoing support for change is beneficial?

Are there any issues you feel that we should be aware of?

What do you plan on doing to maintain the changes you have made?

If you could add/change things during the anger management program (positive changes only) that you feel would be beneficial to others attending, please share them with us.

(More questions in workbook handout section)

ACTIVITY HAND OUTS!!

ANGER MANAGEMENT INTAKE

INTAKE CHECK OFF LIST

1. ☐ Intake and Assessment
2. ☐ Lethality/Risk Assessment
3. ☐ History
4. ☐ Court Papers
5. ☐ Parole/Probation Officer Contact Information
6. ☐ Restraining Order
7. ☐ Time Out
8. ☐ Confidentiality
9. ☐ Definitions of Abuse/Battering
10. ☐ Types of Anger
11. ☐ Group Rules
12. ☐ Group time and day form
13. ☐ Consent to Release
14. ☐ Program Fee's and Policy
15. ☐ Violence Free Contract
16. ☐ No Weapons Contract
17. ☐ Stop Light Technique Information
18. ☐ Program Description and Length of Time
19. ☐ Mandated Child Abuse Reporter form
20. ☐ Leave of Absence Policy
21. ☐ Acceptance/Rejection Policy
22. ☐ Program Topic Outline
23. ☐ Statement of Program Philosophy
24. ☐ Attendance Policy
25. ☐ Restraining Order Compliance Contract
26. ☐ Group Participation Compliance Contract
27. ☐ Concurrent Program Compliance Contract
28. ☐ Program Rule Compliance Contract
29. ☐ Termination Information and Policy
30. ☐ Reinstatement Policy
31. ☐ Progress Report
32. ☐ Completion and Exit Interview

VIOLENT AND CONTROLLING BEHAVIOR

CHECKLIST

Please circle each specific behavior you have done since age 17.

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC ABUSES:

Yelling, swearing, being loud, using angry expressions or gestures, out-shouting, criticism, name calling, mocking, put downs, accusations, ridicule, use of trivializing gestures, facial expressions, threats – implied or direct (verbal or nonverbal).

Harassment: uninvited calling or visits, following partner around, monitoring or checking up on partner, embarrassing partner in public, not leaving when asked, harassing partner at work

Isolation: Not allowing partner to visit, talk to, or be with friends, family or others. Criticizing partners friends, place of worship or desire to worship, family members, making jealous comments or accusations, not helping with children, preventing partner from taking a job, monitoring phone calls, mail or email.

Pressure tactics: rushing partner to make choices and decisions, using accusatory tones and words, using guilt, sulking, making threats to have affairs, withholding financial support, turning friends against partner, manipulating children, triangulating others into relationship, holding something over your partners head and trying to get your own way all the time.

Economic abuse: withholding money, credit cards; making partner give detailed accounts for spending; overspending yourself; using household funds for drugs/alcohol; using legal system against your partner; giving partner and “allowance”; having power to “veto” in financial decisions.

Claiming “Truth”, being the “I wear the pants in the family” authoritative partner; defining “roles” based on sex; manipulating logic.

Lying, withholding truth, being unfaithful both sexually and emotionally, telling white lies.

Withholding household help, not doing your share, no help with children, crazy making techniques on children and partner; not following through on agreements.

Emotionally withholding: not giving support, validation, attention, not expressing emotions other than anger and contempt, not respecting partner or partners wishes.

Lack of self care: using and abusing drugs/alcohol, sex, staying out late, choosing risky behaviors, lack of sleep, not eating in a healthy manner.

PHYSICAL ABUSE:

Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, choking, strangulation, pulling hair, biting, twisting arm, grabbing

Rape by use of force, threats, coercion, violence, using drugs

Use of weapons: throwing things, keeping weapons around to frighten partner

Intimidation: using threatening or scary gestures, blocking exits, using size to intimidate, standing over partner, pointing a finger at partner, driving recklessly, punching walls, banging on tables, out-shouting

Damaging or destroying partners possessions, abusing pets, damaging joint possessions, threatening to or actually harming partners loved belongings

Restraint: blocking, locking partner in a room, sitting on partner, preventing phone use, taking car keys, disabling car, and holding arms or hands of partner

INTAKE FORM

Name: _____ Date: _____

DOB: _____ Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____ work: _____

Address: _____

Have you ever been arrested? Y N Charge: _____ Convicted: Y N

Are you on Parole or Probation? If yes – which: _____

Are you under the care of a Psychiatrist? Y N For What diagnosis? _____

Doctor's Name and contact information:

Have you ever tried to commit suicide? Y N How long ago? _____

Were you hospitalized? _____

Do you have a history of drug/alcohol use and/or abuse? Y N If yes, then

What drug/alcohol and for how long did you use? _____

Are you clean and sober currently? _____

What are you enrolling in our program today? Be specific. (Example: I yelled at my children named and ages) _____

_____ (be specific please)

Emergency contact name and number: _____

Are you seeing another therapist/counselor/psychologist/psychiatrist not mentioned above? If so please give name and number: _____

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

I, _____, agree to not discuss outside of this group, any discussion, comments, stories and/or personal experiences, as well as names of members of group whether visiting one time or continual members.

I, _____, agree that this is a safe place and a safe group for everyone in attendance. I agree that I am part of making this a safe place to discuss issues and experiences and if I should break this confidentiality agreement – I may be terminated from the group and asked to leave.

By signing this document, I am stating that I agree and understand the confidentiality agreement.

Signature

Date

CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION

I, _____, give permission to _____
_____ to discuss with _____, any information
that pertains to my case and counseling sessions. I understand that this
information may be exchanged with the representatives of the courts, DCFS,
my attorney, and will be valid _____ to _____.

I understand that my records are protected under certain governmental and
Ethical regulations and cannot be released without my written consent or
Unless subpoenaed by a court of law.

Executed this _____ Day of _____

Signed: _____

DAILY HASSLES SCALE

Background:

This scale aims to assess the frequency and intensity/impact of 20 experiences that can be a “hassle” to parents causing friction. It is helpful in showing where to find major difficulties in raising children, thusly causing problems between family members.

Parents/caregivers complete the scale, which allows them to express what it feels like to be a parent with pressures felt by the caregiver. This will help the facilitator to see concise areas of pressures and to identify areas where assistance could be provided.

The facilitator will score the Scale in two different ways – frequency and intensity. The frequency of each type of happening provides an “objective” marker of how often it occurs. The intensity indicates the caregiver’s “subjective” appraisal of how much those events “hassle” or affect them.

The time frame for this can vary according to the facilitators focus. It is set up for the last six months but if there are reasons that a family may have been under more intense pressures in the last two months, then the facilitator can tell them to fill out the survey based on the last two months. However, it is intended to assess to see if there is progress in handling stressors over the last six months or if the parents/care giver is not dealing with the stressors effectively. Periods of less than one month should not be assessed with this tool.

Use

The facilitator should help the parent/care giver understand that the aim of filling the Scale out is to give an overall assessment of their stressors and to highlight areas for future discussion. It will help prioritize the parenting issues that need to be addressed.

Administration

The Scale should be given to the parent/care giver to fill out themselves and can be read to them if necessary. It takes about 15 –20 minutes total and is to be used as a basis for discussion. The facilitator can talk with the parent/care giver privately as well as use topics that are stressors for group discussion.

Scoring

The Scale can be used in two distinct ways: (a) the totals of one frequency and intensity scales can be obtained, or (b) scores for challenging behavior and parenting tasks that can be derived from the intensity scale.

To obtain frequency and intensity total scores:

- a. A score of 3 or 4 for any one event indicates that it occurs with above average frequency.
- b. On the intensity scale – a score of 4 or 5 for any one event indicates that it is at least some problem to the parent.
- c. The challenging behavior total score is obtained by adding the intensity scale scores for items: 2, 4, 8, 9, 11, 12, 16. Range: 1-35.
- d. The parenting tasks total score is obtained by adding the intensity scale scores for items: 1, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 17, and 20. Range 0-40.

There is no cut off for any of the scales but total scores above 50 on the frequency scale or above 70 on the intensity scale indicate potentially hassling events and that the parent/care giver is experiencing pressure over parenting.

Frequency scores over 3 or 4, or intensity 4 or 5, particularly those where the parent rates high intensity impact, should be discussed to clarify the need of the parent.

The total scores on the behavior and parenting tasks scales may be useful in indicating how the parent/caregiver sees the situation, whether there are difficulties in the behaviors of the children that are troublesome or other reasons.

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

SECTION II: THOUGHTS, FEELINGS, BEHAVIORS AND FANTASIES

In this section you are asked to think about your relationships and attitudes regarding them. Below is a list of statements. Please read each one carefully. For each statement use the scales below to rate the **REQUENCY** and **POWER** (amount of influence, control) that the thought, feeling, behavior or fantasy has in your attitudes about relationships. Unless the question specifies a particular length of time, you should be thinking in terms of "has this ever been a part of my thoughts and behaviors?"

FREQUENCY

0 = never

1 = one time

2 = seldom

3 = periodically

4 = often

5 = very often

POWER

0 = no power

1 = very low power

2 = low power

3 = moderate power

4 = high power

5 = very high power

FREQUENCY

POWER

Example: I feel chemistry with someone so I think this is a serious relationship

 4

 3

1. Thinking you must have a relationship

2. Fantasize about what your relationship "should be"

3. Have thoughts with "if only he/she" in them

4. Feel like you walk on "egg shells" now and again

5. Over responsible in the relationship

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 6. Think that jealousy is love | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Thinking that the next time will be different | _____ | _____ |
| 8. Thinking that if you love enough your partner will change | _____ | _____ |
| 9. Feeling you have to "give in" to be safe and "responsible" | _____ | _____ |
| 10. Feel you have to "honor and obey" | _____ | _____ |
| 11. Believe that you are the problem in your relationship | _____ | _____ |
| 12. Denying how you really feel due to fear and/or repercussion | _____ | _____ |
| 13. Like being part of "drama" | _____ | _____ |
| 14. Rationalize why you stay in a relationship | _____ | _____ |
| 15. Rationalize why your partner acts the way they do | _____ | _____ |
| 16. Make excuses for your partners behaviors | _____ | _____ |
| 17. Fantasize about how your life could be | _____ | _____ |
| 18. Don't know who you are anymore | _____ | _____ |

- | | | |
|---|-------|-------|
| 19. Hide the reality of what your relationship really is like | _____ | _____ |
| 20. Feel sad most of the time | _____ | _____ |
| 21. Think deluded thoughts (e.g., you know how _____ are/is) | _____ | _____ |
| 22. Have sex even when you don't feel like it | _____ | _____ |
| 23. Feel like you have to do something because..... | _____ | _____ |
| 24. Feel depressed, lonely, hopeless or unworthy | _____ | _____ |
| 25. Use sex to find love | _____ | _____ |
| 26. Feel desperate or anxious | _____ | _____ |
| 27. Stay and listen when being verbally assaulted/abused | _____ | _____ |
| 28. Give in when arguing with your partner just to keep peace | _____ | _____ |
| 29. Use patronizing language in conversations with partner | _____ | _____ |
| 30. Call your partner names when arguing | _____ | _____ |

31. Have affairs outside your relationship when you get angry

32. Believe you need to "win" arguments

FREQUENCY

POWER

0 = never

0 = no power

1 = one time

1 = very low power

2 = seldom

2 = low power

3 = periodically

3 = moderate power

4 = often

4 = high power

5 = very often

5 = very high power

33. Use intimidation tactics to get control

34. Keep secrets so no one will know outside the family

35. Force another to do something they don't want to

36. Drink alcohol to feel better or to cover feelings

37. Use medication to feel better or cover feelings

38. Use drugs for any reasons

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 39. Receive physical harm or pain without reporting it | _____ | _____ |
| 40. Seek to humiliate or degrade others for control | _____ | _____ |
| 41. Avoid parties and events due to partners behaviors | _____ | _____ |
| 42. Stay with your partner because of religious beliefs | _____ | _____ |
| 43. Use computer for sexual arousal | _____ | _____ |
| 44. Fall "in love" quickly and repeatedly | _____ | _____ |
| 45. Behavior inappropriately and then say it will never happen again | _____ | _____ |
| 46. Hit, spank, slap, bop, squeeze a partner | _____ | _____ |
| 47. Send gifts hoping to be forgiven for something | _____ | _____ |
| 48. Feel you are not good enough.... | _____ | _____ |
| 49. Make excuses for yourself or another | _____ | _____ |
| 50. Thought about or attempted suicide | _____ | _____ |
| 51. Had homicidal thoughts or feelings | _____ | _____ |

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 52. Failed in efforts to control behaviors | _____ | _____ |
| 53. Lose touch with reality from time to time | _____ | _____ |
| 54. Have strong feelings of guilt and shame | _____ | _____ |
| 55. Have a sense of loss of self and self esteem | _____ | _____ |
| 56. Have a sense of loss of life goals | _____ | _____ |
| 57. Act against your own values and beliefs | _____ | _____ |
| 58. Have strong feelings of loneliness and isolation | _____ | _____ |
| 59. Emotional exhaustion | _____ | _____ |
| 60. Strong fears about your life and future | _____ | _____ |
| 61. Have strong feelings of hopelessness and despair | _____ | _____ |

GROUP RULES

- 1. Participants may not miss more than 2 sessions of the 26 week program. If you miss more than 2 sessions you will be suspended from the group and reported back to the courts.**
- 2. Participants must be on time. If participant is late more than 5 minutes he/she will be locked out and will not receive credit for the session missed.**
- 3. Participants must show up at least 15 minutes before group begins to sign in, pay their fee, and enter group room.**
- 4. Participants may not use any violence during the program. To do so is terms for immediate dismissal from program, possible jail time and subjected to other consequences.**
- 5. During group sessions, participants may not blame, justify, minimize, or name call.**
- 6. Participants may not use racist or sexist language in group.**
- 7. Participants are to keep other participants names and discussions in group confidential. The group process is confidential and a safe place for all attendees.**
- 8. Participants may not use drugs/alcohol. Participants will be drug/alcohol tested on sight if facilitator suspects use and agrees to this by signing below.**
- 9. If a participant is found to be under the influence of drugs/alcohol while in group they may be terminated from the program, asked to leave, not given credit for the session, and/or referred to a drug/alcohol recovery program.**
- 10. Participants who are disruptive or uncooperative may be suspended from the program and referred back to the courts and probation/parole officer notified.**
- 11. No participant will be given a completion letter until all outstanding balances have been paid in full. A violation report will be sent to the judge when payments are behind. Payment must be made at the beginning of each session.**
- 12. All progress reports need a minimum of two week notice prior to due date for the facilitator to have ready for participant. If participant fails to notify facilitator at least two weeks prior to due date, a \$100 late notification fee will be required before progress report is written for participant.**

13. All progress reports will include a record of participation, progress and any other information requested by courts and PO officers.
14. Participants are not allowed to chew gum, eat, swear, or make other body noises during group. Drinking of soda, coffee, tea, or water is allowed.
15. No name calling, swearing, fighting, justification, minimizing or otherwise inappropriate behavior is allowed in group or on premises.
16. Participants must use victims and children's names during group process.
17. Participants are to use "time outs" and other tools learned during group.
18. Participants are not to ask facilitators to write references or recommendations for work or any other situation.
19. Participants are asked that they call the facilitator if they are unable to attend group on time for any reason and/or if they are going to miss a group session.
20. Participants are to give a 24 hour notice if they are going to miss group for any reason.
21. Participants are to give a notice of termination of program of at least 30 days. They have two weeks to enroll in another program and must notify the new program of current programs address, contact person information, etc. so that a transfer form can be made out for them. It is participant's responsibility to find a new program and make sure paperwork is completed.
22. No gang symbols, clothes, paraphernalia, hats, shirts, etc. are allowed.
23. No smoking is allowed in program area, room, or on premises.
24. No sunglasses allowed to be worn during group.

By signing and dating below, participant agrees to all rules and regulations listed above:

Signature

Date

Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

DISCLAIMER ON THE WORKSHEETS ENCLOSED. THEY WERE TAKEN FROM INTERNET ANGER MANAGEMENT SITES AND COPIED TO BE USED IN THIS WORKBOOK. I DID NOT WANT TO REINVENT THE WHEEL AND CREATE NEW ONES WHEN THERE WERE PLENTY OF GOOD WORKSHEETS ALREADY AVAILABLE.

THESE WERE TAKEN FROM DIFFERENT SITES INCLUDING (BUT NOT LIMITED TO) THE FOLLOWING:

OAKWOOD SOLUTIONS, LLC

ANGER MANGEMENT SOLUTIONS

THERAPY WORKSHOP BLOGSPOT

DR. WILLIAM DEFOORE

YOU CAN ADD YOUR OWN WORKSHEETS TO YOUR WEEKLY TRAINING SESSIONS TO IMPROVE THE ACCOUNTABILITY AND PARTICIPATION OF THOSE ATTENDING YOUR PROGRAM.

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Practicing ANGER MANAGEMENT

Like any other skill, managing anger takes practice. The next time you get angry, try these approaches:

- ✓ Write out a clear statement: I'm angry because _____
_____. (Be specific.)
- ✓ Study your anger. Make a list of reasons why this makes you angry.
- ✓ Visualize yourself in the room with the person. Write down what you would say to that person.
- ✓ Choose a time to talk that is good for you and the other person. Maintain eye contact and a calm voice while talking.
- ✓ Put yourself into the other person's shoes. Allow yourself to be "wrong" some of the time.
- ✓ Avoid blaming, attacking, or bringing up other grievances.
- ✓ Use "I" statements. "I get angry when..." Blaming statements often start with "you": "You never..."
- ✓ Can the situation be changed or avoided in the future? If the answer is yes, think about how that can be accomplished. If the answer is no, work toward acceptance. Remember, you can't control other people's behavior, but you can control the way you respond.
- ✓ Use relaxation techniques such as deep breathing exercises or imagery—focusing on a peaceful place, thought or sound.
- ✓ Write a letter to the person with whom you're angry. Refrain from delivering the letter for a few days. When you review it, you may decide to take another approach.
- ✓ Find a physical outlet for anger, such as exercise or housework.
- ✓ Set a time limit for anger. Then let it go.
- ✓ Use positive self-talk: "I'm angry but I can get on with my life or my job."
- ✓ Know your limits. Seek counseling if anger continues to be a big problem for you.

Keep Track of Your Anger Response:

Something that triggered my anger:	My response:	Something I did well in this situation:	Something I could have done better:

It helps to practice anger management techniques with a neutral person. Get together with a friend and take turns role-playing, each assuming the role of the person the other one is angry with.

What's Your Anger Style?

Anger comes in three basic styles. We may switch styles depending on who or what is triggering our anger, but most of us lean to one style or another. Check the boxes that describe your anger style and use the blank lines to add any other appropriate descriptions.

Lock it up!

BEHAVIOR

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> withdraw emotionally | <input type="checkbox"/> deny anger, but show it in other actions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> give the "silent treatment" | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> become ill or anxious | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

REASONS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't have the right to be angry. | <input type="checkbox"/> I may lose my job, or a relationship. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger is inappropriate or childish. | <input type="checkbox"/> I fear I will hurt or offend someone. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I may lose control of myself. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can't cope with strong feelings. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> People will dislike me if I show anger. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |



Turn it loose!

BEHAVIOR

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> blowing up at people | <input type="checkbox"/> flying off the handle at small things |
| <input type="checkbox"/> getting physical or hurting people | <input type="checkbox"/> bringing up old grievances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> threatening, shouting or swearing | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blaming people | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> breaking things | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

REASONS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> I need to assert my power over people. | <input type="checkbox"/> The best defense is a good offense. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I'm afraid of getting close to someone. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I can't stand to be wrong. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I don't know how to communicate calmly when angry. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

Manage it!

BEHAVIOR

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> remaining calm | <input type="checkbox"/> allowing discussion to happen |
| <input type="checkbox"/> focusing on the behavior, not the person | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> using "I" statements: "I feel angry when..." | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sticking to the subject | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

REASONS

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Anger is a normal emotion—it's OK to be angry. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> When I'm angry, I want to solve the problem that's causing my anger. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> I want to be able to express anger appropriately. | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |



Anger Inventory

Everyone gets angry. Getting to know what triggers your anger and how you react can help you manage it in a positive way. Check any of the following boxes that apply to you and use the blank lines to add anything not listed here.

What do you do when you get angry?

- ☐ clench your jaw
- ☐ get a stomach ache
- ☐ raise your voice
- ☐ want to hurt someone
- ☐ refuse to speak
- ☐ want to get away
- ☐ become verbally or physically abusive
- ☐ sweat or turn red
- ☐ get sarcastic
- ☐ never get angry
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

How do you feel when you get angry?

- ☐ guilty
- ☐ anxious
- ☐ depressed
- ☐ ashamed
- ☐ withdrawn
- ☐ don't feel it until later
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____



What is your anger like? Does it...

- ☐ last too long?
- ☐ flare up frequently?
- ☐ express itself even when you try to suppress it?
- ☐ go away quickly?
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

What is the outcome of your anger? Does it...

- ☐ interfere with your job or relationships?
- ☐ contribute to physical problems?
- ☐ lead to accidents?
- ☐ get you into legal problems?
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____
- ☐ _____

SPECIAL NOTE
This inventory is confidential. No one should see it but you.

What situations make you especially angry?

Are there people you have trouble dealing with when you're angry? Family members or employers often fall into this category:

PERSON

HOW YOU RESPOND

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Relaxation to Deal with Anger: Free Relaxation Script

This guided relaxation script describes how to deal with anger quickly and effectively in the moment. Guides you in controlling anger and managing anger when it arises.

It's time to take a break.... and relax.... to deal with anger in a healthy, productive way.

Anger is a normal and natural emotion, and there is nothing wrong with having feelings - you are human, after all. You have the power to decide how to deal with this emotion you are experiencing.

Anger management does not mean holding anger in. It does not mean that you will never feel angry. Anger management is managing the behavioral responses that can arise when you are feeling angry.

All you really need to do right now is take a few moments just to relax, for you, to help you feel relaxed and calm. It feels good to relax. After this short relaxation session is over, you can proceed with your day, and react in a way that you choose.... relaxing for a moment now will help you to react calmly, rather than acting out of emotion.

It's okay to be angry. Just allow yourself to feel however it is you are feeling right now, noticing this feeling, but not reacting just yet. All you're doing is observing. Emotions are neither right nor wrong... they just are.

Take a deep breath in. Hold for a moment, and now breathe out.

Breathe in... hold that tension.... and now breathe out.... feeling the tension release with your breath.

Breathe in.... and out.....

in..... out.....

Keep breathing like this, slowly.... deeply.... and let your body relax a little.

Turn your attention again to how you are feeling. Notice the physical sensation of anger. Where in your body is the anger stored? Some people notice that they tighten their shoulders when they are feeling angry. Others who deal with anger notice clenched fists or tight jaws. Anger may be experienced as a feeling in the stomach.... the neck.... any one or a number of places in the body demonstrate physical symptoms of anger.

Many of these physical symptoms are uncomfortable. Some of these symptoms can be relieved right now, if you like, by relaxing your muscles. Let's relax a few areas to begin this process to deal with anger by relaxing your muscles.

Starting with your hands and arms, first tighten your hands into fists. Feel the tension in your hands and arms. Hold.... tighter.... tighter.... and relax. Let go, allowing your hands and arms to be relaxed, loose, and limp. Notice the difference between tension and relaxation.

Now see if you can create a feeling of relaxation in your shoulders. Take a moment to relax your shoulders now. You may choose to tighten the muscles, and then relax, or you can simply relax your shoulders without tensing them first. Do whatever seems to work the best.

Focus now on your face and jaws. Relax your face and jaws, tensing first if you want to. Let all the tension leave your face..... let the tension leave your jaws.... leaving your face and jaws limp, smooth, and relaxed.

Scan your body now, for remaining areas of tension. Relax each area that feels tense.... scan your body from head to toe.... relaxing each part of your body.

(pause)

Take note of how you are feeling now. Physically. Emotionally.

You are controlling anger right now, just by the fact that you have not yet reacted with angry behaviors. You have chosen to relax, to deal with anger in a healthy way.

To increase the control you have over anger, you may want to repeat some affirmations to help create realistic, rational thinking.... also called self-control thoughts.

Here are 5 affirmations for anger management to help deal with anger:

I acknowledge that I am feeling angry right now, and accept the way I feel.

I have the power to control my reactions.

I can fully experience this anger, yet wait before I take action.

I can feel angry, but calm and in control at the same time.

It's okay to feel angry.

Notice again how you are feeling. Physically, how are you feeling? Let your body relax a little more... relaxing any tense areas.

Emotionally, how are you feeling? See how emotions come and go.... anger can come and go.... it will not last forever. There is a limited time where you exercise self-control, before the anger is no longer an issue.

You may feel less angry... just as angry... or more angry now than you were at the beginning of this relaxation session.

To deal with anger that may remain, you may need a way to express the anger and get it out. You do not have to keep your emotions inside... you can choose how to express them.

You can let anger out by breathing deeply.... breathing in relaxation, and breathing out anger.... letting anger go with each breath.

There are other ways to express anger, too. You can do any of these activities after this script to allow yourself freedom to express the anger you experienced. Physical exercise, journaling, talking to someone you trust.... there are many ways to express yourself.

After the anger has decreased and you are feeling calm, you might want to address the situation that was upsetting by taking action to change the situation, or speaking to the person you were upset with. Or you may just choose to let the situation go.

Once your anger has decreased you can choose whatever option seems best. You have the right to feel a range of emotions, including anger, and to express these emotions in healthy ways that you choose.

I'll conclude this script with some breathing.

Take a deep breath in.... and out....

in.... out.... relaxing with each breath

in.... out....

in.... out....

Keep breathing deeply to deal with anger and feel relaxed and calm.

Congratulate yourself for dealing with anger with relaxation.

I'll count now from 5 to 1. Imagine that right now, you are at a 5, and that when I reach 1 you will be feeling awake and alert, yet calm, peaceful, and relaxed.

5

4

Dealing with Anger

By Inner Health Studio

These anger management worksheets will help you to identify your anger triggers and find more effective ways to deal with anger.

What is anger?

Anger is an emotion. It is a signal that we think we are being treated unfairly.

Feelings are neither right nor wrong. **It is okay** to feel angry.

Actions can be right or wrong. **It is not okay** to hurt ourselves, others, or property when we feel angry.

So how can we deal with anger and act in healthy ways?

- 1) Recognize anger - know when you are angry and what makes you angry.
- 2) Practice positive responses - practice, practice, practice until your new positive responses become good habits

Quick List of Ways to Cope with Anger

Walk away

Exercise

Talk to someone who you are not feeling angry with

Distract yourself

Count 10 breaths

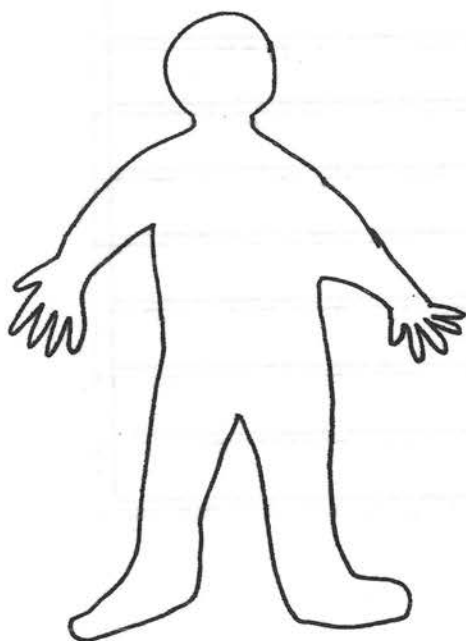
Write about it

Come back and deal with it later when you feel calm

Symptoms of Anger

How do you know when you are angry? All of us have **symptoms** of anger – physical and mental signs that tell us we are angry.

Physical signs	Mental Signs	Other signs
Fast heart beat Sweating Shaking Clenched jaws Clenched fists Fast breathing Headaches Stomach aches Upset feeling in the stomach Tight chest Tense muscles Frowning, scowling Red face	Problems concentrating Confusion Memory problems Thoughts of doing harm Angry thoughts Irritability Short tempered	Yelling Swearing Withdrawing from others Throwing things Pacing



Show in this diagram where you experience anger by shading or circling the area or writing words.

Anger Management Worksheets by Inner Healthy Studio

Write the things that make you angry on the scale below, according to how angry they usually make you feel.

How Angry	Situations or events
100 As angry as possible	
95	
90	
85	
80	
75	
70	
65	
60	
55	
50 Moderately angry	
45	
40	
35	
30	
25	
20	
15	
10	
5	
0 Not angry at all	

Questions About Your Anger:

How do you know when you are angry?

Where in your body do you feel anger? List your physical signs of being angry.

What is the first sign of anger you notice? List your early warning signs that tell you when you are starting to become angry.

What makes you angry? List all the things you can think of... all the way from small annoyances to big problems.

How You Handle Anger

How do you usually react when you feel angry?

Think about the last time you reacted in an unhealthy or negative way to anger. What happened right before you got angry?

How did you react?

How did you feel after you reacted?

What could you have done instead?

What would happen if you were to react in a more positive way?

A Plan for Dealing With Anger

Make a plan. Write down one of the situations from your anger scale. Choose one that causes you to feel a little angry. Describe how you would like to react in the future to this situation.

Choose a situation near the top of your anger scale. Describe how you would like to react to a situation like this.

What negative behavior do you most want to avoid when you experience anger?

What will you do instead?

What will you do when you experience your early warning signs of anger?

