



ANGER

MANAGEMENT

ANGER IS:

- A normal emotion
- A normal emotion that happens to everybody
- A normal emotion that can be controlled- just because someone might not know how to control their anger, doesn't mean they can't learn.
- A normal emotion that shouldn't be just ignored, it won't go away- ignoring anger is a bit like squeezing the end of a balloon, the anger will just move to another location. It will come back and sometimes when you least expect it.
- A normal emotion that can be planned for in advance- you can develop an anger plan to help you calm down, when you start to feel angry you can activate the plan.

ANGER CAN BE:

- A way to express when we are in pain or hurting
- Learnt behaviour- if we grow up around people who can't control their anger, then we may learn to express our feelings in the same way.
- A way of coping with extreme stress or pressure
- Physical- we can channel feelings towards other people with physical attacks, towards objects around us, or towards ourselves through deliberate self harm or eating disorders.
- Verbal- we can take our feelings out on other people by shouting, swearing or being nasty to them.
- Hostile or uncooperative- we can let our feelings change the way we act towards people, not talking to them, reacting badly, feeling hatred towards them.

ANGER LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE WHO:

- Is always tense
- Is highly impulsive- they might think no but act yes
- Lacks empathy- they are unable to recognise how other people are feeling
- Has a low tolerance threshold- the smallest thing might wind them up
- Has a low frustration threshold- they get angry when things don't go right for them
- Has self defeating anger- their anger causes more issues and problems than the thing that made them angry
- Have low self esteem- they don't really like themselves
- Aren't very assertive- they can't get things sorted without resorting to anger
- Can't cope with stress- things get on top of them very easily
- Blame other people when things go wrong- nothing is ever their fault
- Are irrational about things- everything is unfair towards them
- Have high expectations of those around them- other people should always put them first
- Who exaggerate situations- they say things like ' I was only....'

ANGER IS LIKE FIRE:

- **'SPARK'** - what causes ignition? What causes you to kick off? What are your triggers? Identify them now, sparks may be insignificant now but can lead to greater danger if not controlled.
- **'FLAME'** - spark will lead to flame, this is the impact of anger raging inside, wanting to burst out, anger eats/burns away at you, you become frustrated, you may wish to seek revenge, it is harmful, it hurts, it is destructive.
- **'FIRE'** - the flame will lead up to fire, this is the first impact of anger on the outside world, up until now people have not been able to see your anger burning away, now the anger burns inside and out, everybody sees it, people will react in different ways, some may wish to crush the fire, others will wish to stoke it up, the fire/anger causes destruction.
- **'INFERNO'** - the fire/anger is now raging out of control and become an inferno, what are the consequences? Immense damage caused to itself, immense damage caused to everything and everybody around, very destructive, very hard to rebuild the hurt/damage caused, when the inferno finally dies down feelings of regret will appear.

BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER

Sometimes it is helpful to work out how and why a problem has occurred, after it is all over.

Think about and then describe below, three incidents in which you have been involved fairly recently:

1. Losing my temper

2. Being in trouble at home

3. Being in trouble at school

On the next page fill in the grid with references to the incidents that you have described above.

| Time | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|---------------------|----------|----------|----------|
| Place? | | | |
| Who was there? | | | |
| What was happening? | | | |
| My feelings before? | | | |
| What happened? | | | |
| Effects? | | | |
| My feelings after? | | | |

Draw the person you are angry with here then scribble them out:

Call the person all the names you want to here:

Draw an angry monster who will come and get them here:

Say what you want to say to them and never did here:

ANGRY PAGE!

Draw them and poke a hole through where their face is:

List all the things you would like to do to the person here:

Colour this red:

Scribble hard here:

MANAGING OUR ANGER

In the previous sections we looked at the sorts of situations which might lead to you losing your temper.

Now we need you to look in more detail at the triggers and the thoughts that are going on in your head and at ways in which we can stop your anger from becoming a negative force.

- When are you likely to lose your temper? Are you tired? Frustrated? Tense? Hungry? Sad? Irritated?
- What are the physical signs of anger in your body? Muscles tighten? Rapid breathing? Pounding heart? Clenched fists?
- What's going through your mind? Its me or him! I'll show them! Its not fair! I've got to win this one!

Just being aware of some of these things is half the battle, once aware that you are in danger of blowing, try some of the following:

- Try to Relax
- Take deep controlled breaths
- Give yourself a moment to think about what is happening, count to 5/10/20
- Use a magic word in your head e.g.: stop or calm!
- Try to distract yourself e.g. sing a song or count
- Walk away
- Say some positive things to yourself
- Try to imagine a soothing scene in your head e.g. imagine you are in your favourite place or floating on a bed in the sea.

GIVE YOURSELF A GOOD TALKING TO

Practice some of the following positive self statements:

- I know that this could be difficult but I can handle it and stay in control
- Take some deep breaths
- Calm...calm...
- Relax those muscles
- Think of my relaxing scene
- This person has the problem, I'm not going to let them get to me
- I'm not going to take this personally
- My voice will stay quiet and calm even if I'm shouting inside
- Well done I did it!

See you can do it. Remember practice makes perfect!

On the following page is a kind of diary for you to keep over the next week or two. Practice your responses and keep a record of your successes.

