

Anger Management Workshop



Do small things irritate you?
Are you grumpy all of the time?
Do you think the world is out to get you?
Do your friends or family say that you over-
react to situations?

*If you answered “Yes!” to any of these
questions, then you need this workshop!*



Sponsored by

TRiO
STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES



What is Anger?

Anger is a completely normal, usually healthy emotion. However, if it gets out of control and becomes destructive, then it can cause problems at work, at home, and in the overall quality of your life.

If you allow anger to control you, then it makes you feel as if you are at the mercy of a powerful, unpredictable force.

The Nature of Anger

Anger can vary in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage.

It causes physiological and biological changes such as increased heart rate, increased blood pressure, and increased levels of your energy hormones, adrenaline and noradrenaline.

It can be caused by external and internal events. You could be angry at a specific person or an event (such as a traffic jam); perhaps anger could arise from worrying or brooding about your personal problems. Memories of traumatic or enraging events can also cause feelings of anger.

Expressing Anger

The natural, instinctive way to express anger is to respond with aggression, which allows us to respond to threats and to defend ourselves when needed. In other words, we kick into survival mode automatically when needed.

However, there are some healthier ways of dealing with anger. Let's look at them:

Expressing Anger

Three main approaches to dealing with anger are expressing, suppressing, and calming.

- Expressing anger in an assertive manner is the healthiest way. It allows for compromise between two parties. You are able to express your needs without being pushy or demanding and without hurting others.

Expressing Anger

- Anger can also be suppressed, and then converted or redirected. The purpose here is to hold in the anger, stop thinking about it, and redirect the feelings into something more positive. Be careful, though, because anger that is not expressed outwardly can turn inward. Anger turned inward is called depression. In other words, you turn the anger toward yourself when you don't properly handle it otherwise. This can also cause high blood pressure and muscle tension and pain.

Expressing Anger

- Sometimes, unexpressed anger can cause pathological expressions of anger such as passive-aggressive behavior (getting back at people without telling them why) or being constantly cynical and hostile (criticizing and putting down others). This can cause the person to have few successful relationships.

Expressing Anger

- The third way to deal with anger is to simply calm down inside. You can control your outward response and then take steps to lower your heart rate, calm yourself down, and let the feelings subside. We will talk about relaxation techniques later in this workshop.

The Goal of Anger Management

- To reduce your emotional feelings AND your physiological arousal. You can't change the people or the things that cause the anger, but you CAN learn to control your own reactions.
- It is not a good idea to make any important, life-changing decisions while angry. Wait until you have been able to calm down, so you can think more clearly.

Do POA have an anger problem?

There are psychological tests that measure the intensity of anger feelings, how prone you are to anger, and how well you handle it.

However, if you have a problem, you probably already know it. If you find yourself acting out-of-control and frightening, you may need to seek professional help.

Why are some people more angry than others?

Some people are just naturally more hotheaded than others. They get angry more easily and more intensely than others.

People who are chronically irritable and grumpy are also angry, but they just don't show it as outwardly. Some people withdraw socially, sulk, or get physically ill when they are angry.

Why are some people more angry than others?

- Easily angered people have a low tolerance for frustration; in other words, they don't think they should be subjected to frustration, inconvenience, or annoyance.
- They can't take things in stride.
- If a situation seems unjust, they get particularly infuriated; for example, being corrected for a small mistake or being cut off in traffic.

Other Causes of Chronic Anger

- It could be genetic or physiological.
- Some children are born more irritable, touchy, and easily angered.
- It could be sociocultural. Anger is not as socially accepted as anxiety, depression, or other emotions. Consequently, we don't learn how to handle or channel it constructively.
- Family background also plays a role. Easily angered people often come from families who are disruptive, chaotic, and not skilled at emotional communications.

Is it good to let it all hang out?

NO! This is a dangerous myth! Letting it rip actually causes the anger and aggression to escalate. It also causes delay of a resolution of the problem.

It is best to figure out what triggers your anger and to develop strategies to keep those triggers from sending you over the edge.

Relaxation Techniques

➤ Deep breathing

- You must breathe from your diaphragm, your gut, in order to feel relaxed.