How will you handle situations when you feel very angry?

Practice positive reactions to everyday stresses

Walk away instead of reacting in anger. It's okay to stomp your feet if you need to!

Exercise. This helps get rid of the physical energy that is built up by anger.

Talk to someone who you are not feeling angry with. Phone a friend, relative, or professional. Tell them about what happened and how you are feeling.

Distract yourself. Do something you enjoy, like reading, TV, music, games, going to the store, cooking a meal.... and take your mind off the anger. Come back and deal with it when you are feeling calmer.

Count 10 breaths. The reasons for counting your breaths are: 1) to calm and relax you by breathing more deeply and 2) to pause for a few moments instead of reacting automatically.

Write about it. Get your feelings and thoughts out on paper instead of confronting the source of your anger right away.

Deal with it when you feel calm. Get away from the situation, and come back later. You will react more positively.

The more practice you get at reacting in positive ways, waiting until the anger goes down a little before responding, and learning new habits, the more easily you will be able to manage anger.

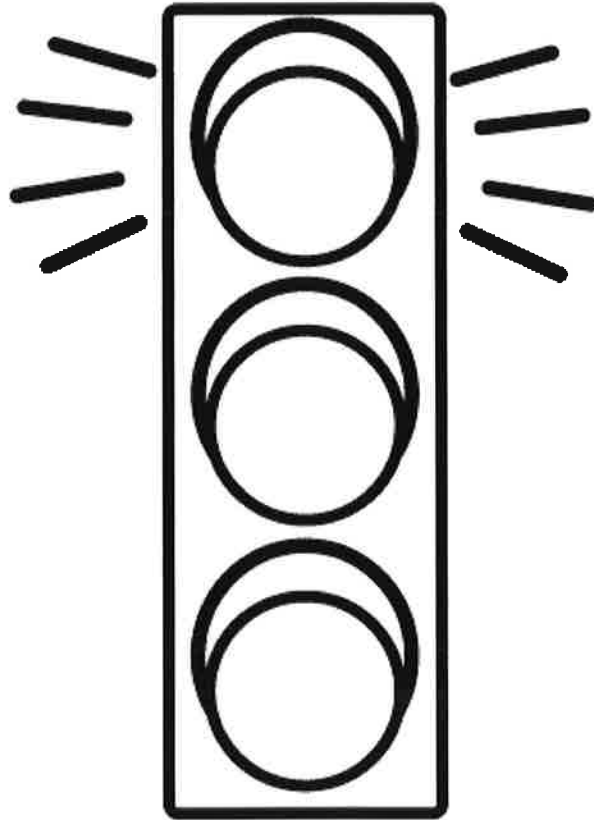
THE ANGER STOP LIGHT METHOD

The Anger Stop Light Method is a visual of a *continual pattern* that most angry individuals follow and interventions for the cycle can happen when one learns to use the Stop Light Method.

- 1) The cycle starts with the *green stage (Green Light)*, which is exemplified as being a state when both partners are happy to be in a relationship, at this point the relationship is loving and enjoyable. The individual is in a calm, no stress, and peace minded state of mind.
- 2) The next stage is the *yellow stage (Yellow Light)* in which tension is building within the individual and relationship. The couple may be getting into small arguments, and the participant may become frustrated with their partner. Rumination is running full force and negative emotional states are beginning and escalating. This is the same stage where the person is nitpicking at their victim. They are yelling, screaming, threatening and blames everything on the victim. This is also the period where the abuser may act sullen and withdrawal affection from the victim. This phase lasts the longest it could last from days, to weeks, months, or even years.
- 3) The last stage is the *red stage (Red Light)*. This stage is usually the shortest stage and the most harmful. This stage is based on one specific incident that leads to an explosion of anger. The angry person may sexually, physically, psychologically or verbally harm their partner. Some angry individuals may use a weapon against the victim, pull their hair, and publicly humiliate the victim. This is the time when the victim may call the police, fight back and leave the relationship.

Once the cycle is in place it becomes difficult to break. Visually, the cycle shows the different stages and the roles that the abuser takes in each stage; it is imperative that the abuser "watch" his thoughts, emotions, ruminations and body physical manifestations of stress, pressure and ruminations. The participant must take interventions between the Green Light Stage of the Stop Light and the Yellow Light Stage so that an event of anger does not take place and they can maintain control of themselves, their thoughts, emotions and physical well being.

STOP LIGHT FOR ANGER MANAGEMENT



Learning to control one's anger is what **The Anger Management Program** is all about. All people at one point in their lives have difficulty controlling their anger. Anger is the result of a strong feeling towards something or someone. Anger is a natural feeling that happens in all of us. However, when anger turns to verbal abuse (spoken words) or physical abuse (hitting), it becomes a problem. Healthy people who have anger know how to control it so that verbal or physical abuse is not necessary.



The Anger Management Map is a simple tool to help you become more aware of your feelings of anger and help you learn to control it. **The Anger Management Map** provides a chance for you to tell how you think, feel, or behave in certain situations. Answer each item by marking if the item is most like you, sometimes like you, or not at all like you.

The results of the test will be useful only if you answer as honestly as possible. **The Anger Management Map** is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Answer each question as you really think, feel or act—not as you think you should. Answer all items. You are now ready to start.

Begin by answering the questions that make up **The Anger Management Map** and learn where you are now. Make change fun. Set goals and plans and improve your anger control skills.



ADMINISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS

General Instructions

When filling out **The Anger Management Map**, there are a few key points to keep in mind.

1. **The Anger Management Map** is part of an approach to testing and learning important anger control skills.
2. To be of value, personal skills must be understood and practiced. As you fill out **The Anger Management Map**, claim only those skills you use and practice in actual life.
3. As you read the descriptions, select those which describe what you do—not those that you could or should do. Be honest; tell the truth.

Specific Instructions

1. Use a pencil or ball point pen.
2. Read each item and circle the answer that best applies to you in ONE given area of your life, such as work or school.
3. "M" stands for most of the time, "S" stands for some of the time, and "L" stands for least of the time.
4. Circle the letter and the number for each item. Carry over the number only to the box at the end of the item.

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS

1. After completing the entire **Anger Management Map**, add the score values in each column and record the total at the end of each of the two parts of **The Anger Management Map**. Part One will have 3 scores. Part Two will have 3 scores.
2. Carry over the total scores for each skill area to the map at the end of **The Anger Management Map** by placing a large DOT where your score would appear.
3. Start on the left side of the map, draw a line from the left margin to the dot for each scale and make a bar graph.

Part One—The Anger Management Map

SITUATION: When I am really angry with someone, I usually feel:

1. M/2 S/1 L/0 Some tension or worry, but comfortable in expressing exactly what is on my mind
2. M/2 S/1 L/0 Confused about what to say
3. M/2 S/1 L/0 A need to argue.

SITUATION: When I am really angry with someone, I usually think:

4. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I should not express my anger
5. M/2 S/1 L/0 OK, I'm angry and I need to deal with it in a good way
6. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I should attack and show my anger

SITUATION: When I am really angry with someone, I usually behave by:

7. ~~M/2 S/1 L/0~~ ~~Saying what is bothering me and working to achieve a constructive resolution~~
8. M/2 S/1 L/0 Angriely expressing myself and getting into an argument.
9. M/2 S/1 L/0 Not saying anything to the person so as not to hurt his/her feelings

SITUATION: When someone is really angry with me, I usually feel:

10. M/2 S/1 L/0 Tension and the right to understand the person's anger by talking to him/her
11. M/2 S/1 L/0 Angry and the need to argue
12. M/2 S/1 L/0 Confused and afraid, and the need to avoid him/her

(add all three columns and carry to next page)

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Totals from
Previous Page

13. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I am at fault and the person does not like me

14. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I need to react even stronger so as not to be overcome and feel helpless

15. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I have a right and need to understand the person's anger at me and to respond to solve the conflict or argument.....

16. M/2 S/1 L/0 Showing my own anger and increasing the problem

17. M/2 S/1 L/0 Asking for the reason for the anger and dealing with the feelings directly

18. M/2 S/1 L/0 Backing off, saying I'm sorry, or not really saying what I feel.

SITUATION: When I communicate or talk with a person who is in charge,
I usually feel:

19. M/2 S/1 L/0 A need to protect myself and develop a good way to deal with the person

20. M/2 S/1 L/0 Comfortable and direct in my approach to the person.....

21. M/2 S/1 L/0 Nervous and unsure about approaching the person

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Part One—The Anger Management Map

Totals from
Previous Page

SITUATION: When I communicate or talk with a person who has "authority" or is in control, I usually think:

22. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I really shouldn't bother that person or take
up much of his/her time

23. M/2 S/1 L/0 That what I want or need is most important and
that I can push myself on the person

24. M/2 S/1 L/0 That my needs are real and it is OK to say them. .

SITUATION: When I communicate or talk with a person who has "authority," I usually behave:

25. M/2 S/1 L/0 In a way that shows that I am sorry to bother
him/her

26. M/2 S/1 L/0 Comfortably and at ease with the person.....

7. M/2 S/1 L/0 In a pushy way with the person

SITUATION: When another person asks me to do something, I usually feel:

28. M/2 S/1 L/0 Nervous and unsure about saying no to the person

29. M/2 S/1 L/0 Comfortable about saying yes or no to the request

30. M/2 S/1 L/0 Anger and upset that the person expects a yes....

SITUATION: When another person asks me to do something, I usually think:

31. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I have the right to say yes or no and feel good about my answer.....

32. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I don't like being asked to do something and usually say no even if I feel maybe or yes

33. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I say yes many times even when I feel like saying no

(add all three columns and carry to next page)

Part One—The Anger Management Map

Totals from
Previous Page

SITUATION: When another person asks me to do something, I usually behave:

34. M/2 S/1 L/0 By saying no or letting that person know that I resent him/her for asking me to do it.
35. M/2 S/1 L/0 By telling the person yes or no comfortably
36. M/2 S/1 L/0 By doing what he/she asks even if I don't want to do it.

SITUATION: When I ask someone to do something, I usually feel:

37. M/2 S/1 L/0 Unsure about asking him/her
38. M/2 S/1 L/0 More concerned about getting what I want than with the feelings of the other person
39. M/2 S/1 L/0 Confident and good about my right to ask him/her.

SITUATION: When I ask someone to do something, I usually think:

40. M/2 S/1 L/0 That what I need or want is important and that the person should do it right away
41. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I really should not be bothering someone by asking
42. M/2 S/1 L/0 That I have a right to ask him/her and respect his/her decision if he/she says yes or no

SITUATION: When I ask someone to do something, I usually act:

43. M/2 S/1 L/0 Pushy and sometimes aggressive in making the request
44. M/2 S/1 L/0 Comfortable and direct in making the request.
45. M/2 S/1 L/0 Uncertain and uncomfortable in making the request

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Totals from
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SITUATION: When I am around a new group of people and need to start a conversation, I usually feel:

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|--|
| 46. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | Uncertain and confused about how to start a conversation |
| 47. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | A little uneasy, but comfortable. |
| 48. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | Uncomfortable and pressured to get a conversation going even if I am a little pushy. . . |

SITUATION: When I am around a new group of people and need to start a conversation, I usually think:

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| 49. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | That I will have fun meeting these new people and I would like for some of them to know me. . . |
| 50. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | That I need to get things started whether they are ready to or not |
| 51. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | That they are more relaxed than I am and that I don't have much to say anyway. |

SITUATION: When I am around a new group of people and need to start a conversation, I usually act:

- | | | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|-----|---|
| 52. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | Carefully and wait until someone comes to talk to me..... |
| 53. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | By talking too much, and I often come on too strong..... |
| 54. | M/2 | S/1 | L/0 | In a relaxed, comfortable way by introducing myself to someone..... |

Totals for Part One (Carry over to Anger Management Map)

Interpersonal Assertion
Interpersonal Aggression
Interpersonal Deference

Part Two—The Anger Management Map

55. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am a caring person, and people seem to sense this in me.
56. M/2 S/1 L/0 One of the things that I need to change most is how I feel about myself as a person
57. M/0 S/1 L/2 Even though I have worked hard, I have not reached my goals because people have not given me that opportunity
58. M/0 S/1 L/2 I cannot find the time to really enjoy life the way I would like
59. M/2 S/1 L/0 I can understand and be patient with a person who is having a lot of feelings or emotions
60. M/2 S/1 L/0 One of the things I need to change most is the way that I talk to my family
61. M/0 S/1 L/2 I am bothered by physical symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches, and I can't sleep at night
62. M/0 S/1 L/2 When I see someone trying to do something that I know that I can do much faster, I get very impatient
63. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am a warm person, and people like talking to me about their feelings
64. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am not happy with the way I manage my time. .
65. M/0 S/1 L/2 I am a tense person
66. M/0 S/1 L/2 I find it difficult to really let myself go and have fun
67. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am the kind of person that people are really able to talk to about their problems.
68. M/2 S/1 L/0 I need to change my job, career, or school

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Totals from
Previous Page

59.	M/0	S/1	L/2	I do not seem to be able to comfortably express strong emotions such as fear, anger, sadness
70.	M/0	S/1	L/2	If I really relaxed and enjoyed life the way I would like, I would find it hard to feel good about myself
71.	M/2	S/1	L/0	My friends tell me that I am an understanding person
72.	M/2	S/1	L/0	I am a good decision maker
73.	M/0	S/1	L/2	Even on vacations or at times when I try to enjoy myself and relax, I feel a lot of pressure to meet time deadlines.
74.	M/0	S/1	L/2	I often want people to speak faster and find myself wanting to hurry them up
75.	M/2	S/1	L/0	I feel the emotions of others as they feel them . . .
76.	M/2	S/1	L/0	I need to change the way that I handle stress and tension.
77.	M/2	S/1	L/0	I am able to relax at the end of a hard day and go to sleep easily at night
78.	M/0	S/1	L/2	I often feel that I have little control over what I think, feel, and do
79.	M/2	S/1	L/0	I have a good ability to listen to and really understand another person's feelings
80.	M/2	S/1	L/0	I am not satisfied with my ability to handle problems in conflictive situations or arguments with others.
81.	M/0	S/1	L/2	I am unable to relax, and tend to rely on other things to calm me down.

(add all three columns and carry to next page)

Part Two—The Anger Management Map

Totals from
Previous Page

82. M/0 S/1 L/2 I feel tense and pressured by the way I have to live
83. M/2 S/1 L/0 People say I am a good listener
84. M/2 S/1 L/0 When faced with an important decision, I am not concerned about making a wrong choice
85. M/0 S/1 L/2 My friends often try to get me to slow down and relax more.
86. M/0 S/1 L/2 I am impatient with myself and others, and I am usually pushing to hurry things up.
87. M/2 S/1 L/0 I can understand how a person feels when he/she is talking to me
88. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am not satisfied with the amount of energy I put into being successful in life
89. M/0 S/1 L/2 I am under so much stress that I can feel the tension in my body
90. M/0 S/1 L/2 My friends often say that I look worried, tense, or uptight.
91. M/2 S/1 L/0 When a person is telling me something important, I can pay attention and really hear him/her
92. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am not satisfied with my skill and ability to sell myself to others
93. M/2 S/1 L/0 I deal with tension, and I have learned several healthy ways to relax
94. M/0 S/1 L/2 On the job or at school, I work under a great deal of tension.
95. M/2 S/1 L/0 I seem to be able to feel what another person feels.

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Part Two—The Anger Management Map

Totals from
Previous Page

96. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am not satisfied with my decision-making ability
97. M/0 S/1 L/2 I have been unable to break negative or bad habits that are a problem for me.
98. M/2 S/1 L/0 When I really relax and do nothing for several days, I tend to feel guilty about wasting that much time.
99. M/2 S/1 L/0 When another person tells me what he/she is feeling, I can understand the feelings and really listen to him/her
100. M/2 S/1 L/0 One of the things that I need to change most is the way that I relate to other people
101. M/0 S/1 L/2 I have become extremely nervous and tense at times, and doctors have advised me to slow down and relax
102. M/2 S/1 L/0 I am not happy with the way I handle my relationships
103. M/0 S/1 L/2 I seem to struggle to do well and seldom take time to honestly ask myself what I really want out of life
104. M/2 S/1 L/0 One of the things I need to change most is how I take care of myself
105. M/2 S/1 L/0 I have found ways to deal with tension, such as exercise and relaxation.

Totals for Part Two (Transfer to Anger Management Map)

Empathy

Stress Management

Change Orientation

THE ANGER MANAGEMENT MAP

A guide for the results of your Anger Management Map

PERSONAL MAP

The Anger Management Map is a positive approach to skills that are important for anger management. The purpose of the Anger Management Map is to provide you with a map or guide for your growth and change. By understanding your Anger Management Map you may become more aware of your strengths and identify areas of possible change and growth related to anger management. The Anger Management Map results may be used in planning skill-building activities that will help you become a success.

PERSONAL SKILL SCALES

Your results for each scale of the Anger Management Map are presented on this map. Your skills for each of the scales has been plotted on the map. A scale score may be considered a skill strength if the score is at or beyond a standard score of 60. A standard score on any skill scale between 40 and 60 may be thought of as a "normal" or "average" level of skill. A standard score below 40 shows room for improvement.

Name: _____

PERSONAL MAP

EMOTIONAL SKILLS	STANDARD SCORES																	EMOTIONAL SKILLS
	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80					
INTERPERSONAL ASSERTION		9	12	15	18	21	24	27		30	33	36						INTERPERSONAL ASSERTION
EMPATHY	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20		22	24							EMPATHY
STRESS MANAGEMENT	4	9	14	19		24	29	34		39	44	49						STRESS MANAGEMENT
	DEVELOP					STRENGTHEN					ENHANCE							

INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION MAP

PERSONAL COMMUNICATION STYLE

COMMUNICATION STYLE	LOW				NORMAL			HIGH				COMMUNICATION STYLE
INTERPERSONAL AGGRESSION		2	4	6	8	11	15	19	24	29	35	INTERPERSONAL AGGRESSION
INTERPERSONAL DEFERENCE	2	4	6	10	14	18	22	26	30	32	36	INTERPERSONAL DEFERENCE

PERSONAL CHANGE ORIENTATION

SCALE	LOW				NORMAL			HIGH				SCALE
PERSONAL CHANGE ORIENTATION	1	3	5	7	9	11	13	16	18	21	24	PERSONAL CHANGE ORIENTATION

Healthy Relationships and Interpersonal Communication

Successful living requires skills that help build strong and healthy relationships. Good communication is the key to positive and healthy relationships. Communication is especially difficult under stressful conditions. Stress is usually the trigger for anger. Empathy, the ability to put oneself in someone else's shoes, is a key part in controlling one's anger. Research shows that people who have empathy are less likely to act out on their anger. Assertion is a powerful emotional skill that helps a person to communicate more effectively, honestly, and appropriately. It is the opposite of aggression or deference. Aggression and deference are patterns of communication that need to be changed by the emotional skills of anger control and fear control. Finally, change orientation shows how satisfied you are with your present level of skills in the above scales. Change orientation shows how comfortable you are with your current anger management skills and abilities. This scale shows your potential for success through training.

KEYS TO A HEALTHY RELATIONSHIP

1. Goodwill and a desire for the relationship to win
2. Collaboration and cooperation rather than competition
3. A belief that our partners as well as ourselves can and wish to learn and grow
4. An openness to feedback and a willingness to use it positively as information that can help the relationship, rather than defensively with anger
5. A capacity to listen with empathy, sensitivity and concern as to how it is for the other
6. A willingness to risk saying what is wanted and needed and a choice not to attach each other personally
7. Responsibility for self, for reflective thinking, for one's style of speaking so as to best be heard, understood and considered and for seeking workable solutions

A relationship is a series of expectations. Problems occur when two different sets of expectations (beliefs, habits, preferences) collide or when expectations change.

A healthy relationship has explicit agreements between two people. Since hidden expectations often determine your reactions and interaction with your partners, there is a need to be explicit and arrive at heavier that is **MUTUALLY** agreeable (about who will do what and under what circumstances.)

For some it is useful to write it down, especially in those areas where there have been conflicts and disagreements. Use useful tools to surface hidden expectations and come to new understandings regarding issues that have been getting in the way of the relationship: speaking on your own behalf, empathetic listening, shared meaning, surfacing hidden expectations, identifying issues of concern needing negotiation: -

SKILLS IN CONFIDING

A healthy relationship requires the following:

- a. speaking
- b. listening with empathy
- c. accepting differences
- d. negotiating conflict
- e. self understanding
- f. mutual respect
- g. trust

What gets in the way of confiding?

- 1) not speaking on one's own behalf
- 2) not listening with empathy
- 3) not accepting differences
- 4) not negotiating conflict
- 5) not understanding one's OWN wishes, hopes and fears
- 6) not understanding your own partner
- 7) a lack of mutual respect
- 8) distrust

INTRODUCTION TO LISTENING SKILLS

I. Qualities of a Good Listener

A. Empathetic

B. Respectful

II. Empathy

A. To accept & approach from the other person's point-of-view

B. How is empathy different from sympathy?

III. Feeling Identification

A. This is a way to acknowledge feelings. Several purposes:

1. Lets caller know she or he is heard
2. Lets caller know it's important to you to understand
3. Clarify: you might get it wrong, and then the caller can correct you
4. Says that it's okay to feel that & to talk about it.

B. Ways to communicate this:

- It sounds like your feeling...
- You're feeling...
- I can hear that you're feeling really...
- That made you feel...
- That was...
- How are you feeling about that?
- What was that like for you?

IV. Validation

Again, lets caller know its okay to feel that. Examples:

- "That sounds really scary"
- "You have the right to feel scary"
- "It's not crazy to feel that way"

V. Consequences

Focuses on specifics. Helps to clarify for advocate AND caller. Can make it less overwhelming for the caller and less vague. Can help make it feel more in control.

Examples:

- "Everything feels awful"
"What's feeling so awful right now?" or
"What are some things that feel awful?"
- "I don't think that I can get through this week."
"What are some of the hardest things about getting through the week?"
- "I don't know, the meeting was just so uncomfortable."
"What about it was uncomfortable?"

Saying "Would you like to say more about that?" can also help with concreteness.

Listening Skills

Good communication skills form the foundation of intervention and counseling. As an advocate your primary task is to actively listen to callers. Simply being a "good ear" is not enough. A counselor must be able to use reflective and active listening skills that will facilitate good communication

Tips for Supportive Listening:

1. Act like a good listener. Be alert. Actively focus your attention on the words, ideas and feelings the speaker expresses.
2. Share responsibility for communication. Only part of the responsibility rests with the speaker; you, as the listener, have an important part. Try to understand, but if the communication is unclear or could have several interpretations, ask for clarification. If you're unsure, repeat what you've heard and let the speaker tell you whether you heard it the way she meant it.
3. Accept what the speaker says. Silently arguing with what the speaker says will set up a barrier between you and her. You don't have to agree; your role is to help make a safe space for her to express her feelings, no matter what they are. Don't be so concerned with planning your response that you tune out or miss the full meaning of what she says.
4. Be alert to non-verbal communication. Tones of voice, word emphasis, pauses, and body language are just as expressive (often more so) than words. The same sentence can have many different meanings, depending on the speaker's tone of voice and which words she emphasizes.
5. Listen for the speaker's meaning and purpose. Be sensitive to different levels of meaning in what the speaker says. People often feel safer expressing their message in hints and implications rather than direct statements. If you sense that the speaker means something that she hasn't directly stated, ask her. Let her tell you whether you're right or wrong about it. It can be a great relief to her to hear you say it first, especially if she's worried about being judged for what she says.
6. Be aware of your own emotions. It's important for you to be nonjudgmental and supportive of what the speaker expresses. Your worries, enthusiasm, anger, fear, and frustration are all normal; don't, however, let them inhibit the speaker from feeling safe to express her own feelings.
7. Get rid of distractions. Active listening takes energy and focus. A radio on in the background, an open magazine in front of you, other people in the room - these all detract from your ability to be a good listener.
8. Avoid taking control. Let the speaker say what she wants to say, and make sure she feels heard before you respond in any other way.

9. Stop talking. You cannot listen while you are talking. Saying nothing can be an effective way to communicate genuine acceptance. Simply being there is a powerful support for the survivor.

R. Burns of the University of Chicago suggests the following psychological barriers to listening

1. Red Flag Listening. Sometimes, certain words raise a "red flag", an alarmed response, for the listener. These words cause us to get upset and stop listening. We lose contact with the caller and stop trying to understand what she is expressing. Red flag words are different for each person. Some examples: suicide, fundamentalist, lesbian, cult abuse, abortion. Other "red flag" messages include expressing love for the perpetrator, wanting to stay in the relationship, etc. It is important to know that the survivor is doing what she needs to do to cope; the advocate's role is to be nonjudgmental and supportive.
2. Open Ears/Closed Mind Listening. Sometimes we decide that what the caller is saying makes not sense, or we think we can predict what the caller wants or is trying to say. In this way we fail to listen to what she is actually saying. This type of listening is judgmental; it limits what the caller is "allowed" to say.
3. Fact Listening. Often we try to remember everything the caller is saying to us. In the process of repeating the facts over and over to ourselves we miss the next message and lose the caller. It's best to try to remember only the important facts and main ideas. If you have the key facts, you can work with the caller to fill in any gaps. The advocate's most important role is to pay attention to the caller's feelings- facts are secondary
4. Pencil listening. When you try to write everything down, you are bound to lose the caller. It is best to jot down only the key words that relate to the major feelings or ideas that the caller is communicating.

Active Listening

Active listening is not the same as simply hearing and replying. In active listening, instead of passively absorbing the person's words, the listener tries to comprehend, reflect, and respond to the speaker's words and feelings.

Active listening builds trust and rapport with the person and offers ongoing feedback to let them know that they are understood. Active listening means that we acknowledge our own ignorance with regard to a person's feelings and thoughts, and listen deeply in order to understand. A listener must be alert and aware not only of what is said but of what isn't being said as well. When one thinks they know what is not being said, then one can clarify by it up and asking if that was what was being thought about as well.

Active listening is a most important tool. It is both an art and a skill that involves a constant process of clarification and reflection. There is a constant trying to understand more accurately what the speaker means in his/her various forms of communication.

Active listening is a learned skill requiring energy, concentration, and practice of specific techniques. Information and feelings is gathered using all your senses to understand. The process of active listening requires respect for self and others.

Active Listening Includes:

- 1. Responding with empathy, respect, and genuineness**
- 2. Comprehending and communicating the difference between feelings and thoughts**
- 3. Accurately perceiving the others feelings and acknowledging and verbalizing back to them**
- 4. Helping him/her to identify their feelings**
- 5. Communicating, when appropriate, your own feelings**
- 6. Refusing to take responsibility for their feelings, decisions, choices, as it is their responsibility and not ours**
- 7. Giving ongoing feedback**

8. Ability to help identify options and alternatives

9. Ability to be resourceful

THE RESCUE TRIANGLE

RESCUER

PERSECUTOR

VICTIM

As an advocate, it can be tempting to fall into the role of "rescuing" the survivor. This is a dangerous relationship to develop. In assuming that we can rescue another person, we assume that we have powers and skills that she does not have. We also discourage her from developing and strengthening her own powers and skills.

RESCUER – the person helping:

- Assumes a one-up, superior position
- Views the person needing help as helpless and powerless to change
- Assumes complete burden of dealing with every problem presented
- Expects little or no effort on the part of the person seeking help during the interaction

VICTIM – the person being helped:

- Assumes a one-down, inferior position
- Believes that she is helpless and powerless to change
- Expects the helper to assume responsibility for the helping process

PERSECUTOR

Empowering the persecutor is the result of assuming the positions of Rescuer or Victim. The accumulation of the resentments and anger acquired by assuming such roles: for instance, Rescuer becomes angry when Victim isn't helping herself or himself and persecutes victim. Victim becomes angry when kept in an inferior position by Rescuer.

As rescue is an attempt to "save" someone who views herself or himself as powerless and unable to make a change. A rescue does not encourage the survivor to be in control: it discourages her from her own power and reinforces passivity. Rescue relationships are oppressive and presumptuous.

Way to AVOID Rescue:

1. Person seeking support asks for what she wants.
2. Person giving support consents and states conditions.
3. Person seeking support accepts or negotiates for the support and the conditions.
4. Both parties put forth equal effort during the helping process.
5. Both parties avoid doing things they don't want to do.
6. Both parties are honest with each other.

THE DIRTY DOZEN OF LOVE KNOTS:

1. If you really loved me, you would know what I want and you would do it. Since you don't, you obviously don't care.
2. If we don't agree, one of us must be wrong. If it's me, that means that I am bad, stupid, ignorant or inadequate. So it can't be me. I must prove that it is you, so I don't feel like a failure.
3. If I tell you how I feel, you interrupt, disagree, give advice, judge or dismiss my feelings. I stop telling you. I distance.
4. If you are in pain, I believe I should be able to fix it. I don't know how to fix it, so I feel inadequate. I get angry at you for making me feel inadequate. I withdraw from you and blame you when you are in pain.
5. If I let you get close to me, you will find out my secrets, my fears and how inadequate I really am.
6. If I love you, I will need you. I cannot trust you to stay. I will provoke you, blame you, drive you away. So when you leave, I will know I was right.
7. If I tell you what I want and you do what I want, it doesn't count (because I had to tell you). If I don't tell you what I want, you don't do what I want. If you do what I want, but not the way I wanted you to, it doesn't count. I feel unloved.
8. If I do what you want and it's not what I want to do, I resent it. I believe you would resent it if I do what I want to do (as it isn't what you want to do). So I never do what I want. I'm miserable. I hate you for making me miserable.
9. If I tell you what I want, you don't do, as you resent feeling controlled. If I don't tell you what I want, there's a hidden chance you might do it on your own. So I never tell you what I want. After a while, I even stop letting myself know what I want. What do I want? I'm confused.
10. If I ask what you are thinking or feeling, I believe I am intruding (as you would tell me if you wanted me to know). If I don't ask, you believe I'm not interested, so you never tell me. We live as strangers.
11. If I tell you how I feel, you are angry. If I don't tell you how I feel, you are angry. If I tell you how angry I am at you, you distance yourself from me. If I don't tell you how angry I am at you, I distance myself from you.
12. If I let myself get close to you, I will need you. If I am too dependent and need (love) you too much, I will not be able to survive without you. I will become weak. I must avoid closeness. I will distance myself from you and care less, so that I won't miss (need) you too much when you are gone (die or leave me).