AN EYE ON YOURSELF

During the course of the next week, keep record for yourself of how many times you have achieved the following things.

Simply write in the box the numbers of times you had a success.

| Goals | Number of times achieved |
|---|---------------------------------|
| Spoke quietly instead of shouting even though I was angry | |
| Walked away from possible trouble | |
| Stopped myself from swearing at somebody | |
| Felt angry but managed to cool myself down | |
| Stopped myself from hitting somebody | |
| Avoided an argument by talking and listening | |
| Spoke politely to someone I don't like | |
| | |
| | |

LETS RELAX!

Learning to relax is an extremely important and valuable thing to do. It doesn't come naturally to many of us and we need to practice the skills involved in order to become better at it.

Learning to relax physically stops us from:

- Getting physically tense
- Having headaches
- Getting tired
- Becoming anxious and irritable
- Having sleepless nights
- Getting into arguments and fights

Rules for relaxation:

- Decide upon a daily routine for your relaxation (when and where)
- Choose somewhere quiet to practice where you won't be disturbed
- Don't practice if you are hungry or if you have just had a meal
- Breathe through your nose, taking deep breaths regularly
- Try to be conscious of using your stomach muscles to breathe with

On the next page are some more specific instructions.

LETS RELAX THOSE MUSCLES

1. Lie down or sit so that you are feeling really comfortable.
2. Concentrate on the feeling in your muscles as we try tensing or relaxing them.
3. Starting with your hands and arm, clench your fists tightly and tense the muscles in your arms. Very slowly relax them. Repeat this several times.
4. Now think about your shoulders. Hunch them up tightly, nearly touching your ears. Slowly let them relax. Repeat a number of times.
5. Keeping your eyes closed screw them up tightly then gradually release your eyelids until they are totally relaxed. Repeat.
6. Tighten up your eyebrows by drawing them together and then slowly release the tension in your forehead. Repeat.
7. Tense your jaw by biting your back teeth together tightly. Then let your jaw get heavier and heavier until it is totally relaxed. Repeat.
8. To relax your neck let your chin fall forward onto your chest until the muscles in your neck feel quite tight. Slowly pull it back until you feel relaxed. Repeat.
9. Pull your stomach in as tight as you can then gradually relax those muscles and repeat.
10. Using your heels push down hard against the floor until you feel the tops of your legs are as tight as possible. Slowly relax and then repeat. For the bottom half of your legs point your toes as hard as you can then slowly release and repeat.

Then go through the whole sequence again.

LEARNING TO BREATHE

It sounds a bit silly. We all know how to breathe, it's the first thing that we ever do and we never even have to think about it.

Well there are actually many different ways to breathe and sometimes we have to consciously get our breathing under control.

Think about times in the past when:

- You've been frightened
- Somebody had been sleeping
- You've been running
- You've felt angry
- You've been upset

There are noticeable variations in our breathing pattern at such times.

It is possible to get our breathing under control to decrease tension, to relax our muscles, to decrease our heart and pulse rate and even to increase our alertness by providing more oxygen to our brain.

Try the following:

- Sit quietly but comfortably on a chair with your hands resting on your lap.
- Keep your back straight but relaxed so that your lungs are able to operate efficiently.
- Keep your head straight but relaxed with your eyes gently closed.
- Take a deep silent breath through your nose. Feel the breathe travelling deeply into your lungs, feel your chest expanding slowly.
- Let the breath out through your mouth, slowly and calmly feeling your lungs empty.
- take another deep breath and feel what is happening to your chest as the air flows through your nose, down your windpipe and inflates your lungs.
- Now breathe out again through your mouth quietly and slowly.
- Keep repeating the process at your own pace enjoying the feelings of peace and relaxation.

USING OUR IMAGINATIONS

As we have already said, one of the ways to help us relax when we're feeling tense and angry is to use our imagination to picture a pleasant, peaceful scene.

Here is an example of one to get you started. It is much better however to draw your own imaginary scene, based perhaps on happy memories from your past, be creative its your own private world.

Begin by getting yourself relaxed, using the relaxation and breathing exercises that we have already tried. Let all other feelings go, breath slowly and calmly, close your eyes.

Listen as this is read to you...

We are going on a short but gentle journey. We are going into the woods, walking along a winding path through the softly waving trees. It is a beautiful, sunny, warm day with a few cotton wool clouds floating gently across a blue sky. The sun is warm on the skin of your arms and you can feel the breeze softly ruffling your hair. By the side of the path colourful and scented flowers grow in small groups. A young rabbit basks in the sunlight, cleaning his soft fur and nibbling on the lush green grass. You can feel the earth warm and firm under your feet. The path ends at the bank of a slowly babbling stream. You sit on a mossy tree trunk at the side of the stream, dipping your feet into the tumbling water which bubbles and sings around your ankles. The water is soft and cool on your feet as the sun continues to warm your face and arms. The breeze blows a leaf from a nearby tree and you watch as it floats silently down, coming to rest upon the surface of the water, which carries it away down stream. You close your eyes and listen to the sounds of the water, the birds singing cheerfully in the trees and the leaves rustling gently in the late afternoon air. You can stay here for as long as you like, feet dipped in the stream, there are no pressures to leave, you are calm and happy, no worries, all is well.