➤ Calming words or phrases

- Slowly repeat words like “relax,” “take it easy,” “all is well,” “it’s going to be OK” while breathing deeply.

➤ Visualize a relaxing experience, from either memory or your imagination.

➤ Non-strenuous, slow yoga-like exercises can relax your muscles and make you feel much calmer too.

Cognitive Restructuring

- This means changing the way you think.
- Angry people tend to curse and swear, get very exaggerated, be overly dramatic, and use words like “never” and “always” to describe events in their lives.
- Angry people tend to alienate and humiliate other people who might otherwise work with them to resolve a problem.

Cognitive Restructuring

- Logic defeats anger, because anger, even when it's justified, can quickly become irrational.
- One must use cold hard logic with him/herself.
- One must remind oneself that the world is “not out to get you.” Everyone experiences rough spots in life.
- Angry people tend to demand fairness, appreciation, agreement, and willingness to do things their way.

Cognitive Restructuring

- Angry people need to become aware of their demanding nature and change the demands into desires. For example, “I would like (this) to happen.”
- Then the person would feel the normal feelings of frustration, disappointment, or hurt when he/she did not get what he/she wanted, but not anger.
- Some people try to use anger to avoid hurt, but the hurt is usually still there.

Problem Solving

- Sometimes anger and frustration is caused by real and inescapable problems in our lives. And the fact that our culture believes that there is a solution for every problem does not help.
- The only thing to do when there is not going to be an end to a problem in the foreseeable future is to decide HOW to deal with the problem.
- Make a plan and check your progress along the way, give it your best, face the problem head-on, but don't punish yourself if an answer does not come right away. This will help you to have more patience.

Better Communication

- Angry people tend to jump to conclusions.
- When you are in a heated discussion, you need to slow down and think through your responses.
- Listen carefully to what the other person is actually saying and take time before giving your answer, even if it means you need to withdraw to yourself for a while before coming back with an answer.
- If the person you are disagreeing with is someone you really love, you don't want to blurt out the first thing that comes to your mind because it is impossible to take back hurtful words and it could possibly destroy the relationship forever.

Using Humor

- Silly humor can give you a more balanced perspective. For example, when you get angry and call someone a name or refer to them in some imaginative phrase, try to picture what they would literally look like if they actually were what you called them. This could take the edge off of your fury.
- Don't use harsh, sarcastic humor. That's just another form of unhealthy anger expression.
- The main thing is to not take yourself so seriously.

Changing Your Environment

- Problems and responsibilities can cause anger when you feel trapped by them and by the people involved.
- Sometimes you need a break. Scheduling some personal time for yourself during especially stressful times in your life can help to alleviate angry feelings. For example, taking a walk alone to clear your head, so you can then deal with issues, will help.

Some Final Tips

- Timing of when to discuss things is important. Don't try to discuss things when you are tired or distracted. It can lead to arguments.
- Avoidance of things that upset you can help; for example, not looking at your child's messy room. The point is to keep yourself calm.
- Finding alternatives to make things easier for yourself can help keep you calm. For example, finding a different route to work that is less congested could help make your morning commute quicker and easier.

Do you need counseling or assertiveness training?

- If your anger is getting so out of control that it is having an impact on your relationships and other important parts of your life, such as your job, you may need some counseling. Psychologists say that highly angry people could get closer to a middle range of anger with about 8-10 weeks of therapy.
- If seeking assertiveness training, find a counselor who can teach you to “tone down” your reactions so that you can express your needs without running over the needs of other people. Much of assertiveness training focuses on the person that is too passive, but the angry person needs to learn how to change from being aggressive to being assertive.

Anger Management

We hope you have enjoyed and benefited from this workshop! Please print the evaluation from the TRiO website, fill it out, and return it to Patricia Nicholas in Rm. 114, Bldg. B; Kayla Owens in Rm. 110, Bldg. B; or Tawanie Shanks in the TRiO lab, Bldg. B.

The material from this workshop came from the American Psychological Association online. You may reference:

www.printthis.clickability.com/pt/cpt?action=cpt&title=Controlling+Anger+Before...

All information contained in this workshop is for educational purposes only.