THE LOSS EXPERIENCE

When a family experiences the loss of a relationship due to abuse, it is not that different from the loss experienced from a death. Grief is experienced and is a process that a victim must go through to be able to move into recovery. The loss or grief comes from the loss of what the "wish" was for the relationship or for what the "fantasy" was for the victim in hoping the relationship would be "happily ever after". A victim has the fantasy that involves "if only's". "If only he wouldn't have such an anger issue", "if only he would stop drinking", "if only I was a better wife" and so on. When a relationship dissolves and divorce happens, regardless of who initiated it, the divorce is full of loss.

One of the ways to help work through the loss is to know the steps to grieving and allow yourself to experience those steps. They are:

1. **DENIAL** - What's the first thing you do? You try to start it again and then again. You may check to make sure to do everything the abuser asks and check the radio, heater, lights, etc. and then...try again.
2. **ANGER** - "I should have left years ago." "Why didn't I listen?" "I loved you. How could you do this to me?"
3. **BARGAINING** - Realizing that you're going to have to make a change. "Oh please God, if you will just give me someone else to love. I promise I'll..." or "Please God, let him do so I don't have to go through this pain."
4. **DEPRESSION** - "Oh God, what am I doing to do. I'm going to be alone forever. I give up. My job is at risk and I don't really care anymore. What's the use." "What am I going to do on my own (and with or without my children)".
5. **ACCEPTANCE** - "OK. It's over. Guess I had better call a lawyer. Time to get on with my life; I'll deal with this later."

Another way to help with the loss experience is to put into "reality" those "fantasy" and "wishful thinking" thoughts by "reframing" them. Reframing events is an important way to help another person to receive "reality thinking" about their relationship. It helps a victim to not separate the abuser into two different people (e.g., "the good man" vs. "the bad man" of his personality and behaviors).

Reframing the picture means that the way we think about the challenges we face greatly influences the way we react to them. External factors may not be under your control but your reaction is under your control. Reframing takes practice. IT means coming up with new definitions, deciding where you spend your energy: the past or future, it means free yourself from old "expectations" and looking forward with "new glasses". It means understanding your own journey with a new awareness.

Reframing doesn't mean that grief will immediately go away. Anytime you experience a "what could have been" event, grief may come back. This does not mean one isn't doing well or hasn't adjusted. This means you have a normal reaction and is a natural part of the loss and grief process. IT will come but stay for a shorter period than earlier in your grief experience.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO REMEMBER THAT RECONCILING YOUR GRIEF TAKES TIME.

Give yourself the gift of patience and permission to name, claim and reframe loss in your life.

According to the Family Resource Center, there is healing power in naming the transitions and losses in our life. When we put words to our experience, it lessens the mystery a bit and helps us know we are not alone. Consider the list below. Which of the following losses have you experienced as a part of a divorce?

Normal Losses in Divorce:

Loss of hopes dreams	loss of goals	loss of confidence
Loss of intimacy	loss of companionship	loss of motivation
Loss of inspiration	loss of roots	loss of time
Loss of self	loss of expectations	loss of identity
Loss of individuality	loss of trust	loss of stereotypes
Loss of truths	loss of faith	loss of friends/family
Loss of social connections	loss of quiet time	loss of inner space
Loss of support	loss of childhood	loss of children
Loss of social contacts	loss of security	loss of finances
Loss of enjoyment	loss of feelings	loss of energy
Loss of self-esteem	loss of control	loss of idealism
Loss of respect for self	loss of communication	loss of normalcy

Loss with grief is real in whatever form. Grief is a process, not an event and is hard work. It is an evolving journey that changes during the lifetime and experienced specific to the person's life experience. Part of grief work is to claim the mixture of emotional, physical, mental and spiritual reactions as your own. Because we "attach" ourselves to people, concepts and needs, we grieve when they are broke. When you grasp that grief and loss has happened to you, you realize that you may be "down for the count" but you can get up again and again.

You do have a choice as to how you approach your grief and loss. The goal is not to feel better but to FACE the pain so you can adjust and feel better.

PERSONAL BOUNDARIES

Boundaries define limits, mark off dividing lines. The purpose of a boundary is to make clear separations between different turf, different territory...

In a relationship toward recovery and the growth process, we are talking about two primary types of boundaries. Natural boundaries that are apart of the way life works – that are aligned with the reality of the rules that govern human dynamics and personal boundaries.

The process of Recovery teaches us how to take down the walls and protect ourselves in healthy ways – by learning what healthy boundaries are, how to set them and how to defend them. It teaches us to be discerning in our choices, to ask for what we need and to be assertive and loving in meeting our own needs. Of course many of us have to first get used to the revolutionary idea that it is all right for us to have needs.

The purpose of having boundaries is to protect and take care of ourselves. We need to be able to tell other people when they are acting in ways that are not acceptable to us. A first step is starting to know that we have a right to protect and defend ourselves, that we have not only the right but the duty to take responsibility for how we allow others to treat us.

We need to start becoming aware of what healthy behavior and acceptable interaction dynamics look like before we can start practicing them ourselves – and demanding the proper treatment from others. We need to start learning how to be emotionally honest with ourselves, how to start owning our feelings and how to communicate in a direct and honest manner. Setting personal boundaries is a vital part of healthy relationships are not possible without communication.

The first thing that we need to learn to do is communicate without blaming. That means, stop saying things like: you make me so angry; you hurt me; you make me crazy; how could you do that to me after all I've done for you; etc. These are the very types of messages we got in childhood that have so warped our perspective on our own emotional process.

The purpose of setting boundaries is to take care of ourselves. Being forced to learn how to set boundaries is a vital part of learning to own our self, of learning to respect ourselves, of learning to love ourselves. If we never have to set a boundary then we will never get in touch with who we really are, we will never escape the enmeshment of codependence and learn to define ourselves as separate in a healthy way.

When I first encountered the concept of boundaries, I thought of them as lines that I would draw in the sand and if you stepped across them I would shoot you (figuratively speaking). I had this image of some place like the Alamo – from a movie I guess – where a sword was used to draw a line in the sand and then those that were going to stay and fight to the death if anyone stepped across it. I thought that boundaries had to be rigid and final and somehow kind of fatal.

Some boundaries are rigid and need to be. Boundaries such as : "It's not OK to hit me, ever", "it's not acceptable to call me certain names, ever", "it's not acceptable to cheat on me".

No one deserves to be treated abusively. No one deserves to be lied to and betrayed.

We all deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. If we do not respect ourselves, if we do not start awakening to our right to be treated with respect and dignity, which is our own responsibility to create that in our own lives, then we will be more comfortable being involved with people who abuse us than with people who treat us in loving ways. Often if we do not respect ourselves, we will end up exhibiting abusive behavior towards people who do not abuse us. On some level in our codependence, we are more comfortable with being abused because it is what we have always known than being treated in a loving way.

Learning to set boundaries is vital to learning to love our self and to communicating to others that we have worth. There are basically three parts to a boundary. The first two are setting the boundary; the third is what we will do to defend that boundary.

If you – a description of the behavior we find unacceptable (be as descriptive as possible).

I will – a description of what action you will take to protect and take care of yourself in the event the other person violates the boundary.

If you continue the behavior – a description of what steps you will take to protect the boundary that you have set.

One very drastic example (in the case of someone who is just learning about boundaries and has been physically abused in the past) would be:

"If you ever hit, I will call the police and press charges and I will leave this relationship. If you continue to threaten me, I will get a restraining order and prepare to defend myself in whatever manner is necessary."

It is not always necessary or appropriate to share the third part of this formula with the other person when setting a boundary - the first two steps are the actual setting of the boundary. The third part is something we need to know for ourselves so that we know what action we can take if the other person violates the boundary. If we set a boundary and expect the other person to abide by it automatically then we are setting ourselves up to be a victim of our expectation.

It is not enough to set boundaries – it is necessary to be willing to do whatever it takes to enforce them. We need to be willing to go to any length, do whatever it takes to protect ourselves. This is something that really upset me when I first started learning how to set boundaries. It took great courage for me to build myself up to a point where I was willing to set a boundary. I thought that the huge thing I had done to set a boundary should be enough. Then to see that some people just ignored the boundaries I had set, seemed terribly unfair to me.

Consequences

It is very important to set consequences that we are willing to enforce. If you are setting boundaries in a relationship and you are not yet at a point where you are ready to leave the relationship then don't say that you will leave. You can say that you will start considering all of your options including leaving but do not state that you will do something that you are not ready yet to do. To set boundaries and not enforce them just gives the other person an excuse to continue in the same old behavior.

If you verbally abuse me by call me names like stupid or jerk, I will confront you about your behavior and share my feelings.

If you continue that behavior I will leave the room/house or ask you to leave.

12 ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Ordering, directing, commanding
2. Warning, admonishing, threatening
3. Moralizing, preaching, imploring
4. Advising, giving suggestions or solutions
5. Persuading with logic, lecturing, arguing
6. Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming
7. Praising, agreeing, evaluating positively, buttering up
8. Name calling, ridiculing, shaming
9. Interpreting, analyzing, diagnosing
10. Reassuring, sympathizing, consoling, supporting
11. Probing, questioning, interrogating
12. Distracting, diverting, kidding

Some of the standard self-improvement literature is listed below. We will add to this list and give brief explanations of the ideas in this literature so that you can decide for yourself what might be helpful to you to read next.

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People by Steven Covey

In his best selling book, Steven Covey lays out the argument that while small changes in our lives can be made through behavioral changes, deeper and more lasting change is the result of deeper principle-centered change. He then lays out the seven habits. They are

1. Be Proactive - Choose to improve upon what you can influence rather than spending any thought or energy on the things you have no control over.
2. Begin with the End in Mind - Know where you want to go before starting. In this chapter, he also recommends and explains a personal mission statement.
3. Put First Things First - This chapter is the basis of another recommended book by Steven Covey that is described below
4. Think Win/Win - In any interaction between two people, the interests of both people need to be protected. If either side loses, the transaction is a bad one.
5. Seek First to Understand and Then to Be Understood - If you want someone to listen to you, first listen to them and really try to understand what is important to them.
6. Synergize - When differences come up, cooperate to come up with real solutions to differences by not trying to win at the expense of the other, but by combining your ideas to come up with a better idea.
7. Sharpen the Saw - Find a balance between producing and improving your ability to produce. If you do not take time to restore yourself and rebuild your own abilities, then you will be like the guy sawing who does not take time to sharpen the saw, when sharpening the saw would make the sawing take far less time than sawing with a dull saw.

First Things First by Steven Covey

In this book, Steven Covey makes the case that working harder and faster will not necessarily get us where we want to go. We cannot get it all done, so we need to prioritize. He states that all of the things that fill our time can be divided into one of four categories:

Quadrant 1 - Activities that are urgent and important

Quadrant 2 - Activities that are not urgent and are important

Quadrant 3 - Activities that urgent and not important

Quadrant 4 - Activities that not urgent and not important

The activities in Quadrant 1 will get done because they have to. The activities in Quadrant 3 and 4 take up our time, but never actually need to be done because they are not important. By not doing the activities in Quadrants 3 and 4, we free up time for Quadrant 2. By handling things that are important while they are not urgent, Quadrant 1 becomes smaller and there is less urgency.

The Secret by Rhonda Byrne

The Secret that they talk about in the book and movie The Secret is this: Our thoughts become things. What we focus our minds on becomes real. This concept is very similar to what philosophers and many self-help gurus have stated over the years, but it is put together in a very concentrated way in The Secret.

There is a lot of mysticism interwoven into the Secret. If you are a mystic, it is for you. Otherwise, if you can read through the hocus pocus, there are some good principles. The Secret makes it sound like if you want to be a doctor, tell the universe you want to be a doctor and you will become one with no effort. I don't think that is what they are trying to say, but it sounds like that.

What you really want to get out of this book is that we become what we focus our minds on. If we focus our minds on our problems, they seem to become even bigger and overwhelm us. If we focus our minds on the solutions, the problem becomes smaller and we can solve the problem.

Focusing our minds on what we want will not magically make them appear. But our minds are powerful. When we are seeking an answer, we can ask the universe for what we want and then be still and the answer will be given to us. A difference is made between action and inspired action; inspired action is action that we feel we need to take, but it is action that we want to take.

Another concept of the book is that there is abundance for everyone. If we focus on abundance, then that is what we will get.

CONSEQUENCES FOR BEING ARRESTED

Discuss what consequences they have had to experience due to being arrested (i.e. loss of relationships, a permanent criminal record, etc.)

Many people mistakenly believe that if they are arrested but not charged with a crime, there are no repercussions to the initial arrest. The fact, however, is that any arrest can result in several long-term consequences

Consequences of Arrest: Record of Arrest

In most states, people who are arrested for any reason whatsoever will have a permanent record of that arrest, which must be reported to certain employers and licensing agencies. When you are arrested, the reason for the arrest as well as other pertinent information will be a matter of public record, which can only be sealed for a limited number of reasons. If you are arrested, you may have to disclose that information to future employers, which may cost you a job.

Consequences of Arrest: Posting Bail

Most people who are arrested try to post bail immediately, or call someone to post bail for them. Posting bail can also be made a matter of public record, and the fact that you posted bail can be disclosed to police if you are ever arrested again. While this is not a warning against posting bail, everything you do has consequences.

Consequences of Arrest: Searches

When you are arrested, the supposition that you have been involved in criminal activity may result in certain searches and seizures. Depending on the reason for your arrest, police may have probable cause (or be able to obtain a warrant) to search your car, home, office at work, gym locker or any other property that may contain evidence that applies to your case. Even if no such evidence turns up, the police are still legally able to search your property beyond the reasonable expectation of privacy.

Consequences of Arrest: Seizures

Now list the consequences you may have if arrested due to negative behaviors (or consequences you have experienced due to having been arrested):

DEALING WITH HOSTILE PEOPLE

Research shows that supportive relationships are good for our mental and physical health. However, dealing with difficult people and maintaining ongoing negative relationships is actually detrimental to our health. It's a good idea to diminish or eliminate relationships that are filled with conflict. But what do you do if the person in question is a family member, co-worker, or someone you otherwise can't easily eliminate from your life?

The following are tips for dealing with difficult people who are in your life, for better or for worse:

Difficulty: Average

Time Required: Ongoing

Here's How:

1. **Keep Conversations Neutral** Avoid discussing divisive and personal issues, like religion and politics, or other issues that tend to cause conflict. If the other person tries to engage you in a discussion that will probably become an argument, change the subject or leave the room.
2. **Accept The Reality of Who They Are** In dealing with difficult people, don't try to change the other person; you will only get into a power struggle, cause defensiveness, invite criticism, or otherwise make things worse. It also makes *you* a more difficult person to deal with.
3. **Know What's Under Your Control** Change your response to the other person; this is all you have the power to change. For example, don't feel you need to accept abusive behavior. You can use assertive communication to draw boundaries when the other person chooses to treat you in an unacceptable way.
4. **Create Healthier Patterns** Remember that most relationship difficulties are due to a *dynamic* between two people rather than one person being unilaterally "bad." Chances are good that you're repeating the same patterns of interaction over and over; changing your response could get you out of this rut, and responding in a healthy way can improve your chances of a healthier pattern forming. Here's a list of things to avoid in dealing with conflict. Do you do any of them?
5. **See The Best In People** Try to look for the positive aspects of others, especially when dealing with family, and focus on them. The other person will feel more appreciated, and you will likely enjoy your time together more.
6. **Remember Who You're Dealing With** Seeing the best in someone is important; however, don't pretend the other person's negative traits don't exist. Don't tell your secrets to a

gossip, rely on a flake, or look for affection from someone who isn't able to give it. This is part of accepting them for who they are.

7. **Get Support Where You Can Find It** Get your needs met from others who are able to meet your needs. Tell your secrets to a trustworthy friend a good listener, or process your feelings through journaling for example. Rely on people who have proven themselves to be trustworthy and supportive, or find a good therapist if you need one. This will help you *and* the other person by taking pressure off the relationship and removing a source of conflict.
8. **Let Go Or Get Space If You Need It** Know when it's time to distance yourself, and do so. If the other person can't be around you without antagonizing you, minimizing contact may be key. If they're continually abusive, it's best to cut ties and let them know why. Explain what needs to happen if there ever is to be a relationship, and let it go. (If the offending party is a boss or co-worker, you may consider switching jobs.)

Tips:

1. Try not to place blame on yourself or the other person for the negative interactions. It may just be a case of your two personalities fitting poorly.
2. Remember that you don't have to be close with everyone; just being polite goes a long way toward getting along and appropriately dealing with difficult people.
3. Work to maintain a sense of humor - difficulties will roll off your back much more easily. Shows like "The Office" and books like David Sedaris' Naked can help you see the humor in dealing with difficult people.
4. Be sure to cultivate other more positive relationships in your life to offset the negativity of dealing with difficult people.

These are ten productive ways to deal with your difficult individual. Let's start with the first five.

- **Start out by examining yourself.** Are you sure that the other person is really the problem and that you're not overreacting? Have you always experienced difficulty with the same type of person or actions? Does a pattern exist for you in your interaction with coworkers? Do you recognize that you have hot buttons that are easily pushed? (We all do, you know.) Always start with self-examination to determine that the object of your attention really is a difficult person's actions.

- **Explore what you are experiencing with a trusted friend or colleague or mental health professional.** Brainstorm ways to address the situation. When you are the object of an attack, or your boss appears to support the dysfunctional actions of a coworker, it is often difficult to objectively assess your options. Anger, pain, humiliation, fear and concern about making the situation worse are legitimate emotions.

Pay attention to the unspoken agreement you create when you solicit another's assistance. You are committing to act unless you agree actions will only hurt the situation. Otherwise, you risk becoming a whiner or complainer in the eyes of your colleague.

- **Approach the person with whom you are having the problem for a private discussion.** Talk to them about what you are experiencing in "I" messages. (Using "I" messages is a communication approach that focuses on your experience of the situation rather than on attacking or accusing the other person.) You can also explain to your coworker the impact of their actions on you.

Be pleasant and agreeable as you talk with the other person. They may not be aware of the impact of their words or actions on you. They may be learning about their impact on you for the first time. Or, they may have to consider and confront a pattern in their own interaction with people. Worst case? They may know their impact on you and deny it or try to explain it away. Unfortunately, some difficult people just don't care. During the discussion, attempt to reach agreement about positive and supportive actions going forward.

- **Follow up after the initial discussion.** Has the behavior changed? Gotten better? Or worse? Determine whether a follow-up discussion is needed. Determine whether a follow-up discussion will have any impact. Decide if you want to continue to confront the difficult person by yourself. Become a peacemaker. (Decide how badly you want to make peace with the other person and how much you want your current job. Determine whether you have experienced a pattern of support from your boss.) If you answer, "yes," to these questions, hold another discussion. If not, escalate and move to the next idea.
- **You can confront your difficult coworker's (significant other behavior's) publicly.** Deal with the person with gentle humor or slight sarcasm. Or, make an exaggerated physical gesture – no, not that one – such as a salute or place your hand over your heart to indicate a serious wounding.

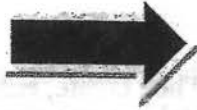
You can also tell the difficult person that you'd like them to consider important history in their decision making or similar words expressed positively, depending on the subject. Direct confrontation does work well for some people in some situations. I don't think it works to ask the person to stop doing what they're doing, publicly, but you can employ more positive

confrontational tactics. Their success for you will depend on your ability to pull them off. Each of us is not spur-of-the-moment funny, but if you are, you can use the humor well with difficult coworkers.

EMOTIONAL ADDICTION CYCLE

PHASE IV – Tension Building

Tension increases, breakdown of communication, “danger” begins and perpetrator justifies and sets up situations to make event happen



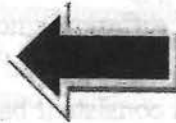
PHASE I – Event

Verbal, emotional, physical abuse, psychological, blaming, threats, Sexual abuse, etc.



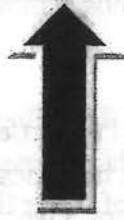
PHASE II – Emotional Addiction

Brain releases chemicals, strengthening bonds and receptors translate and brain seeks more pleasure seeking



PHASE III - Calm Phase (Honeymoon)

Incident is overlooked, abuse is Perceived as temporary and “hope” That abuser will change is created



Understand how this cycle efficiently and completely destroys you if you don't change

EMOTIONAL ADDICTION – WHAT IS IT?

Very few people realize that each and every one of us is addicted to emotions. See, the very same receptors on the cells of our body that are used by drug addicts are the very same receptors that are used for the chemicals compounds our bodies use to experience emotion. So by realizing that people can become addicted to drugs, one can easily realize that one can become addicted to emotions just as easily, and do.

Emotions are a natural part of our daily lives. They create, enhance and bond our experience of the world. Emotions are also our body's way of taking experiences of life and turning those lessons into long term memories in order for us to be able to function in the world more effectively. It's not the emotions that are bad, it's the addiction to those emotions that is the problem.

The body uses combinations of specific chemicals to create each of the different emotions. There is a specific chemical combination for sexual pleasure, depression, happiness, sadness, and anger, and victimization, and any other emotion that you can think of. Over the years, people develop an addiction to the different chemicals of different emotions. The more someone feels a particular positive emotion, the more they want to repeat it and do, so the more addicted to that emotion they become. If someone gets angry on a consistent basis, they develop an emotional addiction to the anger chemicals. If someone plays a victim and cries why me long enough, they habituate that way of being and develop an emotional addiction to those specific chemicals. As each of the cells split, the new cells created need more and more of those specific chemicals in order to get the same stimulation as the old cell.

Our habitual "love" emotional state attracts to us more of that emotional state. So you can see that if we are addicted to specific loving emotional states created by behaviors, experiences, and "make up" sex or our "fantasy of potentiality regarding someone", that those may keep us in bad relationships. If you are in an abusive relationship where the "groomer" gives you gifts, fantastic make up sex, "hope" that they will change, etc., then we have to undo the habitual addiction to those emotional states that create negative consequences and develop new addictions through habit for the positive emotional chemicals with healthy partners who don't abuse. Many times people will act in certain ways just to get the fix of their emotional addiction. The difficult for many people is getting past their emotional addictions that create negativity in their lives and developing more productive emotional addictions.

You must be willing to constantly practice new behaviors and live in "reality" based life in order to develop new habits and create the new emotional addictions to positive emotions. This is difficult at first but with enough practice it becomes easy to stay happy because of your addiction to that specific emotional state. The more you practice those positive emotions developed from positive experiences, behaviors and attitudes, the easier it gets over time because your body will

naturally develop an addiction for those emotional chemicals and attract situations and people to you in order to sustain that emotional addiction. Practice positive emotions, stay away from negative relationships, controlling people, gender biased individuals and seek positive, mutuality based individuals with unconditional positive regard for self and others, and eventually the universe will throw situations and people at you in order to sustain that emotional addiction.

Healing The Past – A Proven Technique That Works

Seeking to deliberately face, and then work to heal, a large hurt from the past takes a tremendous amount of courage. It requires that we face not only the rejection and cruelty of others, but also the possibility of our responsibility, which can be overwhelming. It is far easier to just let the hurts alone and move forward since we can't change the past.




photo credit: photomek

Why Do It?

Given how hard healing the past is, and how it won't change events either way, why should we bother?

1. The pain of the past is lessened or eliminated. Everyone has painful memories, things that they would rather not think about. There may be whole periods of your life, or single instances that you would rather forget. Simple reminders are painful, often physically, and the emotional pain isn't easy either. But, what if those memories didn't bring that pain? What if instead, you had simply sadness? A little regret perhaps, but also a calm feeling that this part of the past will no longer haunt you? Not only is that feeling possible, but it is completely worth it.

2. You feel physically lighter and happier. Unless you have felt the liberating lightness of letting go of a piece of the past, you don't know how awesome it feels. And, even if you have felt it, you may think it was a fluke. It is hard to describe the feeling; akin to the end of a tough job interview, but magnified. This feeling of lightness brings a sense of peace and happiness as well. While the immediate feeling may fade after a day or so, the sense of peace and happiness about that particular hurt will never fade. You will be able to bring it back whenever you want, especially when you need courage for the next bout with past hurts.

3. You are able to see yourself clearly and forgive yourself. When you lived the hurt in the past, you interpreted it in one way. Since that time, you have probably gone over and over the situation, trying to understand. With healing of that hurt, you don't wonder anymore. You finally have clarity on

the situation; you may see things from someone else's point of view, as I did. Or, you may see clearly a false assumption about yourself that clouded your interpretation. It's like you have a new knowledge of yourself that is completely true. Something you know that is who you really are and doesn't need to be hidden. And, no matter what your role was, you realize you couldn't help it; no matter what happened, you did the best you could with who you were at the time – even if that time was a matter of seconds.

How To Do It?

It's easy to say that the past can be healed, but harder to believe when hurts runs deep. When you are ready to tackle the challenge, you will need to feel intense emotions, one that you have become a master at pushing away. While the process is fairly simple to explain, I know it's far from easy to put into effect.

1. Realize that no one is forcing you to face your pain; rather it is a choice you are making.

Any time you probe a particularly large piece of emotional baggage, or even a small piece, you will want to run. There is no shame in the wanting to run and if you don't feel up to it, then don't do it. Only you know how much you can take and when you can take it. It is totally up to you to decide when the time is right. Use that power as a confidence booster that you can face the past and come through it.

2. Give yourself whatever emotional safety you need. This may be time alone in your bedroom, or a walk in the woods. This may be with another person, either a trusted friend or a professional therapist. Dealing with past hurts is messy and scary. You must feel totally comfortable with your present surrounds in order to deal with the pain of the past. A glass of water and a box of tissues would probably come in handy as well. Releasing emotional baggage usually comes with lots of tears.

3. Give yourself permission to feel in order to start exploring the pain. We have become so good at pushing our feelings down and going numb that we need to know it's OK to feel them. This is difficult as our conscious mind, the logical part that works to keep us safe, will do its best to maintain numbness. However, we know deep down that truly feeling our feelings is what we need to do. Take control and know that it is OK to let go, if only for a little while.

4. Allow yourself to feel your feelings about the past as completely as possible. It helps to think of a specific incident you want to address, but I often find that healing past hurts ends up going in a different direction than originally intended. It may be hard to actually feel the feelings, but once you feel the glimmer of one, the others won't be that far behind. Do your best to express whatever comes up fully. You may be shocked at what you will realize about the past and how clear things will become.

5. If you get stuck in a feeling, deliberately stop probing the wound. If the pain is a particularly deep one, you may find yourself getting stuck and unable to get any clarity. You may feel there is no way out and that you were totally to blame for what happened; at least that's what happens to me. When you reach this place there is an out – you must tell yourself something to the effect of, "This pain is overwhelming, I can't face it anymore. I've done what I can for now, and I will put it aside until I am able to face it again." No one said you have to keep feeling awful if you're not making any headway. Remember, you chose to face this pain, you can just as easily choose to stop facing it. Also remember, going over and over the pain without release in the past made it worse. Honor yourself now and stop the downward spiral.

Doing this intense personal work is exhausting. However, it is also incredibly liberating. Every large piece of emotional baggage I've disposed of has stayed disposed of. Little by little, I chip away at the huge pile of luggage, getting closer and closer to complete self love. Some days I may deal with a small hurt, the equivalent of a messenger bag or briefcase. Other times I am able to heal a large hurt, the equivalent of a steamer trunk – the kind that a body could be hidden in. Every shred of hurt that is healed is worth it.

How many times have you had a strong reaction to something that someone says to you? Think about a recent time when you felt hurt, betrayed, worthless, rejected, inferior or angry. What emotional hot button was being pressed? As Bill Ferguson says in his quote above - every one of us has hurts from the past that affect our lives today. These hurts might stem from a feeling of failure, not being good enough, not being loveable or some other form of not being okay. Until you can identify and release these core issues, they will continue to surface. Once you can disconnect from the hurt, the hot button will be gone and you will no longer react personally to comments from others. If the fitness instructor truly believed that she was an excellent instructor, how would she have reacted? She would have let it go as what it really was - a need for the other person to show their knowledge.

Is there an old hurt in your life today that needs resolving? Are you wasting time rehashing events due to emotional hot buttons that have been triggered? Make a commitment to disconnect these hot buttons. Next time you have a strong reaction to something that someone says, stop and ask yourself-"what is the real source of my pain?" Go back to the creation of the old belief about yourself and re-write the belief with the REAL TRUTH

HOW TO DEAL WITH A DIFFICULT SITUATION

At some point in your life you will find yourself involved in awkward moments or difficult situations. These moments can range from feeling embarrassment to divorce or dealing with the death of a loved one. Your difficult situation may be related to your finances, your marriage, your children or your job. However, there are steps and actions you can take to handle any difficult situation that life may bring.

- Realize that your difficult situation is all in how you perceive it. What may seem difficult now will not seem difficult later. What may seem difficult to you may not be difficult to others.
- Realize you have a choice in how you handle your difficult situations. You can choose to be positive or you can choose to be negative. Try to find the positive in every situation that life may bring.
- Be resourceful. Never give up or give in when faced with a challenge. Find out as much information as you can about your situation whether that means talking to someone who has been through it or looking it up in the yellow pages or on the internet to find resources to help you get through the situation.
- Deal with your emotions. In any and every situation that you encounter you will have emotional responses. Sometimes you may feel hurt, sad, disappointment, anger, frustration, shame or loneliness. You need to let yourself feel the emotions. Cry when you need to cry. Punch a pillow, yell, scream, roll around on the floor and have a temper tantrum. Let the emotions pass through you like a current and move on.
- Don't let the situation change you as person unless the change is positive. We all will find that difficult situations help us to grow as individuals. Don't let the situation make you blame other people and harbor resentment or damage your self esteem.
- Have a sense of humor and learn to laugh at your situation or mistakes no matter how bad they are. Laughter is like medicine and sometimes it can be contagious. Write a journal and record your feelings. Find a peaceful outlet such as a long walk, taking deep breaths, listening to your favorite music or watching a good movie. Use time out method or stop light method.
- Always keep a good support system. The support system can consist of friends or family or simply a group of people that are going through the same difficult situation. Remember to surround yourself with love and love yourself no matter what situation occurs.

STRESS AND ABUSIVE BEHAVIORS

ABUSING BEHAVIORS. The angry person's primary goal is to achieve power and control over another. In order to do so, they often plan and utilize a pattern of coercive tactics aimed at instilling fear, shame, and helplessness in their victim. Another part of this strategy is to change randomly the list of "rules" or expectations the victim must meet to avoid abuse. The angry person's incessant degradation, intimidation, and demands on their victim is effective in establishing fear. It is important to note that angry people may also engage in planned and impulsive acts of domestic violence.

STRESS: Stress does NOT cause abusive behaviors but rather can contribute to them. If a perpetrator does not handle his/her stress well then they will act out on family members who are victims to help alleviate their stressors.

So this exercise is to talk to them about their stress and stressors and ask them how they handle them and what works and doesn't work. Guide them to techniques and ways to better handle stressors and stress so that they don't use it as an excuse to abuse. There is no excuse for abuse.

Questions to ask:

What is stress?

What are things that stress you out?

How do you handle those things when they come up?

What works and what doesn't work in handling those stressors?

Who taught you to handle the stress in that manner?

What responsibility do you have in better stress management?

Etc.

STEPS TO HELP FIND INNER PEACE

Inner peace is the most valuable thing that we can cultivate. Nobody can give us inner peace, at the same time it is only our own thoughts that can rob us of our inner peace. To experience inner peace we don't have to retreat to a Himalayan cave; we can experience inner peace right now, exactly where we are. The most important criteria is to value the importance of inner peace. If we really value inner peace, we will work hard to make it a reality.

These are some suggestions (but not all) for bringing more peace into your mind.

1. Choose carefully how and where we spend time.

If you are addicted to the news and spend an hour reading newspapers every day or watching television news like CNN, and other news programs 24 hours a day, the mind will be agitated by the relentless negativity in the world. The news is full of negative events going on around the world and in our community and to have it added to the 78% of negative messages we already receive daily, we are on negative overload. We can try to detach from this negativity, but we will make our progress easier if we don't spend several hours ruminating over the problems of the world. If you have a spare 15 minutes, don't just automatically switch on the TV or surf the internet. Take the opportunity to be still, meditate, pray, relax, or at least do something positive. The problem is the mind feels insecure unless it has something to occupy it and relaxing or focusing on positives is unfamiliar to most, so we need to let our minds get use to this state so it can receive positives. When we really can attain a clear mind we discover it creates a genuine sense of happiness and inner peace. Balance is important in everything – including how we spend our time and where we spend our time.

2. Control of Thoughts.

It is our thoughts that determine our state of mind. If we constantly cherish and choose negative and destructive thoughts, inner peace will always remain allusive. At all costs, we need to avoid pursuing trains of negative thoughts. This requires practice – we cannot attain mastery of our thoughts over night. Affirmations are helpful tools and “listening” to your ruminating tapes being played over and over inside your head. Counter the negative messages you are telling yourself with positive messages. Always remember that we are able to decide which thoughts to follow and which to reject. Never feel you are a helpless victim to your thoughts.

3. Simplify Your Life

Modern life, places great demands on our time. We can feel that we never have enough time to fulfill all our tasks. However, we should seek to minimize these outer demands. Take time to simplify your life; there are many things that we can do without, quite often we add unnecessary responsibilities to our schedule. Do the most significant tasks, one at a time, and enjoy doing them. To experience inner peace, it is essential to avoid cluttering our life with unnecessary activities and worries.

4. Spend time to cultivate inner peace.

Every day we spend 8 hours a day to earn money, can we not find time to spend 15 minutes to cultivate inner peace? No matter how much money we earn, it cannot bring us inner peace, but, if we spend 15 minutes on meditation and relaxation techniques inner peace can become a possibility. Meditation does not just mean sitting still for 30 minutes; in meditation we seek to experience a state of consciousness which is flooded with inner peace. Prayer also is a meditation that can be used to cultivate inner peace. Asking a higher power or God to give you inner peace, then taking time to have a "relationship" with the higher power will automatically help cultivate inner peace. Sleeping 8 hours a night will also cultivate inner peace. If you are not rested – you are not giving yourself the "energy" and "rest" needed to cultivate your healthier self.

"You cannot buy peace; you must know how to manufacture it within, in the stillness of your daily practices in meditation."

- Paramahansa Yogananda

5. Avoid believing Flattery and Criticism

If we depend on the opinions and praise of other people, we can never have inner peace. Criticism and flattery are two sides of the same coin. They are both the judgments of others. However, we should not allow ourselves to be affected by either. When we do, we feed the ego. We should learn to have confidence in ourselves. This does not mean we will love ourselves in an egotistical way, it means we value our real self and have belief in the good qualities that are part of everyone. There is something called "healthy ego" where one is "authentic" and "true" to self. That is part of having confidence in ourselves and trust ourselves to know what is good and what is bad for us. We are not defined by others but by our own values, judgments and ethics. Love of others and self is "healthy ego" and flattery and criticism are not "truth tellers."

6. Be Active selflessly

Inner peace does not mean that we have to live a life of a hermit. Inner peace, can be felt amidst dynamic activity. But, this action should be done with selfless motives. When we serve others we forget our sense of self, and it is when we forget our limited self that we can have inner peace. In Japan, when someone is depressed they are asked to go out and work in a garden for several months. This is therapeutic in that it gets the depressed individual to focus on assisting plants to grow, raking a rock garden, and focusing outside of themselves which is selfless. The person soon realizes that they are no longer depressed because they have focused on positive acts and negative, depression, disappears.

7. Avoid Criticising Others

If we want inner peace, we should feel that our inner peace depends on the well being of others. If we are indifferent to the feelings of others, then it is impossible to have inner peace for ourselves. What we give out comes back. When you criticize another person, it takes negative energy, negative focus, and robs you of love. When you don't waste your time, energy, and self

on criticism, you find more time for peaceful things. If you offer a peaceful attitude to others this is what we will see return.

In today's fast moving world, qualities such as gratitude seem to belong to another age – a simpler time when life moved along at an easier pace and there was time to appreciate everything. Yet within this apparently meek sounding quality there lies a tremendous source of power that can radically reshape the way you look at the world.

8. What gratitude can do for us:

- **Puts things in perspective:** Human beings have this self-defeating propensity to let the bad things in life fill our mental vision and leave no room for the good, a tendency reflected and perpetuated by television and newspapers. Often it takes just one bad thing to happen for us dwell on it and get depressed, no matter how many good things that are happening. In cultivating a daily practice of gratitude, we start to reverse that process and gain a true perspective on life.
- **Lifts us above the ebbs and tides of life:** The more you develop the quality of gratitude in your life, you will start feeling grateful even when bad things happen to you, because you will have developed the inner vision/peace to see that good things and bad happenings are nothing but experiences to shape you and make you stronger. Hence you will be able to have peace of mind no matter what the outer circumstances are.
- **Takes us out of our limited ego:** As with other practices of self-discovery, your awareness expands and you gradually feel you are part of something much more infinite than your limiting ego and finite mortal frame. Gratitude helps us turn away from self-centeredness and realize our place in the world.
- **Awakens a higher part of our being:** Gratitude is primarily a quality felt by the heart center, that place in the middle of our chest where we can feel our soul, or the essence of our existence. Therefore, when we are consciously grateful, some inmost part of ourselves is awakened and we enter into the higher and nobler realms of our being.

Techniques to cultivate the quality of gratitude:

There are many different techniques to use; the important thing is that they be practiced every day, preferably at the same time each day so you can form a habit. Just after you get up in the morning is usually the best time – you aren't likely to be disturbed, and the peace and serenity you get from the practice benefits you throughout your whole day.

- **Writing down things you are grateful for:** This serves as a useful beginning to the other techniques. Each day you can write down seven things that you are truly grateful for, and as you write try to feel that quality inside your heart. When you start writing, you realize how many things there are – from the big things such as the gift of life and friends down to tiny little incidents that happened yesterday such as someone giving you a smile or the chance to spend a few minutes sitting in a park.

- **Expanding gratitude inside your heart:** you can try silently chanting the word gratitude over and over again. Each time you repeat the word you can feel that a tiny flower of gratitude inside your heart growing and growing, expanding petal by petal.
- **Cultivating inner joy:** Joy carries with it the quality of expansion and awareness which gives rise to gratitude. Try breathing in and out and keeping your awareness on the river of breath entering and leaving your body. Feel that when you breathe in, pure inner joy in entering into your heart, and when you breathe out, worry tension and stress are leaving your system.

There are many things one can do to find inner peace. Your job is to find what works for you and make it a daily habit of your life. You are important and inner peace is not something that you can take in pill form, nor is it "given" to you as a gift. It is something you "cultivate" by taking time to do the techniques needed to make it "your gift" to you!!

WHAT IS LOVE VS LOVE CONFUSION

There are many ways we can talk about love. But there are certain images and words describing what love is that lead to confusion and sometimes to bad situations if acted on. In fact some of these messages are actually what love isn't. There are many things about love that can't be summed up in a word. Here are two lists to help you sort out what love is or isn't. These lists are to help you decide how you want to be treated.

Love is...

Responsibility

Hard work

Pleasure

Commitment

Caring

Honesty

Sex

Trust

Communication

Sharing

Compromising

Closeness

Recognizing differences

Vulnerability

Openness

Respect

Love isn't...

Jealousy

Possessiveness

Pain

Violence

Sex

Obsession

Being selfish

Cruelty

Getting pregnant

Making someone pregnant

Dependency

Giving up yourself

Intimidation

Scoring

Fear

Proving yourself

GROUP ACTIVITY 1 HAND OUT

THERE IS ONLY ONE PERSON ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH THAT HAS THE POWER TO MAKE YOU ANGRY AND THAT PERSON IS YOURSELF!!

If the same thing happened to 10 different people, they would all react differently. Some would get mad, some would get afraid, some would feel sad and some would blow it off. What makes the difference? Why do different people react differently to the same event?

The difference is the personal history of the person and how they have learned to deal with events, stressors, threats, or loss. It is not what happens to you – it is how you deal with it that matters.

Anger was given to us as a natural emotion to our “fright and flight” response to an event. The anger was a warning to us to “run away from” or “flee” from the act, threat, stressor, or event. The threat can be real or perceived and made up. To be human is to become angry some of the time. However, man changed the automatic response of “flight” when anger kicks in – to “attack” or “fight” when faced with a threat, stressor, event and/or act. We should be running as far away as we can until our emotional response settles down and we can think more rationally. It is important not to make anger bad or destructive but to make it a tool for building something and for survival.

You are the only one who can make yourself angry and you CHOSE how you respond to events that upset you. What you think about the event can determine whether you become angry or not. Your thoughts and beliefs can make your response positive or negative as well as your repeated behaviors.

The event -----your thoughts of the event ----- consequent emotion

IT IS WHAT WE DO WITH ANGER THAT IS IMPORTANT

We can use anger to lash out at another

We can use anger to intimidate another

We can use anger to speak out with firmness and increase our self esteem

We can use anger to correct a situation that is wrong

We can use anger to motivate us to do something positive

All great social movements had their beginnings based in someone getting angry and using it as a tool for social, personal, and societal change.

GROUP ACTIVITY 2 HAND OUT

TIME OUT!

A good tool to use to interrupt the escalation of anger is a “time out.” You can’t be physically abusive, verbally abusive, emotionally abusive (or any other type of abuser) if you take a time out. Why? Because a time out means you choose to not be in the presence of another individual when you are escalating. If you are not there, you can’t abuse anyone, plus by walking away – you get to de-escalate and cool down so that you can see the situation more clearly and without anger and its tunnel vision. You take time outs because you care about yourself, the other, about safety and good communication. To make it effective with another person, you will need to explain what it is and why you both need to use it and accept it when it is called for.

Time out is simply done by saying “I can feel myself escalating and getting tense so I need a time out” and reassure the other person that when you have calmed down you will be back to resolve the issue without anger. A time out is not an abandonment or power play. Then you simply leave. You go for a walk, listen to music, go play a sport activity, or exercise. You do not drink or use drugs during a time out, nor do you ruminate over the conversation trying to justify your anger. You remind yourself of your being in control of your anger, that you love the other person and that you want to relax and calm down.

When you have calmed down, you go back to try to resolve calmly, with respect and unconditional positive regard, the issue or problem. If you begin to escalate again, then you take another time out. You may have to schedule the discussion at another time until you can be in control of self and your anger. But be sure to ask for a time that is good for the both of you.

This is a very effective technique if you use it when you first feel the signs of an argument coming on or your body tensing up.

MORE WAYS TO BREAK OUT OF ANGER

Your peace of mind is where you put your energy. Identify your “self angering” metaphors:

I’m as hot as a firecracker
I’m an emotional yo-yo
I’m a time bomb ready to explode
I’m coiled and ready to spring
I have a short fuse
I am a volcano ready to go off
I have a ball of fire in my belly
I’m at the end of my rope
I’m at the breaking point
I’m a prisoner of my anger
I’m a pressure cooker ready to blow
I have a fire consuming me
I have an uncontrollable temper
I need to be right over being happy
I’m an emotional roller coaster
I’m stuck and can’t change
I live by the river – Denial
I have “red outs”
I allow people to push my buttons

Stress leads to anger so having stress management in your life will reduce anger. Here are some coping skills to deal with threat and feeling overwhelmed:

Deep breathe
Relaxation and/or visualization
Meditation/Prayer
Alpha State
Talk to friends
Listen to tapes

Listen to music or play
Exercise
Play or listen to music
Problem solve
Confront nicely others/share feelings
Stay in the “present” and not the past or future
Distract by doing pleasurable things like attending an event or working on a hobby
Go camping
Identify Triggers
Confront negative self talk and change to positive self talk
Write/journal
Set boundaries
Find humor in situations
Read books that will help you
Go to self help groups
Gain social support
Get more sleep
Ask you unconscious mind to see things differently and reframe situations consciously
Take a vacation

Remember that when you are feeling stressed, your priority is to take good care of yourself.

Not so healthy ways to cope with stress and anger:

Become immersed in excessive violent television/movies
Ignore the problem and do not confront the person(s)
Hang out with negative people and/or triangulate others into your problem
Allow irritability to build up
Withdraw into silent treatment
Explode on other and mistreat them

Deny the problem

Internalize anger

Personalize anger

Dwell on negative thoughts

Stuff feelings

Eat/binge

Drink/drugs

Push your body into fatigue

Excessive work or other activities that lead to negative consequences

Remember to use empowerment statements to change from negative thoughts to positive thoughts which lead to positive behaviors/actions.

For example:

I will get through this!

I'm in charge, not my anger!

I choose to take care of myself!

I remain calm when I am stressed!

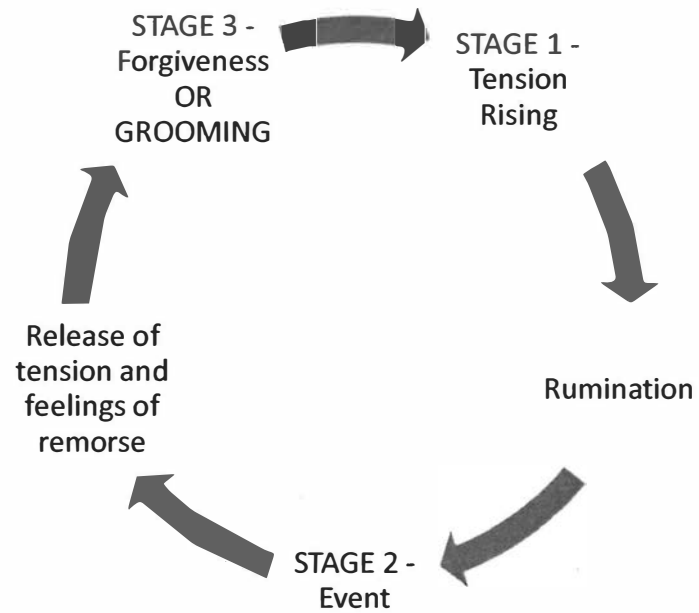
I choose to take a deep breath and take a time out!

And so on

Getting angry when frightened or crying when frustrated are examples of misguided emotion.

GROUP ACTIVITY 3 HAND OUT

ANGER CYCLE



GROUP ACTIVITY 4 HAND OUT

GROOMING

Grooming is a process. It begins when the person chooses a target. He/she may visit places where their victim is likely to go. Other people strike up relationships with adults and children who make particularly good targets.

Victim selection and recruitment are next. There is no prototypical victim of anger. Anyone may be victimized. Not surprisingly, anger perpetrators often target people with obvious vulnerabilities. Those who one can bully, who spend time alone, who lack confidence and self-esteem, and who are isolated from their peers are all likely targets.

People who groom engage or "recruit" their victims in different ways. Many use a combination of forced teaming and charm. They may offer to give rides, or buy treats and gifts as tokens of friendship. They may offer drugs or alcohol or money to "help out". And they almost always offer a sympathetic, understanding ear. "I understand and respect you -I do" statements. "I have been in relationships other men/women but I have never felt like this before. You make me feel so good. I trust you. I respect you. I care for you more than anybody else. And I love you. I'm here for you."

Successful perpetrators of anger grooming find and fill voids in a person's life so they can "mind bomb" them with anger techniques.

A groomer when wrong will usually say: "I am sorry I yelled at you. Please don't tell your friends because they'll be upset and don't tell your mother or dad because they won't like you being with me." Later on, secrecy joins hands with threats: "If you tell your friends/family what happened, they will hate you (or me)." Then on to this, "If you make me jealous, I will make sure that if I can't have you – no one else will either."

The forging of an emotional bond through grooming leads to physical contact. People who use the grooming process to break down a person's defenses and increase the acceptance of lies and anger behavior. The first physical contact between angry person and their victim is often touching another in some way. Repeated blaming and grooming desensitizes the person.

GROUP ACTIVITY 5 HAND OUT

Rumination is a way of responding to distress that involves repetitively focusing on the symptoms of distress, and on its possible causes and consequences. It is endless negative self-talk and focus on negative events in one's life. It can cause depression, anger, fear, and other negative behaviors and attitudes.

Rumination is more common in people who are pessimistic, neurotic, and who have negative attributional styles. The tendency to ruminate is a stable constant over time and serves as a significant risk factor for clinical depression. Not only are habitual ruminators more likely to become depressed, but experimental studies have demonstrated that people who are induced to ruminate experience greater depressed mood. There is also evidence that rumination is linked to general anxiety, post traumatic stress, binge drinking, eating disorders, and self-injurious behavior.

Rumination was originally believed to predict the duration of depressive symptoms. In other words, ruminating about problems was presumed to be a form of memory rehearsal which was believed to actually lengthen the experience of depression. The evidence now suggests that although rumination contributes to depression, it is not necessarily correlated with the duration of symptoms.

Rumination is similar to worry except rumination focuses on bad feelings and experiences from the past, whereas worry is concerned over potential bad events in the future. Both rumination and worry are associated with anxiety and other negative emotional states.

GROUP ACTIVITY 6 HAND OUT

YOUR KEY TO ANGER CONTROL – RESPONSIBILITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Recognize: Thoughts + body reactions/emotions = anger

Accept: You control the thinking

Choose: To pause and cool down, to take down your ruminating self “anger”

thoughts. Breathe deeply and be in control, to choose a higher level of anger response. Time out is part of the take control phase here

Monitor: Your level of arousal, other emotions that accompany anger, what you tell yourself to keep yourself caught in anger (what purpose is it serving for you)

Learn: About how you react when you have stressors, risks to property, threats

To self and self-esteem (being discounted, put down, rumors spread about you, teased, etc.)

Watch your thoughts and learn what triggers you. What do you tell yourself to make yourself angry? What ruminations are you participating in and be conscious of changing those thoughts.

GROUP ACTIVITY 7 HAND OUT

Characteristics of People with Anger Problems

- **Low frustration tolerance** - You do not tolerate even the most minor frustrations well. You are easily irritated. You have a short fuse. Some people with low frustration tolerance fume quietly, some explode verbally, and some resort to physical violence when provoked.

- **Judgmental and critical reactions** – You can feel and react quite judgmentally and critically at times.

You can be very competitive and may try to win at all costs in a conflict or debate. You may be adversarial and don't easily recognize the importance of other people's needs, feelings or opinions. You believe strongly that you know the way things are and expect other to agree.

- **Perfectionism** - You can feel like what you accomplish is never quite good enough. You can put off actions or projects waiting to get them just right. Or there are aspects of your life where you feel you must give more than 100 percent or else you will be mediocre or worthless. If so, rather than working toward success over time, you may sometimes try to be perfect. You may also expect others not to make mistakes.

- **All or Nothing Thinking** – This is the basis of dysfunctional thinking which leads to anger problems. It sets you up from the start to fail. And it is actually a childlike way to move through life. You see things in black or white categories, either right or wrong, which is what we are taught in childhood. But adult reality is not so clear cut...there are a lot of gray areas especially when it comes to relationships and lifestyle differences.

- **Possessiveness** - Possessive behavior is a sign that you lack trust or are somewhat insecure. When you act possessively you are sending a clear message that you do not trust the other person and that you are handling that mistrust by being controlling.

- **Poor communication** – You may have trouble staying focused on what someone is saying and it may be difficult for you to listen carefully. You may not believe that communicating with others is effective or you've given up on discussing things. Or, you may simply be a quiet person and have never developed your communication skills.

- **Punitive behavior** – You may often feel like punishing others for various reasons. You have a belief that people 'should' do things the right way and if they don't, they 'should' be punished. You may also have been punished quite frequently as you were growing up.

- **Addictive Personality** – You may have a tendency toward substance dependence, or once you 'start' it is difficult to 'stop'. This may include gambling, food, pornography, exercise, work, and even relationships. This often implies impulsive behavior and difficulty in delaying gratification.

- **Use Anger as a Way to Feel More Powerful** – You automatically use the defense of your self-identity (ego) by becoming angry to avoid feeling vulnerable or 'small'. You cannot feel angry and 'small' at the same time; so you find yourself automatically feeling anger when you are challenged in some way.

*Remember "Anger is a **feeling** or **emotion**, and aggression is an **action** or something we do. Aggression is something a person does that may harm someone else.*

GROUP ACTIVITY 8 HAND OUT

Minimizing means downplaying the severity and effects of one's abusive behavior:

- "I'm not like those others who *really* hurt family/friends."
- "I just pushed her/him" (leaves out the "down a flight of stairs" part).
- "I slipped and got her/him by accident" (punched her/him in the face).
- "I only did it once."
- "I couldn't control myself."
- "It just sort of happened."

Denying means pretending the abuse never happened:

- "I never did that, she/he is crazy."
- "She/he got a restraining order because her lawyer told her to."
- "I'm not a violent guy/gal."
- "OK, it happened, but I'll never do it again."

Justifying means inventing excuses for the abuse:

- "I had no choice."
- "It was my childhood."
- "I had a right to defend myself" (against a scared partner six inches shorter than the abuser)
- "Someone has to be in charge."
- "She/he started it."

Blaming means making someone else responsible for your anger abusive behavior:

- "I pushed her/him to quiet her down."
- "I wanted to make her/him listen."
- "I'm being framed."
- "If she/he would just shut up, I wouldn't have smacked her/him."
- "I was arrested because of her/him."
- "She/he is the angry abusive one."
- "I was drunk."
- "She/he has ruined my life."

The goals of minimizing, denying, justifying, and blaming include:

- Salving one's conscience
- Escaping the consequences, legal or emotional or financial, of one's actions
- Getting other people on your side
- Fear
- Shame
- Concealing your anger abusive behaviors
- Controlling another by turning them against their perceptions of the anger abuse
- Saving face

The quickest way to outgrow and move beyond the urge to minimize, deny, justify, or blame is to

GROUP ACTIVITY 9 HAND OUT

POSSESSIVENESS

When do you classify a person as overly-possessive?

People who have a borderline or acute personality disorder -- schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, etc -- are all prone to insecurity and possessiveness. They display signs of histrionics and antisocial behavior and are not in control of their emotions.

In a relationship, healthy insecurity and possessiveness are not uncommon, nor are they a cause for worry. When these traits cross a reasonable boundary, however, they cause stress and put pressure on one or both partners and it is best to avoid such people.

An aggressive individual may become physically or verbally abusive.

How do I know if I am too insecure?

It is best to do a reality check and look out for the following tell-tale signs. You are overly possessive if:

- ~ You incessantly are on the phone through the day, asking too many questions -- where are you, who you're with, what you're doing, etc. with your partner.
- ~ You are unnecessarily suspicious of your partners activities whenever the two of you are together or not.
- ~ Your interactions with the opposite sex -- friends, colleagues etc -- always leads to a fight between the two of you and in some cases, violence.
- ~ You try to control and curb your partner and get angry about trivial issues.
- ~ You spy on your partner and cross-check what they've been up to behind their back.
- ~ Discussions about your jealous nature fail to have any effect on you.

How do I cure my possessiveness and jealousy?

Unfortunately, this isn't always possible. However, you can take the following steps to curb unreasonable behavior:

~ Try to discover the root of the insecurity. Often, aggression and over-possessiveness in a relationship are a learned reaction. If one's parents or peers have set a bad example, it's likely they could be following it.

~ Communicate your feelings honestly to your loved one.

~ If talks between the two of you fail, you may consider seeking out a professional counselor or psychiatrist who can help with the situation. Take responsibility for your attitude and behaviors. Focus on YOU and not on what the other person is doing and where they are going. You are only in control of YOU.

Talk about some other ways one can learn to control their possessiveness and list them here:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

GROUP ACTIVITY 10 HAND OUT

12 ROADBLOCKS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

1. Ordering, directing, commanding
2. Warning, admonishing, threatening
3. Moralizing, preaching, imploring
4. Advising, giving suggestions or solutions
5. Persuading with logic, lecturing, arguing
6. Judging, criticizing, disagreeing, blaming
7. Praising, agreeing, evaluating positively, buttering up
8. Name calling, ridiculing, shaming
9. Interpreting, analyzing, diagnosing
10. Reassuring, sympathizing, consoling, supporting
11. Probing, questioning, interrogating
12. Distracting, diverting, kidding

GROUP ACTIVITY 11 HAND OUT

PSYCHOLOGICAL ABUSE AND ANGER

Defining Psychological Abuse

Psychological abuse occurs when one's feelings, thoughts, preferences, desires, needs, appearance or friendships are trivialized or made to appear inconsequential relative to the anger abuser's. In other words, the angry person constructs the relationship and the world of their receiving person/victim according to his/her terms and conditions over that of the abused and for his/her own gratification, which is often simply control over the abused. Psychological abuse happens when anger is continual and repeated to such an extent that the receiver of it is affected negatively in the brain. The brain responds to anger in negative ways by releasing chemicals that trigger behaviors and attitudes that can also cause anger or other physical problems.

So let's discuss the ways you have trivialized your significant others

Feelings

Thoughts

Preferences

Desires

Needs

Appearance

Friends

Family

Church or place of worship

Make up

Speech

GROUP ACTIVITY 12 HAND OUT

LAUGHTER QUIZ

This quiz will show you how willing and able you are to laugh at life and its follies.

1. During the day I laugh out loud, snicker or giggle:
 - a. Once or not at all
 - b. Two or three times
 - c. At least once an hour
 - d. Constantly, I'm on medication
2. When I am alone and read, see, hear or think something funny
 - a. Smile to myself
 - b. Laugh out loud but look to see if anyone saw or heard me
 - c. Laugh out loud and find someone to share the funny thing with
 - d. Take a cold shower
3. In the past year I can remember:
 - a. At least one time I spent laughing an entire minute
 - b. At least two to five times I spent at least a whole minute laughing
 - c. More than five minutes I spent laughing a whole minute
 - d. I can't remember – what was the question?
4. When I'm around other people they laugh and joke:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. I never hang around people, they might laugh at me.
5. When faced with a daily crisis, I respond with a laugh:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. Only if it keeps me from crying

6. I do things intentionally to make myself laugh:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. That might hurt!
7. The people I spend most of my time with:
 - a. Leave me feeling drained and depressed
 - b. Don't really affect my attitude
 - c. Make me laugh a lot
 - d. Usually steal my lunch money
8. I can name:
 - a. One thing that almost always makes me laugh
 - b. Two things that almost always makes me laugh
 - c. At least three things that almost make me laugh
 - d. My closest relatives
9. I laugh at myself:
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes c.
 - c. Often
 - d. Only when I am not in the room
10. I do silly things on purpose (wear strange buttons, make funny noises, wear funny type of clothing, etc.):
 - a. Never
 - b. Sometimes
 - c. Often
 - d. No one ever notices me
11. When I hear people laughing at work, I think:
 - a. I wish I could get paid to goof off
 - b. They are laughing at me
 - c. I wish I knew what the joke is
 - d. It is Saturday and I shouldn't even be here

Give yourself the following points:

A = 0 B = 1 C = 2 D = 3

Add up your points. If you have less than 5 points, you have humor malnutrition and someone probably told you to “grow up and get serious.” You will need to convince yourself that humor is an acceptable emotion.

If your score is from 6-15, you occasionally have a good laugh but your life lacks humor regularly. You need to use a humor laxative and exercise regularly to find humor in stressful things.

If your score is 16-20, you are humorously fit! You approach life with the right amount of humor and benefit from it. You have the opportunity to become a friend and role model for people around you who need the healing power of humor but don't seem to use it in their lives.

If your score is 21-33, you are dangerously silly, aren't you? Don't stifle those childlike instincts. You are probably the former class clown. You can make money from your talent!!!!

GROUP ACTIVITY 13 HAND OUT

Anger does not break up relationships. It is HOW you do your anger that creates problems between people. Here are some of the sub skills of anger that are missing in those people who use their anger in hurtful ways:

- Catch initial muscle tensions, temperature changes and the adrenalin rush that signify anger and fear.
- Use self-calming and stress management techniques during an argument.
- Observe and identify body reactions, emotions and thoughts during the beginning states of anger.
- Slow down the anger response by acknowledging the physical cues of anger and breathing them through.
- Displace anger symbolically when it's not safe to express it directly.
- Break into self-angering thoughts and use relaxation techniques to cool self down.
- To deal directly with the problem and stop blaming others.
- Find and express sadness, confusion and hurt lying under anger.
- Analyze the threatening event and identify and break into triggers.
- Examine current angers and relate them back to old unresolved childhood issues.
- Stay present during threat or stress rather than lash out or stuff anger.
- Change the self-angering or self-depreciating meanings given to threatening events.
- Make self empowering statements to deal with life's stressors (I can handle this. I don't have to get mad.)
- Increase self esteem by changing inappropriate anger responses to behaviors that help problem solve.

Much of anger is intergenerational and has been passed down from parents to children. Discuss how and who they learned theirs from.

GROUP ACTIVITY 14 HAND OUT

ANGER AND CULTURE

Variations within and between Cultures

The degree to which anger is sanctioned differs considerably by culture. Some cultures strive to eliminate anger in children, whether by avoiding mention of the emotion or by extensive discussion of anger and its negative consequences. Jean Briggs's work among the Utku (an Inuit group) established that while expressions of anger in infants up to the age of two were tolerated, older children and adults were held to strict emotional standards that forbade explicit manifestations of anger. In general, parental treatment of children's anger ranges from providing angry children with loving attention to shaming them or imposing corporal punishment. Barbara Ward's account of temper tantrums in the children of Kau Sai, China, during the early 1950s indicates that adults simply ignored children's tantrums, leaving children to cry themselves out. Indeed, adults were so unconcerned about these fits of anger that they often instigated them by frustrating children. However, aggressive responses were feared and strictly controlled; children who fought each other were quickly restrained, and even verbal aggression was considered wrong. Some societies abhor physical violence but tolerate verbal expressions of anger. One anthropologist's account of a southern French village in the 1950s indicated a sophisticated pattern of verbal aggression in the village, with ritual insults and epithets, and a simultaneous absence of schoolyard fighting of the sort familiar in the United States. Cultures and historical periods differ, as well, in their acceptance of adult anger directed toward children. Child-rearing advice in Europe and America since the mid-eighteenth century has been fairly consistent in admonishing parents to avoid expressions of anger toward (or even around) their children, but Michelle Rosaldo's research among the Ifaluk tribe in the Philippines found it common for adults to express anger toward children.

However, even within culture, childhood anger norms also differ across social class and gender. Expressions of anger are often prohibited toward those of higher status, as they may constitute a challenge to the social hierarchy. One of the social nuances children must learn is that of deference, and who is considered an appropriate target for anger. This is particularly relevant for children from families explicitly marked as low status, such as those found in slave or caste societies, but it also applies to children from peasant or working-class backgrounds. Indeed, children must attend to status markers even within their own families; these

include age differences among children and the status differences between children and adults. Although expressions of anger toward those of higher status may be limited, stereotypes of the working class (for example, in the United States) have often assumed that they are less in control of base emotions, including anger.

GROUP ACTIVITY 15 HAND OUT

Gender and Anger

In patriarchal societies, where males are accorded higher status, girls are often more restricted in their expressions of anger than boys are. In many cases, the degree of appropriate anger is regarded not merely as a normative component of sex roles but also as a natural difference between males and females. In early modern Europe, for example, girls and women were taught that references to anger as a basis for making demands was simply inappropriate, although similar demands could be grounded in other emotions, such as jealousy. Anger, which was associated with responses of honor, was a male emotion. This differential carried over strongly to the nineteenth century in both Europe and the United States. U.S. standards of femininity argued that anger was unladylike, that a "real" woman would simply not experience the emotion. Since, in fact, girls and women often did feel angry, great effort was urged to keep the emotion in check, and angry feelings often provoked negative self-evaluation and concerns regarding femininity. Novels like *LITTLEWOMEN* detailed how hard girls worked to live up to these expectations, and American girls today still report more self-regulation of anger than do boys.

Ideologies regarding anger have changed over time in Western cultures. While girls were still expected to be free of anger, anger in boys and men (even among dominant males) began to be of greater concern in European society by the eighteenth century, as part of what Norbert Elias has called the civilizing process. In particular, as part of a growing idealization of a loving family, anger was increasingly viewed as inappropriate in the domestic sphere; anger seemed to violate the emotional ties that should positively unite family members. Prescriptive literature also began to warn against anger toward inferiors, such as servants. It is not clear how much this advice altered children's experiences of anger, but some effect seems likely. Growing concern about dueling by upper-class young males in the eighteenth century, which extended into debates throughout the nineteenth century, expressed new ambivalence about anger and aggression.

By the nineteenth century in the United States, a complex anger formula had evolved for middle-class boys. Boys should be taught to avoid anger in the home because it would contradict the loving relationships that should build family life, and anger toward superiors continued to be considered inappropriate. However, anger was an important part of masculinity, so it should not

be completely eliminated in boys, but rather channeled to useful purposes. A boy without the capacity for anger might grow up to be a man without competitive fire or without the ability to fight injustice. Parents were urged to provide boys with experiences that would help them retain their anger but direct it constructively.

GROUP ACTIVITY 16 HAND OUT

ANGER AND THE BRAIN

Understanding how the brain and anger work together is important to laying the foundation for controlling anger. We can teach our brains how to respond to the triggers of our anger and our response to them.

The Cerebral Cortex is the “thinking” part of the brain where logic and judgment reside. It is the outer portion of the brain and it divides the lobes. It is also the “strategy” center of our brain.

The Limbic System is the “emotional” center of our brain. Located in the lower portion and is more primitive than the Cortex. When a person is in “anger” they are not using the “thinking” or Cortex part of their brain – but the Limbic Center.

The Amygdala lies within the Limbic System and stores emotional memories. It is also responsible for our “fright and flight” reactions. Data comes into and passes through the Amygdala where the decision is made to send the data it receives into the Limbic System or Cerebral Cortex. If the incoming data triggers enough of an emotional charge, the Amygdala can override the Cortex, which means the data will be sent to the Limbic System causing the person to react using the lower brain.

During the overriding event – the Amygdala goes into action without much regard for consequences since this area of the brain is not involved in judging, thinking or evaluating. When the Amygdala does this it floods the brain with hormones that cause a physical and emotional alarm. A “surge” of energy follows, preparing for fright or flight responses. The impact of this is an “emotional flush” that lasts for several minutes during which time a person is usually out of control and may say and do things that they will later regret. Further, an additional, longer lasting hormone is released – its impact can last several hours to several days.

Having a long lasting hormone in the body can explain why someone has an initial, powerful, angry reaction then seem to calm down, but then later flair up again disproportionately to the situation.

On average, **it can take 20 minutes for a person who has experienced an angry state of arousal to calm down** – to move functioning from the emotional area to the thinking area of the brain.

These facts are important to know in anger management:

- f. Anger involves a trigger to the emotions “charging” us up to “lose it” (but this can be controlled)
- g. It will take approximately 20 minutes before we can become more logical after this “charging” up
- h. Triggers often result from core beliefs and values being challenged or violated
- i. Anger exists on a continuum
- j. Anger ranges from mild frustration to outright rage

The University of New York did research using MEG (Magneto Encephalo Graphic) scanners testing responses in the brain to facial expressions and sounds. Outcomes showed that the brain showed a “supra addictive response” to fearful sounds and facial expressions. It showed that the hemispherical laterization of neural responses to facial expressions develops by age of 6 months. (Natl. Institute of Physiological Sciences, 2010).

This is important in showing that babies learn from a very early age to respond to the sounds and facial expressions of anger in their parents and siblings. This supra addictive response can be the first step in creating anger addiction in some people.

COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

Simply put, this means changing the way you think. Angry people curse, swear, or speak in highly colorful terms that reflect their inner thoughts. When you are angry, you’re thinking can get exaggerated and overly dramatic. When we replace those thoughts with more rational ones things don’t seem so bad. So we want to eliminate the words, “always, should, have to” and “it’s the end of the world” mentality. Anger doesn’t fix anything if we attack and become aggressive. Remind yourself that anger won’t make you feel better and may even make you feel worse.

Logic defeats anger, because anger, even when justified, can quickly become irrational. So cold hard logic is to remind yourself that the world is “not out to get you,” but that you are experiencing some of the rough spots of daily life.

Ways to improve our anger:

8. Problem solve: make a plan, check your progress along the way. Resolve to give it your best, but also not to punish yourself if an answer doesn't come right away. Approach it with best intentions and efforts. Use patience.
9. Better Communication: Slow down and don't react but respond. Take some deep breaths, take a time out, do whatever you need to slow down and think carefully about what to say and how to responds. Listen also.
10. Use Humor: “Silly humor” can defuse rage in a number of ways. It can help you get a more balanced perspective. It can see things from a different and humorous perspective like a visual of a donkey's head on the person triggering you. It will take a lot of the edge off your anger if you can use humor.
11. Change your environment: Walk away, take “personal” time when you know you are stressed or realize that certain times of the day are your “stress” inducing times; pervade “quiet” times for yourself to reflect, distress, rejuvenate, and laugh.
12. Timing: If you tend to fight when you are tired, distracted, then try changing times when you talk about important matters. Always ask the other person if they have time to talk to you or if another time is better, knowing that they may also be tired, distracted, etc. When we ask “I have something I would like to discuss with you. Is not a good time or is another better?” we leave open communication and timing to its optimal use.
13. Avoidance: If a messy child's room bothers you – then close the door. Why look at something that is going to increase your anger?
14. Finding alternatives: Learn a different response or alternative. In the child's room scenario you could close the door and not look at it or you could look at the alternative of having the child clean the room every Friday so it is clean for the weekend when you are home but gives them the ability to have their room however they want it during the week.

There is now overwhelming evidence that during times of strong and powerful emotions, our brain becomes flooded with chemicals, such as adrenaline and

norepinephrine that short-circuit and interfere with the parts of the brain effecting judgment, reasoning and logic. Specific parts of the brain become smaller and less biochemically active. So the wisdom of the advice to count to 10, taking deep breaths, sleeping on it, or walking away helps you think more clearly.

CHAPTER 17 - REFRAMING

We will be discussing frames and how a frame provides a context or focus for your thoughts and actions. Just as a picture frame puts borders or boundaries on what you can see in a picture, the frames of reference that you choose as a result of your beliefs about yourself and others, your perceived role in life, your perceived limitations in skills/abilities, etc. can limit what you see as possible or can open up all sorts of possibilities. You (and if you allow them, others) are continually setting timeframes, boundaries, limits, etc. on what you can and can't do - often without any real thought about the consequences or if the limitations are true.

Changing the frame of an experience can have a major influence on how you perceive, interpret and react to that experience. Being told that you have one hour to complete a task will most likely result in a different emotional state, approach and quality of work than if you are told that you have one week to accomplish the same task. This illustrates how a change in frame (in this case a timeframe) can have a significant impact on the choices you make. Changing the frame of reference is called reframing. The purpose of reframing is to help a person experience their actions, the impact of their beliefs, etc. from a different perspective (frame) and potentially be more resourceful or have more choice in how they react.

Reframing going on all around us:

Politicians are masters at reframing. It seems no matter what happens, they can put a positive spin on it for themselves or a negative spin for their opponents.

You may be frustrated at your wife for inviting the elderly gentleman next door for supper. Until she points out that if you were in his shoes, then you may find this simple act to be the highlight of your week.

Consider that old wooden table in the basement that you use as a temporary workbench for sawing wood, nailing things together, etc. Instantly, it is seen differently if some tells you that it is a valuable antique.

Jokes are reframes - you are guided to think in one frame and then the frame (meaning or context) changes. How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb? Answer: Only one, and the light bulb must want to change!

Fairy tales often use reframes to help children see different perspectives or consequences - 'crying wolf'.

An excuse is a reframe that attributes a different meaning or context to your behaviors.

Some more notable reframes are:

During the 1984 campaign, there was considerable concern about Ronald Reagan's age. Speaking during the presidential debate with Walter Mondale, Reagan said "I will not make age an issue of this campaign. I am not going to exploit, for political purposes, my opponent's youth and inexperience." Reagan's age was not an issue for the remainder of the campaign!

There is a story about Thomas Watson Sr., the first President of IBM. A young worker had made a mistake that lost IBM \$1 M in business. She was called in to the President's office and as she walked in said, "Well, I guess you have called me here to fire me." "Fire you?" Mr. Watson replied, "I just spent \$1 M on your education!"

A father brought his head-strong daughter to see Milton Erickson - the famous hypnotherapist. He said to Erickson, "My daughter doesn't listen to me or her mother. She is always expressing her own opinion." After the father finished describing his daughter's problem, Erickson replied, "Now isn't it good that she will be able to stand on her own two feet when she is ready to leave home?" The father sat in stunned silence. That was the extent of the therapy -- the father now saw his daughter's behavior as a useful resource later in her life.

Content and Context Reframes:

Content Reframe:

The content or meaning of a situation is determined by what you choose to focus on. An electrical power failure can be viewed as disruptive, a major disaster given all you have to get done. Or it can be viewed as an opportunity to spend some intimate time with your spouse or to have fun with your children finding innovative ways to manage the situation.

A content reframe is useful for statements such as: 'I get annoyed when my boss stands behind me while I am working.' Notice how the person has taken the situation and given it a specific meaning -- which may or may not be true - and in so doing limits her resourcefulness and possible courses of action. To reframe this situation, remember the NLP presupposition 'Every behavior has a positive intention' and ask questions such as:

What other meaning could the boss' behavior have? Or for what purpose does he do it? A possible reframe might be: 'Is it possible he wants to help and does not know how to offer his assistance in any other way?'

What is the positive value in this behavior? The positive value could be related to the boss' behavior (as above) or it could be related to the speaker's behavior. A possible reframe might be: 'Isn't it great that you know your boundaries and are not prepared to allow someone to violate them?'

If you are experiencing a physical problem (including phobias and allergies), you may ask yourself, 'Is this problem useful to me in some way?' For example, it may give you permission to say 'no'. If this is the case, you could ask yourself, 'Is there some other way that I can get this same result without having to have the physical problem?' And just maybe the physical problem will disappear.

Context Reframe:

Almost all behaviors are useful or appropriate in some context. Interrupting a speaker by standing up and offering your view in the middle of her lecture may be judged as inappropriate. To do this same behavior at the end of the presentation in order to provide a different perspective may be welcomed by all present.

A context reframe is useful for statements such as: 'I am too pushy.' or 'I wish I did not focus on what could go wrong.' In this type of situation, your client has assumed that this type of behavior has no value. Your job is to discover when it is of value by asking yourself the question 'When or where would this behavior be useful or viewed as a resource?' A possible reframe might be: 'Isn't that a great skill to have when you need to get things done or to avoid potential problems?' Once you have your client more resourceful, you can then assist him to discover behaviors that may be more appropriate in other situations.

Children and Parenting

Children exhibit all sorts of behaviors - some appropriate and some not so appropriate. Focusing mainly on a child's inappropriate behaviors, may result in the child feeling overly criticized or attacked; resulting in an increase in problem behavior or the child becoming overly defensive. As an alternative, a parent may choose two courses of action:

Assuming every behavior has a positive intention, the parent may choose to discover the positive intention. Then the parent can discuss with the child other behaviors that would meet both the parent's and child's needs.

The parent may point out where or in what context that type of behavior is acceptable; thus validating to the child that his behaviors are useful in certain contexts.

You may believe your reframe is the best ever and yet it may not work for the other person -- simply because they have a different model of the world than you do. Remember - There is no failure, only feedback - and explore other possible reframes.

If you present the reframe in the form of a question or a metaphor (story), it will most likely be more fully considered than if you present it as a statement of fact.

GROUP ACTIVITY 18 HAND OUT

Effect of Anger on Families

Family ties are one of the strongest contributors to individual character development. Many of us spend years trying to understand, erase, or copy the influence of our family unit. When anger is part of a family's tradition, it spreads itself much like a virus to future generations. The wider the spread, the more difficult the anger is to contain.

The effect of anger in families is usually apparent in the way that members relate with one another. Our earliest experiences communicating and relating to others occurs within the family. Patterns of anger in relationships are then taken and recreated in later relationships outside the family. Thankfully, a committed, well-designed treatment plan can repair the damage of having been raised in an angry family system.

Anger in Relationships

Anger is one of the most common negative patterns in relationships. Couples sometimes report that it is their anger that makes the relationship feel alive. Anger takes root in insecure relationships where open communication is absent and the emotion of love is buried beneath years of resentment. There is typically hopelessness in the present and doubt about the future in these relationships. The good news is that individuals committed to improving their relationships through the hard work of therapy are generally rewarded with a renewed sense of hope. Here are some tips on how to limit anger producing interactions in your relationships:

1. When you have anger toward another person, start with an internal check of your own emotional state. Ask yourself why you feel the way you do.
2. Before feeling attacked or hurt, make an attempt to give others the benefit of the doubt, especially if you have nothing to lose by doing so.
3. Ask yourself if you have legitimate assumptions about the intentions of others.
4. Keep the lines of communication open. When you feel resentment building, see if you can journal your feelings and then share your thoughts with a loved one.
5. Explore your participation in relationships that repeatedly bring out the worst in you.

6. Always consider individual or family therapy in instances where your anger feels out of control and/or mysterious.

GROUP ACTIVITY 19 HAND OUT

Respect

Main Entry: **respectful**

Part of Speech: *adjective*

Definition: courteous, mannerly

Synonyms: admiring, appreciative, civil, considerate, courtly, deferential, duteous, dutiful, gracious, humble, obedient, obeisant, polite, recognizing, regardful, regarding, reverent, reverential, self-effacing, solicitous, submissive, upholding, venerating, well-mannered

Antonyms: discourteous, mean, unmannerly

Respect has great importance in everyday life. As children we are taught (one hopes) to respect our parents, teachers, and elders, school rules and traffic laws, family and cultural traditions, other people's feelings and rights, our country's flag and leaders, the truth and people's differing opinions. And we come to value respect for such things; when we're older, we may shake our heads (or fists) at people who seem not to have learned to respect them. We develop great respect for people we consider exemplary and lose respect for those we discover to be clay-footed, and so we may try to respect only those who are truly worthy of our respect.

We may also come to believe that, at some level, all people are worthy of respect. We may learn that jobs and relationships become unbearable if we receive no respect in them; in certain social milieus we may learn the price of disrespect if we violate the street law: "Diss me, and you die." Calls to respect this or that are increasingly part of public life: environmentalists exhort us to respect nature, foes of abortion and capital punishment insist on respect for human life, members of racial and ethnic minorities and those discriminated against because of their gender, sexual orientation, age, religious beliefs, or economic status demand respect both as social and moral equals and for their cultural differences. And it is widely acknowledged that public debates about such demands should take place under terms of mutual respect. We may learn both that our lives together go better

when we respect the things that deserve to be respected and that we should respect some things independently of considerations of how our lives would go.

SELF RESPECT: We may also learn that how our lives go depends every bit as much on whether we respect ourselves. The value of self-respect may be something we can take for granted, or we may discover how very important it is when our self-respect is threatened, or we lose it and have to work to regain it, or we have to struggle to develop or maintain it in a hostile environment. Some people find that finally being able to respect themselves is what matters most about getting off welfare, kicking a disgusting habit, or defending something they value; others, sadly, discover that life is no longer worth living if self-respect is irretrievably lost. It is part of everyday wisdom that respect and self-respect are deeply connected, that it is difficult if not impossible both to respect others if we don't respect ourselves and to respect ourselves if others don't respect us. It is increasingly part of political wisdom both that unjust social institutions can devastatingly damage self-respect and that robust and resilient self-respect can be a potent force in struggles against injustice.

1. WHAT DOES RESPECT MEAN TO YOU?
2. HOW DO YOU GET RESPECT FROM OTHERS?
3. DO YOU MODEL RESPECT FOR YOUR CHILDREN?
4. DO YOU RESPECT YOUR SIGNIFICANT OTHER?
5. DO YOU RESPECT YOUR CHILDREN?
6. WHAT BEHAVIORS SHOW RESPECT TO SELF AND OTHERS?

GROUP ACTIVITY 20 HAND OUT

ANGER ABUSE

Here are a few ways to distinguish anger from abuse. Anger informs others about our own needs and feelings through “I” statements: abuse is about putting down, silencing, intimidating, and threatening others through “you” statements.

Anger asks for: attention, accountability, amends, and restitution: abuse seeks revenge, punishment and humiliation.

Angry people own and express their own feelings: abusive persons export their own fear to others. Anger seeks to address and resolve problems: abuse is about overpowering and winning. Anger deals with the present issue: abuse is more often the result of a build-up of past issues and misplaced rage. Anger is fully consistent with love because it aims at deeper understanding and connection. It moves toward the other. Abuse is motivated by fear and hatred, and moves against the other. Anger is usually a brief flare and ends in closure: abuse arises from a smoldering fire of resentment, bitterness, and vengefulness that is never quenched.

Appropriate anger, above all, is always nonviolent, safe, and in control: abuse is threatening, unsafe, and sometimes violent.

I would suggest that, after considering the above description, you ask yourself what are your intentions when you express anger. When you’re angry, are you about communicating feelings and resolving issues, or is your real intention to get your own way by bullying and intimidating?

GROUP ACTIVITY 21

CHILD ABUSE

Child abuse is more than bruises or broken bones. While physical abuse is shocking due to the scars it leaves, not all child abuse is as obvious. Ignoring children's needs, putting them in unsupervised, dangerous situations, or making a child feel worthless or stupid are also child abuse. Regardless of the type of child abuse, the result is serious emotional harm.

Myths and facts about child abuse and neglect

MYTH #1: It's only abuse if it's violent.

Fact: Physical abuse is just one type of child abuse. Neglect and emotional abuse can be just as damaging, and since they are more subtle, others are less likely to intervene.

MYTH #2: Only bad people abuse their children.

Fact: While it's easy to say that only "bad people" abuse their children, it's not always so black and white. Not all abusers are intentionally harming their children. Many have been victims of abuse themselves, and don't know any other way to parent. Others may be struggling with mental health issues or a substance abuse problem.

MYTH #3: Child abuse doesn't happen in "good" families.

Fact: Child abuse doesn't only happen in poor families or bad neighborhoods. It crosses all racial, economic, and cultural lines. Sometimes, families who seem to have it all from the outside are hiding a different story behind closed doors.

MYTH #4: Most child abusers are strangers.

Fact: While abuse by strangers does happen, most abusers are family members or others close to the family.

MYTH #5: Abused children always grow up to be abusers.

Fact: It is true that abused children are more likely to repeat the cycle as adults, unconsciously repeating what they experienced as children. On the other hand, many adult survivors of child abuse have a strong motivation to protect their children against what they went through and become excellent parents.

Effects of child abuse and neglect

All types of child abuse and neglect leave lasting scars. Some of these scars might be physical, but emotional scarring has long lasting effects throughout life, damaging a child's sense of self,

ability to have healthy relationships, and ability to function at home, at work and at school. Some effects include:

- Lack of trust and relationship difficulties. If you can't trust your parents, who can you trust? Abuse by a primary caregiver damages the most fundamental relationship as a child—that you will safely, reliably get your physical and emotional needs met by the person who is responsible for your care. Without this base, it is very difficult to learn to trust people or know who is trustworthy. This can lead to difficulty maintaining relationships due to fear of being controlled or abused. It can also lead to unhealthy relationships because the adult doesn't know what a good relationship is.
- Core feelings of being “worthless” or “damaged.” If you've been told over and over again as a child that you are stupid or no good, it is very difficult to overcome these core feelings. You may experience them as reality. Adults may not strive for more education, or settle for a job that may not pay enough, because they don't believe they can do it or are worth more. Sexual abuse survivors, with the stigma and shame surrounding the abuse, often especially struggle with a feeling of being damaged.
- Trouble regulating emotions. Abused children cannot express emotions safely. As a result, the emotions get stuffed down, coming out in unexpected ways. Adult survivors of child abuse can struggle with unexplained anxiety, depression, or anger. They may turn to alcohol or drugs to numb out the painful feelings.

Types of child abuse

There are several types of child abuse, but the core element that ties them together is the emotional effect on the child. Children need predictability, structure, clear boundaries, and the knowledge that their parents are looking out for their safety. Abused children cannot predict how their parents will act. Their world is an unpredictable, frightening place with no rules. Whether the abuse is a slap, a harsh comment, stony silence, or not knowing if there will be dinner on the table tonight, the end result is a child that feel unsafe, uncared for, and alone.

Emotional child abuse

Sticks and stones may break my bones but words will never hurt me? Contrary to this old saying, emotional abuse can severely damage a child's mental health or social development, leaving lifelong psychological scars. Examples of emotional child abuse include:

- Constant belittling, shaming, and humiliating a child.
- Calling names and making negative comparisons to others.
- Telling a child he or she is “no good,” “worthless,” “bad,” or “a mistake.”
- Frequent yelling, threatening, or bullying.
- Ignoring or rejecting a child as punishment, giving him or her the silent treatment.
- Limited physical contact with the child—no hugs, kisses, or other signs of affection.
- Exposing the child to violence or the abuse of others, whether it be the abuse of a parent, a sibling, or even a pet.

Child neglect

Child neglect—a very common type of child abuse—is a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs, whether it be adequate food, clothing, hygiene, or supervision. Child neglect is not always easy to spot. Sometimes, a parent might become physically or mentally unable to care for a child, such as with a serious injury, untreated depression, or anxiety. Other times, alcohol or drug abuse may seriously impair judgment and the ability to keep a child safe.

Older children might not show outward signs of neglect, becoming used to presenting a competent face to the outside world, and even taking on the role of the parent. But at the end of the day, neglected children are not getting their physical and emotional needs met.

Physical child abuse

Physical child abuse

Physical abuse involves physical harm or injury to the child. It may be the result of a deliberate attempt to hurt the child, but not always. It can also result from severe discipline, such as using a belt on a child, or physical punishment that is inappropriate to the child's age or physical condition.

Many physically abusive parents and caregivers insist that their actions are simply forms of discipline—ways to make children learn to behave. But there is a big difference between using physical punishment to discipline and physical abuse. The point of disciplining children is to teach them right from wrong, not to make them live in fear.

Physical abuse vs. Discipline

In physical abuse, unlike physical forms of discipline, the following elements are present:

- Unpredictability. The child never knows what is going to set the parent off. There are no clear boundaries or rules. The child is constantly walking on eggshells, never sure what behavior will trigger a physical assault.
- Lashing out in anger. Physically abusive parents act out of anger and the desire to assert control, not the motivation to lovingly teach the child. The angrier the parent, the more intense the abuse.
- Using fear to control behavior. Parents who are physically abusive may believe that their children need to fear them in order to behave, so they use physical abuse to “keep their child in line.” However, what children are really learning is how to avoid being hit, not how to behave or grow as individuals.

Child sexual abuse: A hidden type of abuse

Child sexual abuse is an especially complicated form of abuse because of its layers of guilt and shame. It's important to recognize that sexual abuse doesn't always involve body contact. Exposing a child to sexual situations or material is sexually abusive, whether or not touching is involved.

GROUP ACTIVITY 22 HAND OUT

PARENTING

Have you ever wondered what being a parent means to you? Besides being biologically driven by your survival instincts. Besides being put on a familiar and safe social path. Have you ever really stopped to think why you have chosen to bring children into this world and what would happen if you had not been a parent at all?

You need to be a strong role model for your children and teach them morals, values, respect, responsibility etc. Sometimes you make mistakes, but you need to learn from them and keep going. You should play, laugh and smile with your kids as much as you teach, for happiness goes a long way.

So discuss how you were parented and how you can improve your parenting skills.

Care

If you are a parent, you care for the child. This means that you take care of the child by feeding, clothing and teaching him the things he needs to know to function in life. Care is the one thing that a parent does that is required by law. If a parent does not keep a child, clean and healthy, the child can be taken away from the parent.

Love

True parents love their children. Love goes beyond taking care of them. It is the concern you have for their future and their present. It is your watchful eye over children who are sick or troubled; the care you give when their feelings are hurt; the time you take out of your schedule to spend with them; and it's the protection that surrounds them and keeps them safe.

Understanding

Parents listen. You must take the time to understand the troubles of your children. Listen to what they have to say and help them work through issues that have developed during their day. Even though the problems may seem trivial to you, show understanding to your children so they can see you care about them and their

lives. When possible, help them work through their problems, and if necessary help them solve them.

Discipline

As a parent, you must discipline your child. Children are new to the world and do not see the boundaries between good and bad, right and wrong, or danger and no danger. Your child is constantly looking for the boundaries and how far he/she can push them.

If you allow him/her to go past what is an acceptable childhood boundary, then as an adult he may get in trouble for pushing past what are considered adult boundaries. You must teach your child the difference between right and wrong or good and bad, and show him/her that they can face dangers. When he/she doesn't obey, you must discipline him/her.

Depending on the age and your attitude about what sort of discipline is OK, this could mean a pop on the bottom, timeout, taking away an activity or object, or grounding for a period of time. This discipline helps you reinforce that your child (ren) isn't allowed to do certain things. It is also good to reinforce when your child does things right by rewarding him/her on occasion with a small treat, hug or just by spending time with your child (ren).

GROUP ACTIVITY 23 HAND OUT

SELF WORTH IN CHILDREN

To develop a healthy self-image and concept of self, it is essential to promote the positive attributes of your child and provide a safe, nurturing environment for exploration and building relationships. Beware, however, of your child gaining too much self-esteem. An overabundance of self-esteem may lead to egocentrism and an excess of narcissism in your child. Experts agree that a balance must be achieved between under acknowledgment and over praising. Encouraging your child's attentions, choosing praise and words carefully, and not giving your child too much slack can achieve this.

Below are some easy to ways to ensure that your child's self-esteem is at its peak during the key adolescent years:

Encourage your child's interests and talents—this allows your child to ascertain his or her individual skills, demonstrating that they are indeed successful and gifted persons capable of achieving success.

Let your child “accidentally” overhear you saying something positive about him or her—this is the perfect opportunity to capitalize on the fact that your child believes everything you say. Opportunities for unsolicited praise will let your child realize how highly you think of him/her, while simultaneously revealing what you consider to be his/her greatest attributes.

Help your child view failures as an opportunity to learn—after a failure, children often have the tendency to draw conclusions about their self worth (or lack thereof) from the situation. To prohibit this from happening, take the time to make the situation an opportunity to learn instead. To do this, focus on ways in which they can improve their efforts the next time a similar situation occurs. Be careful, however, to not cut your child too much slack; honest evaluation of both strengths and weaknesses are important.

Have your child stand in front of a full-length mirror and pick out five things they like the most—whether these things be in relation to physical characteristics, personality traits, or personal style, this activity will allow your child to focus on the things they like most about him/herself. This, in turn, will reinforce the idea that your child is indeed a competent, deserving individual.

Be a positive role model—imitation plays a huge role in learning for adolescents. Because of this, the higher self-esteem you have for yourself, the more likely your child is to have a high self-esteem as well. Try never to let your child hear you say anything negative about yourself and/or the way you were parented.

Create a warm, affectionate, safe household environment— this allows your child to express his or her self in safe environments, but control emotions when it is inappropriate. By using both verbal and body language, parents can demonstrate to their children that they care about what they are feeling, and those feelings do matter.

Give praise not only for a job well done, but for effort as well – but do not over-do it— acknowledge that your child is putting forth effort towards a goal, or trying something that had previously been difficult for him or her. Praise your child for accomplishing that goal while limiting excess positive feedback, which can lead to an inflated ego.

Be spontaneously affectionate— your spontaneous expressions of love will promote growth of your child's self esteem. Their self worth will no longer be grounded in success, but in themselves as a person.

Address your child by name—because using a title or name to address others fosters communication development in the future, it is important to set the stage by addressing your child by his or her name. Supplemented by eye contact and touch, addressing your child by name sends a message that says, "you're special."

Give your child responsibilities—by assigning tasks that your child can accomplish, he or she will develop self-confidence and internalize values. By assigning them a "special job," children will deduce that they must be special, and in turn, gain self-value.

Make sure they are getting lots of rest—this ensures that your child is getting proper opportunities to relax and unwind. As children get older, the demands of everyday life grow with them. By unwinding and resting, your child will be able to process the day's events and feel accomplished, not overwhelmed, when they reflect.

12 Myths About Anger – Chapter 24

1. **Anger is bad.** Anger can be energizing, and can help us get things done. Under some circumstances it can help to improve communication. Anger becomes bad when we act impulsively and harm ourselves or others.
2. **Anger is abnormal.** Everyone experiences anger. Even famous pacifists like Ghandi, Jesus and Martin Luther King experienced anger – but they channeled their anger into a force for good.
3. **Anger is something that happens to us.** Anger, and all other emotions, are actually behaviors – things we do. Though it sometimes feels like an event, like a lightning strike, It is something we do, as opposed to something that happens to us.
4. **Anger is an uncontrollable force of nature and cannot be controlled.** Many people believe that once they are angry, they have to let it “run its course.” That they cannot control it, or even influence it. This is not true. Anyone can learn to control his or her emotions. It is a set of skills, just like shooting a basketball. Practice, practice, practice!
5. **Anger is inherited.** While it is true that angry parents often have angry children, this is not inevitable. Angry behavior is complex, and results from both genetic inheritance and learning. It is never too late to learn to control our anger and other emotions.
6. **Anger is “all in your head.”** The truth is, emotions are experienced all through the body. When we get angry, we typically feel it in our bodies even before we are aware of the emotion. Our guts tighten up, blood pressure and breathing rate increases, the hairs on the back of the neck and arms stand on end. It is impossible to hide anger from the skilled observer, though some people may miss the signs in themselves!
7. **Anger builds up until it is uncontrollable.** Known as “the hydraulic theory” of anger, this is simply untrue. The theory holds that anger builds up like water behind a dam, and will flood the valley if it is not released. The truth is that relaxation, meditation and a variety of other approaches can be very effective, without unleashing the anger on others.
8. **Anger can be relieved or released by hitting, kicking or punching things, yelling, etc.** This is known as “catharsis.” Studies have shown that people who vent their anger aggressively simply get better at being angry. In other words, venting anger in an aggressive manner reinforces aggressive behavior.
9. **Anger always leads to aggression.** Most people never or rarely express their anger. They suppress (“I don’t want to talk about it”) or repress (“I’m not angry”) it, instead of acting on it. Of course, the minority of people who do express their anger tend to get our attention, and are more likely to be referred for “anger management training.” Those who repress or suppress their anger need help just as badly, since their anger can cause serious health problems.
10. **Other people make us angry.** We are responsible for our own emotions. Other people cannot make us angry, sad or happy. We can choose whatever emotional state we desire; for example, we might choose to laugh in the face of ridicule or other behavior from another person. We don’t have to get mad!
11. **Males are angrier than females by nature.** Women get angry just as often as men – about once or twice a week, on average — but males report more intense anger, and are more likely to act on their anger. Aggressive behavior is seen as more acceptable in males than in females. Girls and women, on the other hand, tend to hold onto angry feelings longer.
12. **Anger is not a “real” emotion.** Some psychologists hold that anger is a “counterfeit emotion.” While it is true that anger is often triggered by other emotions, such as embarrassment, shame, fear, guilt, jealousy, or anxiety, it is clear that anger is a separate emotion. The simplest way to understand this is to realize that it is possible to experience any of these other emotions without anger.

GROUP ACTIVITY 25

COUPLES COUNSELING

When someone is angry in a relationship, the automatic response is to want to blame the other person in the relationship as being equally responsible for the angry person's behaviors. Individual counseling is in order if one person is the perpetrator of anger abuse and the person should focus on "inward" issues.

Blaming, justifying and anger bombing is not the responsibility of the other person in a relationship. But when two people in the relationship are angry then couple counseling might be an answer to learning better techniques.

COUPLE'S ANGER MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES TO USE IN AND OUT OF COUNSELING SESSIONS:

The goal in sustaining a vibrant and loving relationship is not to prevent authentic differences, feelings and disagreements but to express them in a way that does not escalate into anger that threatens the emotional or physical well-being of either partner.

Complying at all times, fear of making waves, hiding resentments, or equating every disagreement to the inevitable break-up is emotionally exhausting and anxiety producing. **If it is not safe to be angry in a relationship – it is not a safe relationship.**

Stephen Mitchell, author of *Can Love Last*, tells us that "The survival of romance depends not on skill in avoiding aggression but on the capacity to contain it alongside love."

How Do We Do This?

If a couple considers strategies to manage anger when they are emotionally and logically **in a calm state**, they give themselves tools to understand triggers, avoid escalating reactions and diffuse verbal aggression.

Establish a Relationship Safety Net

This is the implicit or stated understanding between partners that they love each other, value the relationship, will not physically threaten or harm each other, will

not say the “unsayable,” and prioritize their couple privacy. When a couple knows they love and trust each other, they have a relationship safety net. They can find a way to manage anger.

Anger Management Strategies

Stop and Self-Observe– It takes two to tango. Consider the self-reflective strategy of stopping to ask yourself “What am I feeling and why? If this is a step you start to use with other feelings, it will be invaluable when you start to feel angry: Why am I reacting with anger? Am I tired, stressed or hungry? Am I overreacting? Am I provoking my partner because the day was a nightmare?

Clarifying the reason you feel angry to yourself can change your feelings. Clarifying the reason for your angry reaction to your partner can change the emotional climate.

Re-consider Your Partner– Your initial angry response might be automatic, “*How the H___ did you lose my car keys at the Beach?*”

That said, can the actions, feelings or behavior of your partner, be seen from another perspective? Are mistakes allowed? Could it be a miscommunication or a misunderstanding? Is there a back-step to understanding or must you stay angry in a way that invites shame, defensiveness or counterattack by your partner?

Call a Time-Out- When a partner cannot handle the discussion of a stormy issue or a discussion deteriorates into a screaming match, one of the most effective anger management strategies is for one or both to call a Time-Out.

“This is going nowhere good – we have to stop.”

Unless this is a pre-arranged plan, it can be difficult to do. When couples actually **plan and use it**, a Time-Out can be amazingly effective. The willingness to stop because one or both feels they cannot deal with the angry exchange is an important respect of each partner’s limits and emotional space. It has a much better chance of inviting possible exchange than cornering a person and demanding he/she talk.

A Time-Out can be followed by a plan to re-visit the discussion at a later point or the next day after both have calmed down and perhaps had time to think. Often partners are impressed that the other waited and trusted the strategy.

Warnings:

Some partners are afraid the other won't talk or re-visit the issue the next day so they won't stop. Nothing productive happens. At the very worst verbal aggression can escalate violence.

Some partners actually plan and re-visit the topic but within minutes they realize they can't do it. This is the point where new communication strategies like those described below can make a difference.

The Written Exchange– This is a way for partners to communicate their feelings, opinions and ideas about an issue without defensiveness, fear of being shouted down or talked to death. The goal is not to get your partner to change his/her mind but to understand you. Quite often having the opportunity to make yourself understood or reading what the other partner really means changes the tenor of the issue and both partners' opinions. It is a surprise to partners that changing the goal to **sharing instead of winning** actually brings about possibilities.

When used after a Time-Out, each writes up what they were trying to say and leaves it on the table for the other to read and **JUST THINK ABOUT**. Often an invitation to talk again follows – sometimes it is not even needed.

Time-Paced Communicating- Sometimes the last thing either partner is going to do is start writing. For them an alternative way of verbally communicating works better to disrupt their familiar fighting pattern.

Technique- Each of you will plan to speak about your thoughts, feelings and ideas regarding the problem issue for 3 minutes (set a timer). The other will only listen and try to understand. At the 3 minute bell, reverse the roles (set the timer). Now the other partner has 3 minutes of uninterrupted time with their partner trying to listen and understand. This should happen at least 2 or 3 times back and forth – that's less than 10 minutes of uninterrupted talking and listening that is more valuable than an hour of yelling and screaming at each other.

Couples who tried the technique reported that they shared ideas and feelings they were unaware of when fighting. Many were surprised to hear the rationale of their partner – something they could not do when verbally defending themselves.

Letting it Go- Once you are done with a disagreement, let it go. You may think that telling your partner one more time the reason you were angry is part of letting go. **It is not.** Once you are in a positive mood or enjoying yourselves, your partner

will not be grateful for such information. In fact, it disrupts the recovery momentum needed to broaden perspective, appreciate each other and build trust.

Working Resolutions– Anger between couples is often fueled by the conviction that each one of us is right but our partner just won't see it. Given this human tendency toward omnipotence, it is worth accepting that an effective anger management strategy is to strive for “working resolutions” that test out the ideas and solutions of both partners. Life is not a sitcom – it usually takes process to come to the right place for both partners.

Assume the Best-Appreciate the Rest– In the big scheme of life, attitude and gratitude play a big part in anger management. While no one can or should tolerate mistreatment, positive consideration of your partner is a valuable antidote to reviewing what disappoints or angers you. Does your partner try with what he or she has been given in life to love and give to you? Are there things that your partner does that really make a positive difference in your life? Those are the reasons to find a way to manage anger.

GROUP ACTIVITY 26 HAND OUT

PHYSICAL SIGNS AND STOPPING ANGER

The first step in effective anger management is to learn how to recognize when you are angry. Some angry people see their emotions as a black or white state—they are either raging mad or they are calm. In reality, anger is not black and white, but rather quite gray. Anger occurs on a continuum between rage and calm where most of the time people experience some gradation of anger between these two extremes.

The same people who tend to see anger in terms of extremes sometimes have difficulty recognizing when they are experiencing intermediate anger states. Luckily, most people experience a number of physical, emotional and behavioral cues that they can use to let them know when they are becoming upset.

Some physical signs of anger include:

- clenching your jaws or grinding your teeth
- headache
- stomach ache
- increased and rapid heart rate
- sweating, especially your palms
- feeling hot in the neck/face
- shaking or trembling
- dizziness

Emotionally you may feel:

- like you want to get away from the situation
- irritated
- sad or depressed
- guilty
- resentful
- anxious
- like striking out verbally or physically

Also, you may notice that you are:

- rubbing your head

- cupping your fist with your other hand
- pacing
- getting sarcastic
- losing your sense of humor
- acting in an abusive or abrasive manner
- craving a drink, a smoke or other substances that relax you
- raising your voice
- beginning to yell, scream, or cry

What techniques have you already learned to stop these signs?

GROUP ACTIVITY 27 HAND OUT

List of Gender Stereotypes

Simply put, gender stereotypes are generalizations about the roles of each gender. Gender roles are generally neither positive nor negative; they are simply inaccurate generalizations of the male and female attributes. Since each person has individual desires, thoughts, and feelings, regardless of their gender, these stereotypes are incredibly simplistic and do not at all describe the attributes of every person of each gender.

While most people realize that stereotypes are untrue, many still make assumptions based on gender. There are many stereotypes we may all be guilty of, such as assuming that all women want to marry and have children, or that all men love sports. The following is a list of some of the most common gender stereotypes as they pertain to either men or women. Remember that these are stereotypes because they claim to apply to all men or women.

Female Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes begin the second a baby's gender is found out. As soon as we find out it's a girl, we immediately begin decorating a pink nursery filled with soft décor and butterflies and flowers. We assume that our daughter will be very "girly" and fill her closet with frilly dresses and her toy box with tea sets and dolls. What this is essentially doing, even though many parents don't realize it, is setting our child up to be the "perfect lady," and teaching her how to be the stereotypical woman. We are teaching her that girls are supposed to wear dresses, serve food, and take care of babies; the biggest and most common stereotype put on women.



Have you ever watched a little girl playing house? Even as young as five or six, she is well aware that she is supposed to stay home with the baby while the husband goes to work, and she has dinner ready when he gets home. Here is another stereotype; women stay at home while men go to work. While there are a million gender stereotypes about females, these are definitely the biggest, and the most debated by feminists of today. Some other stereotypes include:

Women are supposed to have "clean jobs" such as secretaries, teachers, and librarians

Women are nurses, not doctors

Women are not as strong as men

Women are supposed to make less money than men

The best women are stay at home moms

Women don't need to go to college

Women don't play sports

Women are not politicians

Women are quieter than men and not meant to speak out
Women are supposed to be submissive and do as they are told
Women are supposed to cook and do housework
Women are responsible for raising children
Women do not have technical skills and are not good at "hands on" projects such as car repairs
Women are meant to be the damsel in distress; never the hero
Women are supposed to look pretty and be looked at
Women love to sing and dance
Women do not play video games
Women are flirts
Women are never in charge

Male Gender Stereotypes

Stereotyping is no different when it's found out that a boy is on the way. The nursery is decked out in blue, his closet is filled with tiny jeans, polo shirts, and boots, and the theme is usually something like jungle animals or dinosaurs; something tough. Boys' toys consist of trucks, dinosaurs, action figures, and video games. From the beginning boys are taught to be tough, to be protective, and to defend themselves. Boys are taught that daddy's go to work and mommy's stay at home; from their point of view, boys have fun and girls do all the work.

Are you surprised to hear that most parents admit that they do not teach their sons how to do chores such as washing dishes or folding laundry? Instead, they teach them to take out the trash and mow the lawn; from the get-go boys are made to think that certain household chores are "women's work." This is a major stereotype, but the majority of American households today would prove this to be true. Men are supposed to do the dirty jobs and anything that requires muscle, they are also supposed to go to work and provide for the family. Little boys see this and the stereotype continues.

Other gender stereotypes that inaccurately try to describe all men are:

All men enjoy working on cars
Men are not nurses, they are doctors
Men do "dirty jobs" such as construction and mechanics; they are not secretaries, teachers, or cosmetologists
Men do not do housework and they are not responsible for taking care of children
Men play video games
Men play sports
Men enjoy outdoor activities such as camping, fishing, and hiking
Men are in charge; they are always at the top
As husbands, men tell their wives what to do
Men are lazy and/or messy
Men are good at math
It is always men who work in science, engineering, and other technical fields
Men do not cook, sew, or do crafts
Can you see how many of these actually are true of many men or women that you know? They may even be true for you personally, but they do not apply to every single man or woman alive. That is what makes them stereotypes; the fact that these things are considered, "the norm" and

expected of every male or female. Each person is an individual and it is perfectly normal for a woman to run her own business while a man stays home with the kids. On the other hand it is also perfectly acceptable for a man to be a nurse or hate sports, or enjoy cooking.

Men and women are individuals; they are more than just male or female. Our gender is only part of who we are; it does not define us as people.

GROUP ACTIVITY 28 HAND OUT

Relaxation and Visualization

Anger can be managed by relaxation and visualization techniques.

Here are some to practice and use:

Bubble Method

Guided Imagery

Alpha State

Meditation

Yoga

Prayer

Silence Time

Laughter exercises

Practice every day using one or more of the above techniques to improve anger de-escalation and improve self-care

GROUP ACTIVITY 29 HAND OUT

ROADBLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION

The 12 Communication Roadblocks

Throughout our lives, we have learned a variety of ways to help children as well as adults when they have strong feelings, thoughts or problems. We want to be helpful, yet many of our responses actually make it more difficult for the person to express himself, make a decision, or solve a problem.

Listed here are twelve of the more frequent "helping responses" which can become "Roadblocks" to communication. When you read this list, you may feel like the rug has been pulled out from under you because so many of your regular ways of talking responses are now called roadblocks.

Ordering, Directing: "Stop feeling sorry for yourself..."

Warning, Threatening: "You'll never make friends if..." "You'd better stop worrying so much or..."

Moralizing, Preaching: "Life is not a bowl of cherries..." "You shouldn't feel that way..." "Patience is a virtue you should learn..."

Advising, Giving Solutions: "What I would do is...", "Why don't you..." "Let me suggest..."

Persuading with Logic, Arguing: "Here is why you are wrong..." "The facts are..." "Yes, but..."

Judging, Criticizing, Blaming: "You are not thinking maturely..." "You are just lazy..." "Maybe you started the fight first..."

Praising, Agreeing: "Well, I think you're doing a great job!" "You're right!--that teacher sounds awful."

Name-calling, Ridiculing: "Crybaby--", "That's stupid to worry about one low test grade."

Analyzing, Diagnosing: "What's wrong with you is..." "You're just tired." "What you really mean is..."

Reassuring, Sympathizing: "Don't worry." "You'll feel better." "Oh, cheer up!"

Questioning, Probing: "Why..." "Who...?" "What did you...?" "How...?"

Diverting, Sarcasm, Withdrawal: "Let's talk about pleasant things..." "Why don't you try running the world!?" Remaining silent, turning away

GROUP ACTIVITY 30 HAND OUT

ANGER TIME LINE

ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR'S TIME LINE

and Anger Log

Begin a time line by asking the participants to draw a line across a piece of paper.

Year 2nd Yr 3rd Yr 4th Yr 5th Yr 6th Yr and so on

ANGER

Began AS a problem

{ ____) ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ / ____ }

Have them list the type of abuse used on victim listing them under each year they occurred and how many times they occurred .because of anger behaviors

The purpose is to show the types, how often, and the escalation of anger during their lifetime and what behaviors of abuse happened because of the anger

Abuse is a behavior that escalates and intensifies over the years. They need to stop this process immediately and this exercise is a responsibility taking exercise.

ANGER LOG

DAY:

TIME:

ANGER TYPE:

ANGER TRIGGER:

ANGER DEGREE:

TECHNIQUE TO DE-ESCALATE:

OUTCOME:

GROUP ACTIVITY 32 HAND OUT

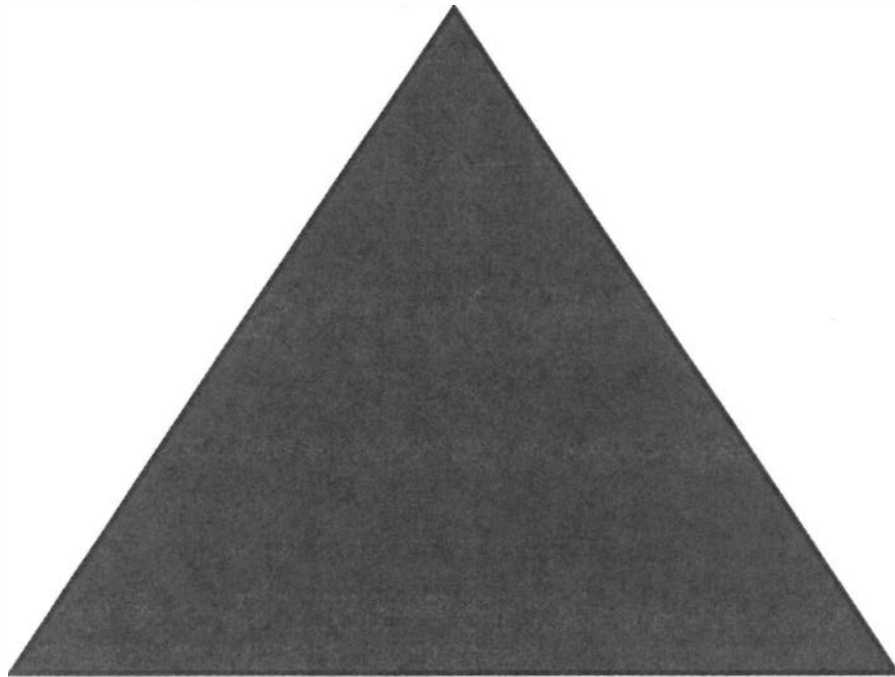
ROADBLOCKS TO COMMUNICATION

GROUP ACTIVITY 31 HAND OUT

POWER TRIANGLE AND ANGER

ANGER TRIANGLE

Anger Behaviors



Justifications, controlling, blaming, entitlement, misconceptions, ruminations, negativity

The foundation of the Anger Triangle is where the problems in anger management begin. Our learned behaviors, triggers, attitudes towards a person, situation, event, and circumstance, can cause us to move in 30 seconds or less, to an “action” fueled by anger.

We need to be aware of using “I” statements for clarification and stating needs; use assertive language and not aggressive language; paraphrase or mirror back skills; be honest but have compromise/mutuality as our compass; let the relationship win and not “me” or “you”; create environments of safety for conversation of resolution and mediation.

It is our responsibility to use time outs, Stop Lite Method, Bubble Relaxation Method and other skills learned in anger management to stay in positive control of ourselves instead of control fueled by anger. You are never out of control as anger is control demonstrated in negative behaviors.

GROUP ACTIVITY 32 HAND OUT

HANDLING DIFFICULT SITUATIONS EFFECTIVELY

There will be difficult situations to deal with from time to time in life. These difficult situations might include:

- Dealing with poor individual or team performance
- Trying to improve an organization that is perceived to be failing
- A process that it is not working
- Resource shortages
- Adverse media coverage

So here are 7 key tips for dealing with difficult situations:

Tip 1: Establish facts first

When difficult situations arise, it is all too easy to jump to solution mode too quickly. While there may be a limited amount of times when fast action is absolutely necessary, your first step to successful resolution is to establish facts. Remember that facts as opposed to hearsay or opinion are verifiable.

Tip 2: Ask lots of questions

Questions, especially the short powerful variety are a great way of getting to the core issue rather than all the detail that someone is trying to provide to you. Think of it a bit like peeling an onion, each layer is getting you closer to the core.

Tip 3: Actively listen

There is little point in asking great questions if you are not actively listening to what is being said. Resist the temptation to jump in before you have properly listened to the different points of view.

Tip 4: Avoid pre-judgement

We all, if we are honest will form some judgements immediately. While these might be right at the end of the day, don't let pre-judgement get in the way of establishing the real issues.

Tip 5: Act professionally

The challenge for you is to remain professional at all times. A good test of this is to ask yourself how you would like to be treated if you were not the manager or leader but an aggrieved party.

Tip 6: Aim for win-win

While this is not always possible, you should aim to find solutions that don't result in a feeling from one party that they have lost while another has won. This might require some careful negotiation around what would constitute a good outcome for all those involved.

Tip 7: Remember there is no one size fits all approach

Each situation is different. While there might be some common ground, remember there is unlikely to be a one size fits all approach to difficult situations. Adapt your approach depending on the situation.

Bottom Line – Handling difficult situations is just part and parcel of managing and leading. So where do you need to focus your attention in terms of developing your competence?

GROUP ACTIVITY 33 HAND OUT

STRESS AND ANGER

ANGER BEHAVIORS. The anger perpetrator's primary goal is to be understood through using power and control and/or bullying behaviors . In order to do so, one often plan and utilize a pattern of coercive tactics aimed at instilling fear, shame, and helplessness in their victim. Another part of this strategy is to change randomly the list of "rules" or expectations the victim must meet. The angry individual uses incessant degradation, intimidation, and demands on their partner/family which is effective in establishing fear and dependence. It is important to note that anger perpetrator may also engage in planned and impulsive acts of domestic violence.

STRESS: Stress does NOT cause angry and abusive behaviors but rather can contribute to them. If a person does not handle his/her stress well then they will act out on family members who are victims to help alleviate their stressors.

So this exercise is to talk to them about their stress and stressors and ask them how they handle them and what works and doesn't work. Guide them to techniques and ways to better handle stressors and stress so that they don't use it as an excuse to abuse. There is no excuse for abuse.

Questions to ask:

What is stress?

What are things that stress you out?

How do you handle those things when they come up?

What works and what doesn't work in handling those stressors?

Who taught you to handle the stress in that manner?

What responsibility do you have in better stress management?

Etc.

GROUP ACTIVITY 34 HAND OUT

ANGER AND DRUG/ALCOHOL ABUSE

Drugs and Anger

People who feel consistently angry or out of control might believe that drugs can help. Many substances seem to soothe the disturbing thoughts and impulses people hold inside their minds, and they can seem vital in bringing about a temporary sense of relief. Some drugs seem particularly appealing to people with anger disorders.

Depressant drugs like alcohol can soothe an overactive mind and blunt the reflexes, and that might make this particular substance quite attractive for people who have anger disorders. In a study of the issue, in the journal *Alcoholism*, researchers found that anger scores in alcoholics were much higher than those seen in people who didn't drink, and that held true in both men and women. Studies like this seem to suggest that alcohol is popular among people who struggle with anger.

Similarly, marijuana can have a sedating effect, allowing people to feel somewhat relaxed and at ease with the world. Not surprisingly, a study in the journal *Substance Use and Misuse* found a link between heavy marijuana use and high anger scores, and that link got stronger the more often the user took in drugs. Studies like this suggest that marijuana use and anger are linked, but they also suggest that marijuana can make underlying anger worse. If anger scores rise with use, perhaps drug use isn't helpful at all.

Untangling the Links

While it's clear that many people who have anger disorders abuse drugs, it's also clear that this codependency doesn't help the person at all. In some cases, as mentioned, the drug use makes the feelings of anger stronger and harder to control. But sometimes drug abuse can make the consequences of anger much more palpable on a temporary basis.

Drugs and alcohol are accelerants and when one uses them to manage anger it is time to look at counseling and possibly recovery programs if there is a dependency on them to manage the anger.

GROUP ACTIVITY 35 HAND OUT

EGO VS. SELF-ESTEEM

What is Ego?

In my opinion, Ego is the feeling of supreme. It is an attitude of thinking ourselves superior to others. Ego obstructs the open mind as it gives lot of importance to self while rejecting other personalities and point of views.

It is an unhealthy attachment to self; Ego persists because we deeply attach ourselves with our ideas. This attachment leads us to resentment; we resent any thought of making our idea inferior to others. Due to this resentment we show negative emotions while facing a contrasting opinion. We argue, become angry and even try to intimidate to make our idea stand out. We are so attached to our idea that we just cannot see it coming second to someone else's idea. Let go this attachment and ego will also be gone.

What is Self-Esteem?

From above argument, one can ask me. How about if my idea is truly the best? Should not I fight for my idea then or would that also be ego? The answer is – now you know your idea is BEST. The associated feeling is of confidence and self-assurance. While in ego the associated feeling is of insecurity and fear.

Let me give you an example – A four year old kid comes to you and says something negative. Would you be offended or take it on your ego? I don't think so because you are self-assured and confident against a four year old. But if a colleague comes to you and say something negative. What happens then? This time you do take it on your ego. What is the differentiator between your responses to these two criticisms? The difference is your own confidence level and self-esteem. You are confident against a four year old but become in-secured when a colleague or boss or neighbor criticizes you. Build your confidence to the level where ego will disappear.

When we are self-assured and confident against a contrasting opinion – it is self-respect and self-esteem. In this situation we respect our own opinion while giving importance to other opinion as well. But when we have ego then we become in-secured and scared. We close ourselves in a shell thus not respecting other's point of view. Ego leads us to argument, anger and ultimately to pain and hurt. However, self-esteem leads us to stability and peace.

Managing Ego

The best way of managing ego is to break the unhealthy attachment with the self. This unhealthy attachment does not let us to appreciate other's point of view. By "breaking the attachment" I do not mean to not respect your own idea. That will be hurting the self and self-esteem. Respect your own idea but also listen to other's point of view. By 'breaking the attachment' I meant to detach ourselves from the behavior causing ego. Respect your opinions but not to the extent that you become defensive.

GROUP ACTIVITY 36 HAND OUT

ACCEPTANCE, RESPONSIBILITY AND NO BULLYING

Far from Being Harmless, the Effects of Bullying Last Long Into Adulthood

Aug. 19, 2013 — A new study has shown that serious illness, struggling to hold down a regular job and poor social relationships are just some of the adverse outcomes in adulthood faced by those exposed to bullying in childhood.

It has long been acknowledged that bullying at a young age presents a problem for schools, parents and public policy makers alike. Though children spend more time with their peers than their parents, there is relatively little work done on understanding the impact of these interactions on their life beyond school.

The results of this research, published in *Psychological Science*, highlight the extent of which the risk of health, wealth and social problems is heightened by exposure to bullying; and in doing so is the first study to look into the effects beyond just health.

Professor Dieter Wolke of the University of Warwick and Dr William E. Copeland of Duke University Medical Center led the team, looking beyond the study of victims and investigating the impact on all those effected; the victims, the bullies themselves, and those who fall into both categories; 'bully-victims'.

Professor Wolke said, "We cannot continue to dismiss bullying as a harmless, almost inevitable, part of growing up. We need to change this mindset and acknowledge this as a serious problem for both the individual and the country as a whole; the effects are long-lasting and significant."

The 'bully-victims' presented the most significant health risk for adulthood, being over six times more likely to be diagnosed with a serious illness, smoke regularly or develop a psychiatric disorder.

The results show that bully-victims are perhaps the most vulnerable group of all. This group may turn to bullying after being victims of bullying themselves as they lack the emotional regulation, or the support, required to cope with it.

Professor Wolke added, "In the case of bully-victims, it shows how bullying can spread when left untreated. Some interventions are already available in schools but new tools are needed to help health professionals to identify, monitor and deal with the ill-effects of bullying. The challenge we face now is committing the time and resource to these interventions to try and put an end to bullying."

All of the groups were more than twice as likely to have difficulty in keeping a job, or commit to saving, and as such displayed a higher propensity for being impoverished in young adulthood.

However, very few ill effects of being the bully were found in the study. When accounting for the influence of childhood psychiatric problems and family hardships, which were prevalent in the bullies, it showed that the act of bullying itself didn't have a negative impact upon adulthood.

"Bullies appear to be children with a prevailing antisocial tendency who know how to get under the skin of others, with bully-victims taking the role of their helpers," explained Professor Wolke. "It is important to find ways of removing the need for these children to bully others and in doing so; protect the many children suffering at the hand of bullies as they are the ones who are hindered later in life."

Though there was no real difference in the likelihood of being married or having children, all groups showed signs of having difficulty forming social relationships, particularly when it came to maintaining long term friendships or good ties with parents in adulthood.

The research assessed 1,420 participants four to six times between the ages of 9 and 16 years and adult outcomes between 24-26 years of age.

Discuss: Acceptance, responsibility and how to stop bullying and what techniques one would use to accomplish the goals

GROUP ACTIVITY 37 HAND OUT

FORGIVENESS

FORGIVENESS WORK

The definition of forgiveness that we will be using for the 52 week program is the following:
“Forgiveness means giving up all hope for a better past.” This definition of forgiveness gives the participant no out for “minimizing, blaming, or justifying” their behaviors and attitudes. It means we are to stop looking at “those that did things to us” and start taking responsibility for today and our future behaviors and attitudes.

So what is forgiveness?

Based on Philosophical, Traditional (Hebrew, Christian, Islamic, Confucian, and Buddhist traditions, among others), Psychological and Developmental principles and gleaned from a large survey of readings, professional dialogue, and stories of forgiveness written by volunteers:

1. What it is:

- *Moral*
 - It is a response to an injustice (a moral wrong).
It is a turning to the "good" in the face of this wrongdoing.
- *Goodwill*
 - Merciful restraint from pursuing resentment or revenge.
Generosity or offering good things such as: attention, time, remembrances on holidays.
 - Moral Love or contributing to the betterment of the other.
- *Paradoxical*
 - It is the foregoing of resentment or revenge when the wrongdoer's actions deserve it and giving the gifts of mercy, generosity and love when the wrongdoer does not deserve them.
 - **As we give the gift of forgiveness we ourselves are healed.**
- *Beyond duty*
 - A freely chosen gift (rather than a grim obligation).
 - The overcoming of wrongdoing with good.

2. What it is not:

- *Forgetting/Denial*
 - Time passing/ignoring the effects of the wrongdoing.
- *Condoning*
 - Nothing that bad happened. It was only this one time. It won't happen again.
- *Excusing*

- The person did this because.....it wasn't really their responsibility.
- Condemning
 - She/he **deserves** to know they have wronged me.
 - "Forgiving" with a sense of moral superiority.
- Seeking Justice or Compensation
 - Forgiveness is not a quid pro quo deal--it doesn't demand compensation first.

3. Important Distinction:

- Forgiveness: **One person's** moral response to another's injustice
- Reconciliation: **Two parties** coming together in mutual respect

The University of Wisconsin has done some research on forgiveness work and found that there are four phases they believe individuals go through in forgiveness:

Uncovering Phase

During this phase the individual becomes aware of the emotional pain that has resulted from a deep, unjust injury. Characteristic feelings of anger or even hatred may be present. As these negative emotions are confronted and the injury is honestly understood, individuals may experience considerable emotional distress. Deciding on the appropriate amount of energy to process this pain and still function effectively is an important consideration during this phase. However, as the anger and other negative emotions are brought out into the open healing can begin to occur.

Decision Phase

The individual now realizes that to continue to focus on the injury and the injurer may cause more unnecessary suffering. The individual begins to understand that a change must occur to go ahead in the healing process. The individual may then experience a "heart conversion" or, in other words, a life change in a positive direction. The individual entertains the idea of forgiveness as a healing strategy. The individual, then, commits to forgiving the injurer who has caused him/her such pain. Complete forgiveness is not yet realized but the injured individual has decided to explore forgiveness and to take initial steps in the direction of full forgiveness. An important first step at this point is to forego any thoughts, feelings or intentions of revenge toward the injurer.

Work Phase

Here the forgiving individual begins the active work of forgiving the injurer. This phase may include new ways of thinking about the injurer. The injured individual may strive to understand the injurer's childhood or put the injurious event in context by understanding the pressures the injurer was under at the time of the offense. This new way of thinking is undertaken not to excuse the injurer of his/her responsibility for the offense, but rather to better understand him/her and to see the injurer as a member of the human community. Often, this new understanding may be accompanied by a willingness to experience empathy and compassion toward the offender.

The work phase also includes the heart of forgiveness which is the acceptance of the pain that resulted from the actions of the injurer. This must not be confused with any sense of deserving the pain but rather a bearing of pain that has been unjustly given. As the individual bears the pain, he/she chooses not to pass it on to others, including the injurer. This is often where the challenge of a "quest for the good" is most evident. Indeed, the individual may now become ready to begin to offer goodwill toward the injurer in the form of merciful restraint, generosity, and moral love. This may or may not include a reconciliation. The goodwill may be offered while at the same time taking into consideration current issues of trust and safety in the relationship between the individual and the injurer.

Outcome/Deepening Phase

In this phase the forgiving individual begins to realize that he/she is gaining emotional relief from the process of forgiving his/her injurer. The forgiving individual may find meaning in the suffering that he/she has faced. The emotional relief and new found meaning may lead to increased compassion for self and others. The individual may discover a new purpose in life and an active concern for his/her community. Thus, the forgiver discovers the paradox of forgiveness: as we give to others the gifts of mercy, generosity, and moral love, we ourselves are healed.

Working through the Phases for recovery: As we begin to work through the process of forgiveness, we have to "open up" the event that happened to us.

WRITE A FORGIVENESS LETTER

GROUP ACTIVITY 38 HAND OUT

BOUNDARIES

BOUNDARIES – WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT

A successful relationship is composed of two individuals - each with a clearly defined sense of her or his own identity. We need a sense of self in order to clearly communicate our needs and desires to our partner. When we have a strong sense of our own identity, we can respect and honor those qualities in our partner that make him/her a unique person. When two people come together, each with a clear definition of her/his own individuality, the potential for intimacy and commitment can be astounding. The similarities between two people may bring them together, but their differences contribute to the growth, excitement and mystery of their relationship.

One feature of a healthy sense of self is the way we understand, incorporate and work with boundaries. **Personal boundaries are the limits we set in relationships** that allow us to protect ourselves and let others know what can be expected with and from us. Boundaries come from having a good sense of our own self-worth. They make it possible for us to separate our own thoughts and feelings from those of others and to take responsibility for what we think, feel and do. Boundaries allow us to value our own uniqueness. Intact boundaries are flexible - they allow us to get close to others when it is appropriate and to maintain our distance when we might be harmed. Good boundaries protect us from abuse and pave the way to achieving true intimacy. They help us take care of ourselves.

Unhealthy boundaries often emerge from dysfunctional family backgrounds. The needs of parents or other adults in a family are sometimes so overwhelming that the task of raising children is demoted to a secondary role, and dysfunction is the likely result. What the children are likely to learn in this situation is that boundaries don't matter. Children may learn that rigid and inflexible boundaries might be the way to handle their relationships with other people. They wall themselves off in their relationships as a way of protecting themselves, and, as a consequence, may find it difficult to form close interpersonal bonds with others in adulthood.

1. Name some ways in which unhealthy boundaries may show themselves in your relationships
2. A healthy relationship is one in which our boundaries are strong enough, yet flexible enough, to allow us to flourish with our own uniqueness. There is a sense of respect on the part of both partners that allows each to live as full a life as possible and to explore their own personal potential. Discuss how this is going to happen in the participants life and how they are going to apply boundaries in their lives.
3. A healthy response is to show our partners respect by allowing them to succeed or fail on their own terms. When boundaries are healthy, you are able to say, "I trust and respect you to make your own life choices. As my equal partner, I will not try to control you by taking away your choices in life." Discuss this concept and how they use control to get their way instead of

setting up boundaries.

4. Unhealthy boundaries, where we collude with our partner in believing the myth that everything is fine, make it difficult to come to terms with the troubles of the relationship. Discuss this and what it means to participants.

Healthy boundary setting is an exciting adventure, and exercise in personal liberation. It means coming to know ourselves and increasing our awareness of what we stand for. When two people with healthy boundaries enter into a relationship, they encourage wholeness, independence and a zest for life in their partner. They know that trust is possible and that the normal expected difficulties found in all relationships can be worked on constructively. They can find true intimacy as whole, complete and equal people. It often means letting go of some of our old misconceptions about the nature of the world. It means treating ourselves with respect and appreciating ourselves for what we really are. When we can do this for ourselves, we can take the same approach toward our partner - and then the true happiness and love that our relationship deserves can become a reality.

Healthy

Being your own person

Being responsible for your own happiness

Balance in separate and togetherness

Outside friendships exist and enjoyed

Focus on the positive qualities of both

Open, honest, respectful communication

Name other qualities of healthy boundaries vs unhealthy boundaries:

1.

2.

3.

Unhealthy

Feeling a need to be complete with someone else

Relying on others for your happiness

Too much/little in togetherness

Don't allow outside friendships

Focus on the negative qualities of partner

Criticism, lying, manipulative communication

GROUP ACTIVITY 39 HAND OUT

GRIEF AND LOSS

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE LOSSES YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED BECAUSE OF YOUR ANGER:

Name some:

What consequences have you had due to your anger behaviors? Name some:

What loss have you experienced if any that resulted in divorce/relationship breakup/death of a family member without being able to resolve conflicts and the relative/friend died?

Discuss how grief and loss has been something you have tried to avoid and used anger as an avoidance tool:

GROUP ACTIVITY 40 HAND OUT

SAFETY PLAN FOR YOURSELF

As the angry individual changes his/her attitudes, behaviors and beliefs, the family members or relationship partner will feel safer to show their own anger towards the person trying to change. In order for the anger perpetrator to not re-offend, there are some things they will want to do:

1. If you have a restraining order it is **YOUR** responsibility to stay away. So **STAY AWAY!**
2. If your partner is “venting” on you then **BE QUIET** and let them say what they need to and then do #3
3. **APOLOGIZE** to them for what you have done to make them feel that way
4. **REMIND** them that you are in the **PROCESS** of change and you are working hard on making the changes necessary so that they won’t feel the way they currently feel right now.
5. If necessary – take a **TIME OUT** and let them know you will be back to resolve issues with them
6. If necessary – use the **STOP LIGHT** method to de-escalate yourself and your anger in response to their anger
7. **MOVE OUT** and get your own place so that both of you can work on individual issues and come back together once those issues have been changed to healthiness
8. Know your triggers and anger physical signs
9. **DISCUSS OTHER WAYS THEY CAN STAY SAFE**

GROUP ACTIVITY 41 HAND OUT

WHAT IS LOVE VS. LOVE CONFUSION (TOXIC LOVE)

LOVE VS. TOXIC LOVE

Here is a short list of the characteristics of Love vs. toxic love (compiled with the help of the work of Melody Beattie & Terence Gorski.)

1. Love - Development of self first priority.

Toxic love - Obsession with relationship.

2. Love - Room to grow, expand; desire for other to grow.

Toxic love - Security, comfort in sameness; intensity of need seen as proof of love (may really be fear, insecurity, loneliness)

3. Love - Separate interests; other friends; maintain other meaningful relationships.

Toxic love - Total involvement; limited social life; neglect old friends, interests.

4. Love - Encouragement of each other's expanding; secure in own worth.

Toxic love - Preoccupation with other's behavior; fear of other changing.

5. Love - Appropriate Trust (i.e. trusting partner to behave according to fundamental nature.)

Toxic love - Jealousy; possessiveness; fear of competition; protects "supply."

6. Love - Compromise, negotiation or taking turns at leading. Problem solving together.

Toxic love - Power plays for control; blaming; passive or aggressive manipulation.

7. Love - Embracing of each other's individuality.

Toxic love - Trying to change other to own image.

8. Love - Relationship deals with all aspects of reality.

Toxic love - Relationship is based on delusion and avoidance of the unpleasant.

9. Love - Self-care by both partners; emotional state not dependent on other's mood.

Toxic love - Expectation that one partner will fix and rescue the other.

10. Love - Loving detachment (healthy concern about partner, while letting go.)

Toxic love - Fusion (being obsessed with each other's problems and feelings.)

11. Love - Sex is free choice growing out of caring & friendship.

Toxic love - Pressure around sex due to insecurity, fear & need for immediate gratification.

12. Love - Ability to enjoy being alone.

Toxic love - Unable to endure separation; clinging.

13. Love - Cycle of comfort and contentment.

Toxic love - Cycle of pain and despair.

Love is not supposed to be painful. There is pain involved in any relationship but if it is painful most of the time then something is not working.

There is nothing wrong with wanting a relationship - it is natural and healthy. There is nothing wrong with wanting a relationship that will last forever - expecting it to last forever is what is dysfunctional. Expectations set us up to be a victim - and cause to abandon ourselves in search of our goal.

If we can start seeing relationships not as the goal but as opportunities for growth then we can start having more functional relationships. A relationship that ends is not a failure or a punishment - it is a lesson.

As long as our definition of a successful relationship is one that lasts forever - we are set up to fail. As long as we believe that we have to have the other in our life to be happy, we are really just an addict trying to protect our supply - using another person as our drug of choice. That is not True Love - nor is it Loving.

GROUP ACTIVITY 42 HAND OUT

DISHONESTY

Dishonesty in Relationships has without fail negative effects. Dishonesty is a destructive force that should be avoided at all costs and it affects the quality of life of human beings and hampers them from fulfilling their potential.

Being dishonest attacks our nervous system the Southern Methodist University reported, and that the stress involved in the effort to hide the truth wields harm to our central nervous systems. The psychological turmoil elevates our negative stress levels.

Dishonesty turns us into fakes and manipulators and also closes the door to feeling any sense of emotional enrichment because we constantly live in an ugly web of lies. Dishonesty breeds distrust among spouses and partners and hence ruin our relationships – relationships that could be rewarding had we nurtured them properly.

Even the harmless white lie can serve as training ground for bigger lies, transforming our dishonesty into indiscretions and ultimately, betrayal. As Tad Williams said, “We tell lies when we are afraid... afraid of what we don't know, afraid of what others will think, afraid of what will be found out about us. But every time we tell a lie, the thing that we fear grows stronger.”

Discussion is on how they have been dishonest in their relationships and to themselves.

GROUP ACTIVITY 42 HAND OUT

WHAT IS A GOOD RELATIONSHIP

What Do Healthy Relationships Look Like?

Here are 15 traits of a healthy relationship:

1. Partners can manage conflict and differences without despair or threats.
2. Both partners protect and nourish the relationship and make it a priority (not addicted to work for example).
3. Both partners know how to be responsible for own needs and also for the care of the relationship.
4. Both partners feel “special” to the other. Arguments or fights do not lead to abuse or threatened break-ups.
5. Both partners can communicate wants, needs, feelings, and emotional issues with little or no shame.
6. There is unconditional love if not unconditional agreement.
7. The relationship feels and is nurturing, comfortable, and fun.
8. Both partners attend to the needs of each other willingly and lovingly.
9. The sexual relationship works well and is mutually satisfying.
10. Both partners can and do keep agreements (maturity).
11. Both partners are honest.
12. There is no abuse: physical, verbal, emotional (ignoring).
13. Both partners have boundaries:
 - Each person can say “no” to requests from partner when necessary without feeling guilty and tell their partner when something feels not right or hurts them.
 - People pleasing is kept to a minimum and neither one feels they are making a “great sacrifice” to stay in the relationship. Each person is able to do their work, attend to their children, care for other aspects of their life without threatening the relationship.
14. Partners can hear feedback from each other that they may be projecting old relationship fears or issues onto the current relationship.
15. There is commitment: exits are blocked in the relationship.

Understanding Emotional Intimacy

Sharing thoughts, feelings and needs is the best way to become emotionally close to someone.

Asking questions casually while you spend time together is the best way to get to know someone, but do not disclose a lot at a time especially in the beginning.

Here are some helpful ideas:

- Use “I” statements: I feel sad that I won’t be seeing you until next month instead of.. It’s hard for one to wait a month to see someone they are interested in... I am happy that you came... vs. You know it’s nice when others show up when they are expected... .
- Do not evade questions about yourself or joke about it or change the subject to something less personal.
 - What are you doing...writing my biography?
 - Is this psychotherapy 101?

Being friends first is more than a cliché — enjoying someone’s company and becoming relaxed around someone are very important aspects of intimacy.

- Don’t disclose prematurely — sometimes women do this. Don’t make “confessions” about your job, your ex-wife, your kids etc.
- *“First strive to understand, then to be understood”* – Stephen Covey
- Avoid criticism whenever possible/offer support first and suggestions later if requested: avoid advice unless it is asked for.
 - Support: That must be awfully hard to do... .
 - Advice: Have you ever thought of redoing the plumbing in your house. I know someone who does that type of work.

GROUP ACTIVITY 44 HAND OUT

WHAT ARE THE “SHOULD”S THAT KEEP YOU ANGRY

“Shoulds” are a list of ironclad rules about how we and other people ‘ought to or ought not to’ act. Another word for a “not” is “should.” These rules are indisputable; and, any deviation from these is deemed bad (by ego). We feel we ‘have to,’ ‘must,’ ‘need’ or ‘ought to’ or “not” do certain things out of duty, obligation or compulsion, never bothering to question our actions because, “That’s the way it’s been.”

Some of the most common shoulds are: I should be able to find a quick solution to every problem; I should always be at peak efficiency; I should never be tired or get sick; I should be totally self-reliant; I should never make mistakes; I should always be happy and serene, even during hardships; and, I should know, understand, and foresee everything.

Known as “categorical imperatives,” shoulds, oughts, nots, musts and have to create unrealistic and overgeneralized absolutes. When we don’t stop to look objectively at these inner statements, we live by an enslaving force of rules. This way of thinking was first recognized by psychiatrist Karen Horney who wrote about “the tyranny of the should.”

This psychologically destructive thinking pattern was further developed by Dr. Albert Ellis who coined the term “shoulding.” According to Ellis, the three main musts are: “I must do well or I’m no good,” “You, you louse, must treat me well or you’re worthless and deserve to roast in hell,” and, “The world must give me exactly what I want, precisely what I want, or it’s a horrible, awful place.” Let’s further explore these unrealistic demands.

When a part of us thinks we should be acting a certain ‘ideal’ way, we create a judging and fault-finding inner critic. As a result, a part of us pressures ourselves to follow these rules and feels guilty and bad when we don’t. This form of demandingness often leads to strong feelings of guilt, self-hatred, anxiety and depression, and to behaviors like procrastination, withdrawal, obsessing about what has been done (“I should have done X instead of Y.”) and worrying about, “What should I do?”

We also place these clear-cut imperatives onto others. We judge their actions and get annoyed when others don’t act ‘right.’ An inner voice exclaims, “They should

know the rules and they should follow them!" This form of demandingness often leads to feelings of anger ("How dare you!"), guilt-tripping ("You should know better."), jealousy, hurt and self-pity ("How could they have done that to me?").

We can even place shoulds on how we think the world (e.g., our environment, economic and political conditions) ought to exist. We might (unrealistically) think that at all times the world must be safe, hassle-free, flowing and full of good; that investment returns will always yield 5% or more. This form of demandingness often leads to a low frustration tolerance, to feelings of despair ('poor me'), anger and depression, and to behaviors such as withdrawal, procrastination, phobias and addictions.

Talk about your "shoulds" and how they relate to getting angry.

GROUP ACTIVITY 45 HAND OUT

KNOW YOUR LOVE LANGUAGE AND YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS LOVE LANGUAGE

Discuss why we need to know our love language and our family members love language. If we don't know them then how can we be fulfilled and how can we fulfill the love needs of our family members (including children)

Chapman's Five Emotional Love Languages:

- **Words of Affirmation**

This is when you say how nice your spouse looks, or how great the dinner tasted. These words will also build your mate's self image and confidence.

- **Quality Time**

Some spouses believe that being together, doing things together and focusing in on one another is the best way to show love. If this is your partner's love language, turn off the TV now and then and give one another some undivided attention.

- **Gifts**

It is universal in human cultures to give gifts. They don't have to be expensive to send a powerful message of love. Spouses who forget a birthday or anniversary or who never give gifts to someone who truly enjoys gift giving will find themselves with a spouse who feels neglected and unloved.

- **Acts of Service**

Discovering how you can best do something for your spouse will require time and creativity. These acts of service like vacuuming, hanging a bird feeder, planting a garden, etc., need to be done with joy in order to be perceived as a gift of love.

- **Physical Touch**

Sometimes just stroking your spouse's back, holding hands, or a peck on the cheek will fulfill this need.

Determining Your Own Love Language

Since you may be speaking what you need, you can discover your own love language by asking yourself these questions:

- How do I express love to others?

- What do I complain about the most?
- What do I request most often?

Speaking in your spouse's love language probably won't be natural for you. Dr. Chapman says, "We're not talking comfort. We're talking love. Love is something we do for someone else. So often couples love one another but they aren't connecting. They are sincere, but sincerity isn't enough."

GROUP ACTIVITY 46 HAND OUT

SPIRITUALITY AND RECOVERY FROM ANGER

Your Spiritual Practice Takes You to the Blockage

Spiritual practice opens blockages. A blockage is any place within you where things are stuck. Oftentimes, the blockages are caused by ideas. Here's a simple one:

"I can't follow my heart to play music because I can't make a living that way."

False. That's a total lie. You can't know if you can or not until you do it. The fear around money (which is a survival issue at its core) is a very common blockage. Part of addressing this issue will very likely involve taking action to turn music into your career if that is what you are choosing. That's active spirituality. You can't just meditate a career into an existence, generally speaking. You have to do your part. That's part of living in this world and being engaged.

The good news is that all that built up angry energy is just waiting to pour out into a direction. You may be surprised how quickly the anger starts to subside as the energy is given room to move. You may also be surprised how quickly things may take place in your life once you go in the direction that you really want to go, although there are no guarantees on this path.

Anger Hides Other Issues

One of the interesting things about anger is that it often hides other issues. In society, we're taught to project our feelings and ideas onto the world. In turn, we go to the world to try and actualize the stories that we're making up about it. So you send out your ideas of perfect ole prince charming, and you try to make him make you feel the way you want to feel. It's crazy. You know it as you read these words. This works for men too. You try to make the beauty queen your girlfriend and have her make you feel how you want to feel. It's all very crazy, and you'll probably get very angry in these situations because more often than not those other people don't act out the story you want. So you don't get the feelings you want to feel. But you already have those feelings inside, and this little game is an abdication of your personal responsibility.

In the instances of trying to make another person act out your romantic fantasy, it's very easy to become angry with your romantic partner. At least that's what it seems like. But really, you're just pissed off at yourself. You're angry that you're not

getting what you want. And while you think it's a behavior from your significant other, it's really not. There's something else that you want; it's a feeling inside. Could it be that you need a spiritual life (not religious) that helps you deal with your anger and personhood?

Following the Anger Trail Back to the Core Issue

Instead you have a whole bunch of other feelings that you don't want, and in this example, it's anger. So anger in this spiritual practice is following the trail back to yourself. You'll see how angry you are at yourself for giving away your power to external situations. You'll have to own all of your feelings and your obligation to bring forth your own love. Because ultimately, how can anyone truly love you if you don't even truly love you? And that feeling of love is the feeling you want, is it not?

So perhaps hiding under this specific issue is a self-worth issue. It can be very sneaky sometimes. We've been taught to bury our issues extremely well. That's why this spiritual path can get so messy. Initially, you're pulling yourself apart on the spiritual path, especially if you're in awakening. It's the only way to create a real foundation built on truth and love--two things that are real and can last.

Discuss spirituality vs. religion! Discuss how spirituality can help with anger.

GROUP ACTIVITY 47 HAND OUT
LISTENING, SPEAKING AND COMMUNICATION

WHAT IS LISTENING?

WHAT IS SPEAKING?

WHEN DO WE LISTEN?

WHEN DO WE SPEAK?

WHAT IS ACTIVE LISTENING?

WHAT IS PASSIVE LISTENING?

WHAT IS ACTIVE SPEAKING?

WHAT IS PASSIVE SPEAKING?

WHAT CREATES GOOD COMMUNICATION BETWEEN PEOPLE?

LIST GOOD COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

GROUP ACTIVITY 48 HAND OUT

AWARENESS + ACTION = CHANGE

Discuss how our awareness is one thing and action on it is another and how we need to do both to create the change desired.

Exercise:

Does awareness of anger alone stop us from being angry?

Does action of our anger stop us from being angry?

Does change without the above two items stop anger?

What do we need to do all three things? What is cognitive behavior and how does it help in awareness + action = change?

GROUP ACTIVITY 49 HAND OUT

COUNSELING AFTER ANGER MANAGEMENT

Support services and resources are going to be needed to continue managing one's anger after the program.

Discuss what each individual will want to utilize as ways to continue improving and managing anger:

Counseling

Continuing in group

Yoga classes

Meditation classes

Hiking

Listening to music

All the tools discussed in the training and others they may know about to share with class

GROUP EXERCISE 50 HAND OUT

CONSEQUENCES IF THEY DON'T CONTROL THEIR ANGER

Discuss what consequences they have had to experience due to anger (i.e. loss of relationships, a permanent criminal record, etc.)

Then discuss consequences to being arrested:

Many people mistakenly believe that if they are arrested but not charged with a crime, there are no repercussions to the initial arrest. The fact, however, is that any arrest can result in several long-term consequences

Consequences of Arrest: Record of Arrest

In most states, people who are arrested for any reason whatsoever will have a permanent record of that arrest, which must be reported to certain employers and licensing agencies. When you are arrested, the reason for the arrest as well as other pertinent information will be a matter of public record, which can only be sealed for a limited number of reasons. If you are arrested, you may have to disclose that information to future employers, which may cost you a job.

Consequences of Arrest: Posting Bail

Most people who are arrested try to post bail immediately, or call someone to post bail for them. Posting bail can also be made a matter of public record, and the fact that you posted bail can be disclosed to police if you are ever arrested again. While this is not a warning against posting bail, everything you do has consequences.

Consequences of Arrest: Searches

When you are arrested, the supposition that you have been involved in criminal activity may result in certain searches and seizures. Depending on the reason for your arrest, police may have probable cause (or be able to obtain a warrant) to search your car, home, office at work, gym locker or any other property that may contain evidence that applies to your case. Even if no such evidence turns up, the police are still legally able to search your property beyond the reasonable expectation of privacy.

Consequences of Arrest: Seizures

Now list the consequences you may have if arrested due to negative behaviors (or consequences you have experienced due to having been arrested):

GROUP ACTIVITY 51 HAND OUT

A VICTIM STORY

Invite someone to come and share their story of being on the receiving end of someone's anger.

Or

Show a movie on anger

GROUP ACTIVITY 52 HAND OUT

COMPLETION AND WHAT WAS LEARNED

Have those who are ready to graduate and complete give a short testimonial of their experience in the program and what they learned that they will use after graduation.

Do a graduation ceremony and/or “honoring” of the graduates with a certificate of completion and small potluck or desert party.

WEEK 53 EXIT INTERVIEW

ANGER MANAGEMENT EXIT QUESTIONS TEMPLATE FOR COURSE

1. WHAT DOES BRAIN PLASTICITY HAVE TO DO WITH ANGER?

ANSWER: BRAINS CREATE STRONG TENDENCIES TO REPEAT THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER SO WE NEED TO CREATE NEW PATHWAYS WITH NEW BEHAVIORS AND REACTIONS TO TRIGGERS. PLASTICITY HELPS US WITH CREATING THOSE NEW PATHWAYS.

2. THERE ARE AT LEAST 7 WAYS DISCUSSED TO RETRAIN YOUR BRAIN. NAME 5 WAYS TO RETRAIN YOUR BRAIN

ANSWER: A. MAKE IT NON-NEGOTIABLE B. MAKE IT ACTIONABLE C. COME UP WITH SOLUTIONS FOR YOUR USUAL EXCUSES D. SCHEDULE IT IN E. DO IT DAILY F. FOCUS ON THE HORIZON/GOAL G. DON'T GIVE UP/BE PERSISTENT

3. WHY DO WE CHOOSE ANGER?

ANSWER: IT IS A NATURAL EMOTION WE ARE BORN WITH BUT WE CHOSE IT WHEN WE FEEL THREATENED, FRIGHTENED, OR CHALLENGED

4. CAN SOMEONE MAKE YOU ANGRY?

ANSWER: NO. WE MAKE OURSELVES ANGRY AND WE CAN CHOSE NOT TO BECOME ANGRY.

5. WHAT ARE THE KEYS TO ANGER CONTROL?

ANSWER: RECOGNIZE THOUGHTS, BODY EMOTIONS/REACTIONS AND ACCEPT THAT YOU CONTROL ANGER. CHOOSE TO PAUSE AND COOL DOWN AND MONITOR YOUR THINKING AND ACTIONS. LEARN TO REDUCE STRESSORS BY WATCHING FOR TRIGGERS AND TALK YOURSELF OUT OF THE NEGATIVE RESPONSE.

6. LIST 6 WAYS TO CHANGE ATTITUDES AND BELIEFS

ANSWER: IN ALPHA STATE SAY AFFIRMATIONS. JOURNALING; MEDITATION; RELAXATION/VISUALIZATION; EAT, SLEEP AND EXERCISE; SEPARATE BIG DEALS FROM LITTLE DEALS; USE ENDLESS TAPES; SELF TALK; RECOGNIZE NEGATIVE THOUGHTS AND REPLACE WITH POSITIVE THOUGHTS; BALANCE LIFESTYLE; STOP LIGHT METHOD; TIME OUTS; DEEP BREATHS.

7. WHICH OF THESE DESCRIBE THE "I NEED TO BE RIGHT" THINKING:

ANSWER: BELIEF THAT OUR WAY IS THE ONLY WAY. IT INVOLVES ENTITLEMENT AND RIGID PATTERNS, BELIEFS, ATTITUDES, EXPECTATIONS AND BEHAVIORS.

8. WHAT IS THE LINK BETWEEN ATTITUDE AND BEHAVIOR?

- A. CYCLE OF CONFLICT
- B. INTUITION
- C. INTIMACY
- D. BRAIN PLASTICITY

9. WHAT HAS THE BETARI BOX GOT TO DO WITH ANGER?

- A. HELPS US UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT OUR ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIORS HAVE ON OTHERS*
- B. SHOWS US HOW TO GET OUT OF OUR "BOXED IN" THINKING
- C. BETARI CAME UP WITH BEHAVIOR CHANGE PROTOCOLS

D. BETARI DISCOVERED BRAIN PLASTICITY

10. LIST THE PROGRESSION OF ANGER BUILD UP

- A. IRRITATION
- B. FRUSTRATION
- C. ANGER
- D. RAGE
- E. AGGRESSION

11. WHAT PHYSICAL SIGNS GO WITH ANGER BUILD UP

- A. ADRENALINE RUSH
- B. BODY TEMPERATURE RISES
- C. MUSCLES TENSE
- D. KNOTS IN OUR STOMACH
- E. JAW TIGHTENS
- F. FISTS TIGHTEN
- G. FOREHEAD TIGHTENS
- H. BODY AGITATION/SHAKE

12. NAME SOME EMOTIONS THAT GO ALONG WITH ANGER BUILD UP

- A. FEAR
- B. HURTS
- C. GUILT
- D. CONFUSION
- E. OVERWHELMED
- F. STARTLED
- G. RESTLESSNESS
- H. ENVY
- I. HATE

STAGES OF ANGER:

1. NAME THE FOUR STAGES OF ANGER:

2. WHY DOES “RESPOND DON’T REACT” HAVE AN IMPORTANT PLACE IN ANGER MANAGEMENT?
3. ANGRY PEOPLE COME FROM ANGRY FAMILIES IS TRUE BECAUSE:
 - A. FAMILIES PASS ON EMOTIONALLY STUNTED CHILDREN
 - B. FAMILIES PASS ON LEARNED NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL CONTROL AND RESPONSES*
 - C. FAMILY GENETICS EFFECT ANGER
 - D. FAMILY COMPASSION IS ANGER
4. FAMILY ANGER IS BUILT ON WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING:
 - A. EXPERIENCES
 - B. LEARNED ATTITUDES AND REACTIONS TO THOSE ATTITUDES
 - C. STRESS AND LOW SELF WORTH
 - D. UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS
 - E. POOR COPING SKILLS
 - F. ALL OF THE ABOVE
5. NAME 4 NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES OF ANGER
6. Describe how this program helped you?

References and Resources

Forest, Lynn. The Three Faces of Victim.

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Psychology Today, 2012

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Wilson, Nancy, 2014 Traits of a Healthy Relationship

You are now eligible to join the National Anger Management Association (www.nama.org) and the California Association of Anger Management Providers (CAAMP).



CAAMP

California Association of
Anger Management Programs

Membership Application

Individual \$80.00

☐

\$80.00 fee for first 75 members enrolled
(fees will increase to \$100)

Agency Enrollment \$150.00
(3 members per agency)

☐

\$150.00 fee for first 25 agencies enrolled
(fees will increase to \$200.00/agency)

Name		Agency									
Address		Address									
City	State	Zipcode		City		State		Zipcode			
Phone		Phone									
FAX		FAX									
EMAIL		EMAIL									
Website		Website									
Birthdate											
Type of Credentials:	CAMF	BIF	CATC	CADC	LPC	LMFT	LCSW	PhD	PsyD	MD	Other:
License #:		State:		How many years have you been providing anger management services?							
DISCIPLINARY ACTION: Has any licensing board or other regulatory body ever taken any disciplinary action against you or a license/registration held by you? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Has any professional associations' Ethics Committee ever taken any action against you or your membership as a result of an ethical complaint? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No				CAAMP CODE OF ETHICS and STANDARDS I agree to abide by the CAAMP Code of Ethics. The CAAMP Code of Ethics can be found on www.caamp.org or mailed upon request. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No COMMUNICATION CONSENT I consent to receive emails sent by or on behalf of CAAMP and its subsidiaries and affiliates. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No							
What would you like to see CAAMP provide for its members?											

Return form and check to: CAAMP 15233 Ventura Blvd. Suite 1208 Sherman Oaks, CA 91403

Triggers



Trigger: A stimulus—such as a person, place, situation, or thing—that contributes to an unwanted emotional or behavioral response.

The Problem

Describe the problem your triggers are contributing to. What's the worst-case scenario, if you are exposed to your triggers?

Trigger Categories

Just about *anything* can be a trigger. To begin exploring your own triggers, think about each of the categories listed below. Is there a specific emotion that acts as a trigger for you? How about a person or place? List your responses in the provided spaces.

Emotional State	
People	
Places	
Things	
Thoughts	
Activities / Situations	

Tips for Dealing with Triggers

- Oftentimes, the best way to deal with a trigger is to avoid it. This might mean making changes to your lifestyle, relationships, or daily routine.
- Create a strategy to deal with your triggers head on, just in case. Your strategy might include coping skills, a list of trusted people you can talk to, or rehearsed phrases to help you get out of a troublesome situation.
- Don't wait until the heat of the moment to test your coping strategy. *Practice!*

Triggers



In this section, you will develop a plan for dealing with your three biggest triggers. Review your plan regularly, and practice each of the strategies.

Describe your three biggest triggers, in detail.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for *avoiding or reducing exposure* to each trigger.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for dealing with each trigger head on, when they cannot be avoided.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Stages of Change

Precontemplation

1

The costs of the problem behavior (such as drug use) are not yet recognized. The individual is in denial and is not seriously considering changing their behavior. They may have made previous attempts to change, but have since given up.

Contemplation

2

The individual is experiencing ambivalence about change. They can see reasons to change their behavior, but they are still hesitant. The problem behavior continues.

Preparation

3

The individual has decided to change their behavior, and they begin to think about how to do so. During this stage they will begin to make minor changes to support their goal, but they might not have completely ended the unwanted behavior.

Action

4

Significant steps are taken to end the problem behavior. The individual might be avoiding triggers, reaching out for help, or taking other steps to avoid temptation.

Maintenance

5

The changes made during the action stage are maintained. The individual may continue to face challenges, but at this point they have successfully changed their behavior for a significant period of time.

Relapse

After making changes, some individuals will return to their previous problem behavior. This can happen at any time during the previous stages. Not everyone will experience relapse, but it is always a risk.

The Fight-or-Flight Response

Fact Sheet

► What is the fight-or-flight response?

The **fight-or-flight response** is one of the tools your body uses to protect you from danger. When you feel threatened, the fight-or-flight response is automatically triggered, and several physiological changes prepare you to either confront or flee from the threat.

► What are the symptoms of fight-or-flight?

- Increased heart rate
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Shaking
- Racing thoughts
- Nausea / "butterflies" in stomach
- Sweating
- Difficulty concentrating
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Tensed muscles

► How is the fight-or-flight response triggered?

Even threats to emotional well-being, such as the fear of embarrassment before giving a presentation, can trigger the fight-or-flight response. In these cases, the symptoms often do more harm than good. An increased heart rate and sweating might help you escape from a bear, but they won't do much to help you look cool and collected during a presentation.

► Is the fight-or-flight response bad?

Everyone will experience the fight-or-flight response at times, to varying degrees. Usually, it's natural, healthy, and not a problem. However, when the fight-or-flight response leads to excessive anger, anxiety, prolonged stress, or other problems, it might be time to intervene.

► How can I manage the fight-or-flight response?

In addition to the fight-or-flight response, your body can also initiate an opposing **relaxation response**. Many symptoms of the relaxation response counteract fight-or-flight, such as slower and deeper breathing, relaxed muscles, and a slower heart rate. The relaxation response can be triggered by using relaxation skills, such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation.

Anger Discussion Questions

- 1** Although it might sometimes feel like your anger “explodes” and comes out of nowhere, this is almost never the case. Anger builds slowly, and if you aren’t paying attention, it can happen entirely outside of your awareness. Can you think of a time when your anger caught you by surprise? In retrospect, were there any warning signs you could’ve picked up on?

- 2** Some people describe anger as a “secondary emotion”. This means that anger is a response to a *primary* emotion, such as hurt, fear, or sadness. For example, someone might feel hurt, and lash out with anger in response. Do you think anger is a secondary emotion? Why or why not?

- 3** Many of us pick up life-long habits related to anger when we’re children, based off of the examples set by our parents. Do you notice any similarities between how you and your family members deal with anger? What are your family’s strengths and weaknesses in dealing with anger?

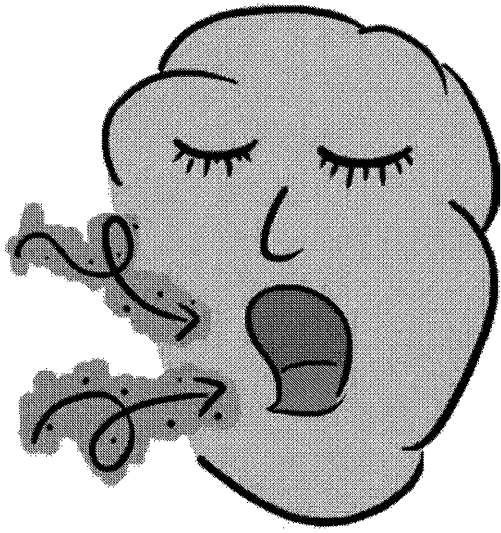
- 4** Everyone experiences anger—it’s a completely normal emotion, and it’s healthy within limits. But as we know, anger can become a problem when it gets out of control. When *is* anger healthy, and when does it become unhealthy or harmful?

- 5** People can express their anger through words, actions, art, or any number of other ways. Do you express your anger in any healthy ways, and if so, what are they? What do you think might happen if you *never* expressed your anger?

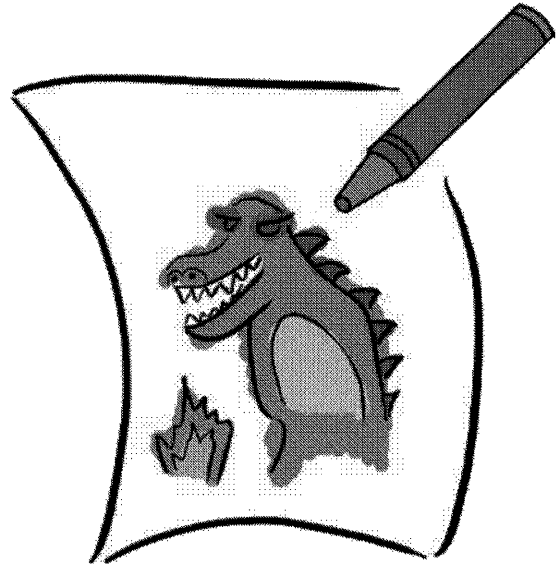
- 6** How you think about a situation can influence how you feel about it. For example, if you think that someone “has it out for you”, you will probably see all of their actions in a negative light. Can you think of a time when your thoughts affected your anger? In what ways could changing how you think help you control how you feel?

- 7** What would it look like if someone was really good at managing their anger? Not just hiding their anger or ignoring it, but managing it in a genuinely healthy way. Do you know anyone who manages their anger well?

Anger Management Skill Cards



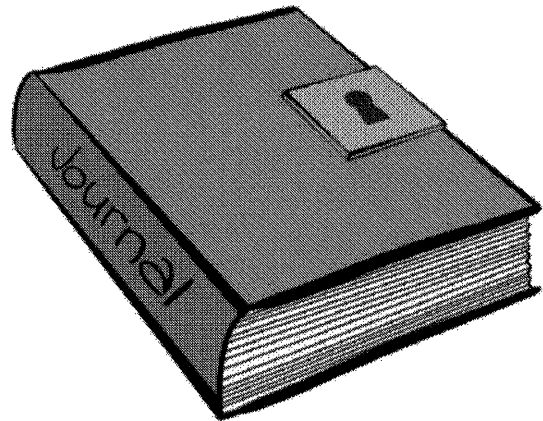
Take 20 Deep Breaths



Draw Your Anger

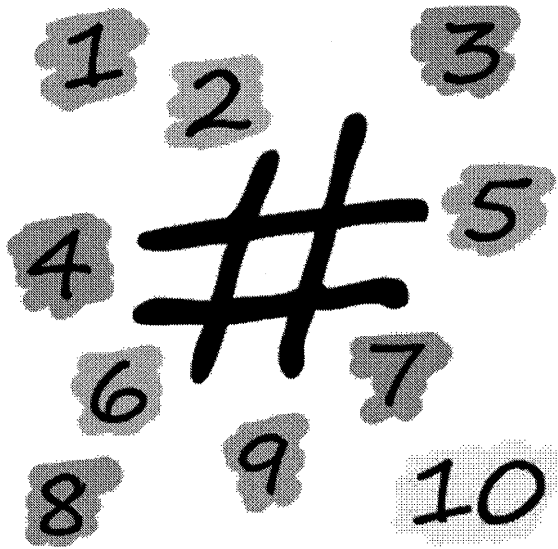


Do 50 Jumping Jacks

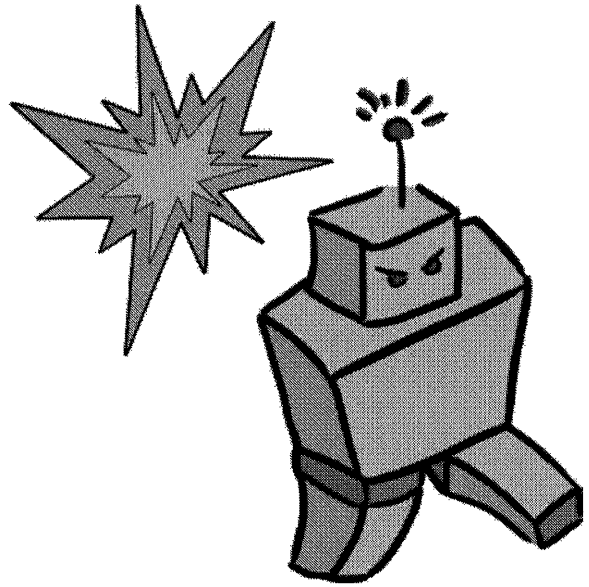


Write About Your Anger

Anger Management Skill Cards



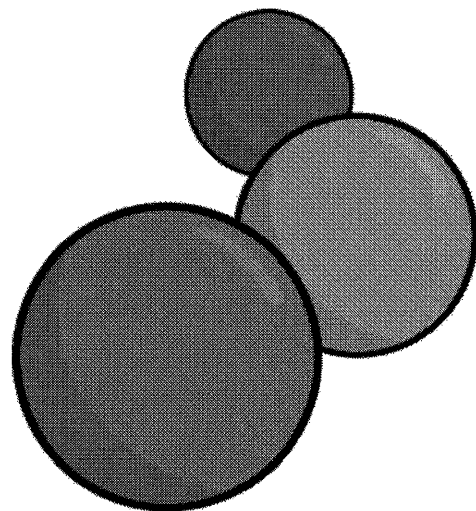
Count to 100



Walk Away

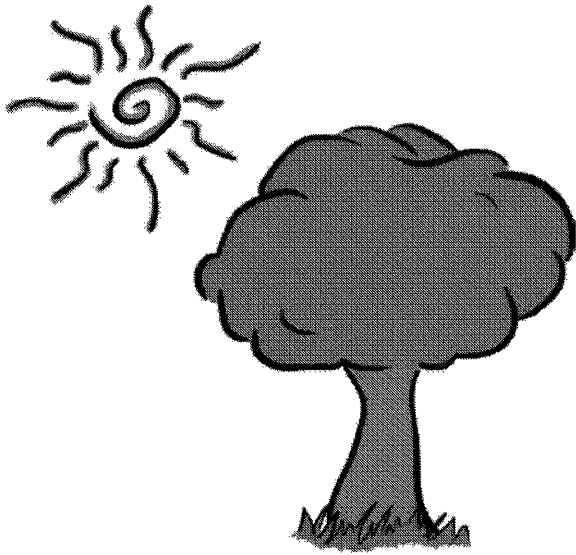


Talk to Someone about
Your Problem



Squeeze a Ball

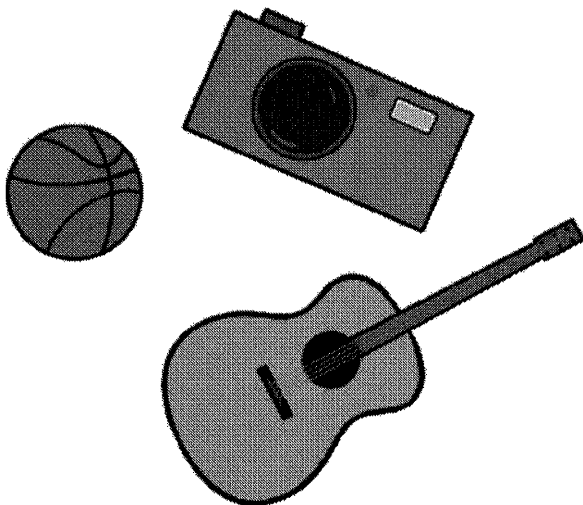
Anger Management Skill Cards



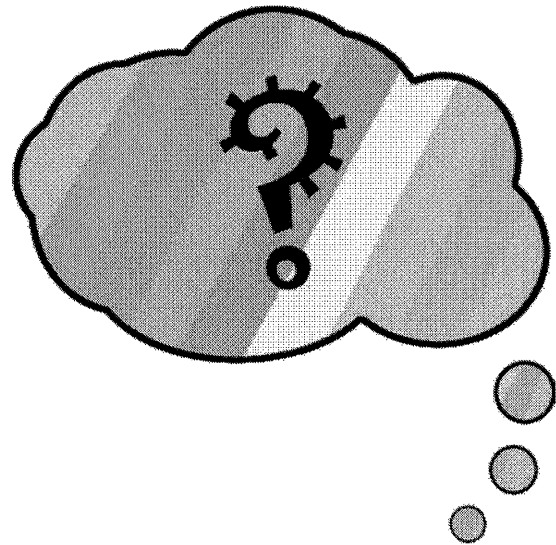
Play Outside



Listen to Music

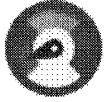


Practice a Hobby



Your Own Idea:

Anger Stop Signs



Anger starts out small, and slowly grows. When your anger is small, you might not even notice it. This is when you are just starting to feel upset about something, but it still doesn't seem like a big deal. Someone at this point might say they are "annoyed".

Draw what you look like when your anger is *small*. This is when you're just a little bit angry.



If your anger has the chance to grow too big, it becomes hard to control. It's like a car without brakes, crashing through everything in its path. It's very hard to stop. Someone who's this angry might yell, hit, cry, or try to break things.

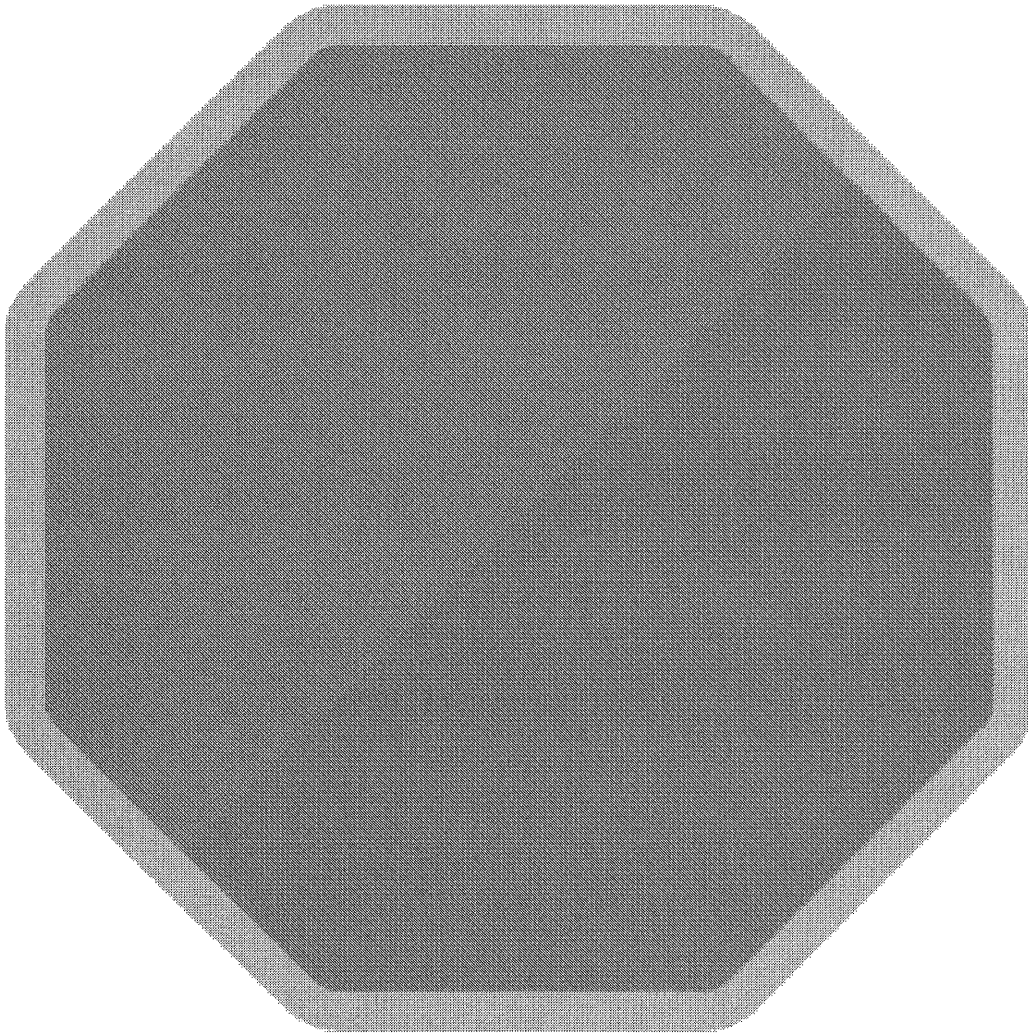
Draw what you look like when your anger is *big*. This is when you're very angry.

Anger Stop Signs



Anger stop signs are clues that your body uses to let you know your anger is growing. These clues start to appear while your anger is still small. If you notice them in time, you can hit the brakes, and take control of your anger before it grows too big.

Everyone has their own anger stop signs. It's important to learn what yours are, so you can spot them in the future. Write your anger stop signs in the space below.



Common Anger Stop Signs

My face feels hot.

I start to shake.

I raise my voice.

I go quiet.

My eyes get watery.

I try to bother people.

I can't think straight.

I feel annoyed.

I want to hit something.

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies

Coping strategies are actions we take—consciously or unconsciously—to deal with stress, problems, or uncomfortable emotions. Unhealthy coping strategies tend to feel good in the moment, but have long-term negative consequences. Healthy coping strategies may not provide instant gratification, but they lead to long-lasting positive outcomes.

Examples of unhealthy coping strategies:	Examples of healthy coping strategies:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drug or alcohol use• Overeating• Procrastination• Sleeping too much or too little• Social withdrawal• Self-harm• Aggression	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exercise• Talking about your problem• Healthy eating• Seeking professional help• Relaxation techniques (e.g. deep breathing)• Using social support• Problem-solving techniques

Example Scenarios

Noelle has a research paper due in one of her classes. Because the paper will require so much work, Noelle feels anxious every time she thinks about it. When Noelle distracts herself with other activities, she feels better. Noelle uses the coping strategy of procrastination to avoid her feelings of anxiety. This helps her feel better now, but will cause problems in the long run.

Juan feels jealous whenever his wife spends time with her friends. To control the situation, Juan uses insults to put down his wife's friends, and he demands that his wife stay home. When Juan's wife caves to his demands, he feels a sense of relief. Juan uses the coping strategy of aggression to avoid the discomfort of jealousy.

Rebecca is angry about being passed over for a promotion at work. Rather than discussing the situation with her boss and trying to improve her work performance, she holds onto her anger. Rebecca has learned to manage her anger by drinking alcohol. Drinking numbs Rebecca's anger temporarily, but the problems at work remain unresolved.

Scenario Discussion Questions

- What consequences might result from this individual's unhealthy coping strategy?
- What healthy coping strategies could be helpful for the individual?
- What barriers might be preventing the individual from using healthy coping strategies?

Healthy vs. Unhealthy Coping Strategies

Describe a problem you are currently dealing with:

My unhealthy coping strategies:	Consequences of unhealthy coping strategies:
1	
2	

Healthy coping strategies I use, or could use:	Expected outcomes of healthy coping strategies:	Barriers to using healthy coping strategies:
1		
2		
3		