



**INNOVEST SME**  
Accelerating Small Business

Tame your Anger! It's costing you a fortune:

# Anger Management Techniques

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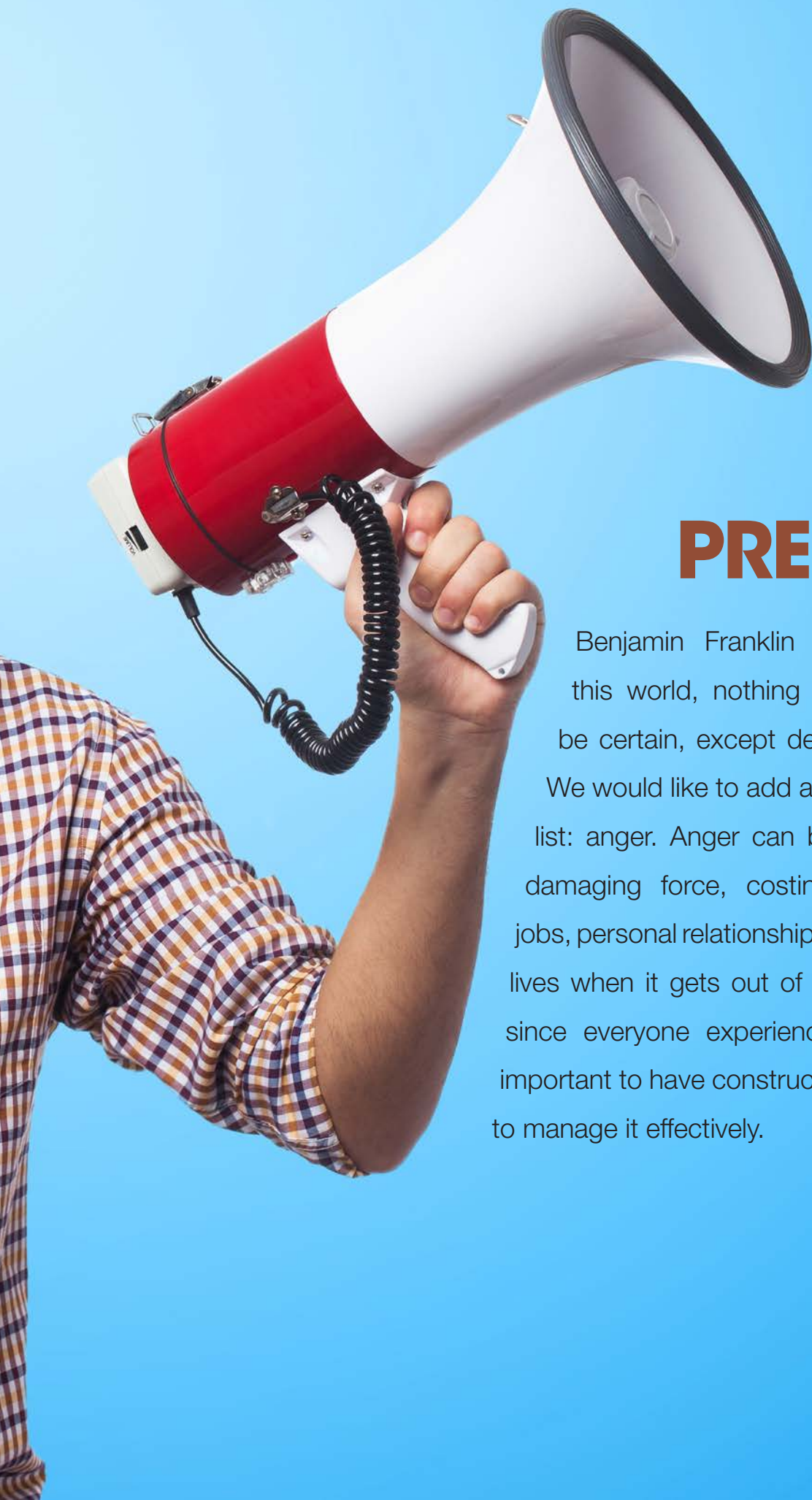
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*Holding on to anger is like  
grasping a hot coal with  
the intent of throwing it at  
someone else; you are the  
one who gets burned.*

— B U D D H A



## PREFACE

Benjamin Franklin once said, “In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.”

We would like to add a third item to his list: anger. Anger can be an incredibly damaging force, costing people their jobs, personal relationships, and even their lives when it gets out of hand. However, since everyone experiences anger, it is important to have constructive approaches to manage it effectively.

*Anger always comes from  
frustrated expectations.*

ELLIOT LARSON

A young man with short brown hair and a light beard is smiling broadly. He is wearing a white t-shirt. His hands are raised to his face, with his index fingers pointing to his cheeks. The background is a textured, greyish wall.

## CHAPTER ONE

# UNDERSTANDING ANGER

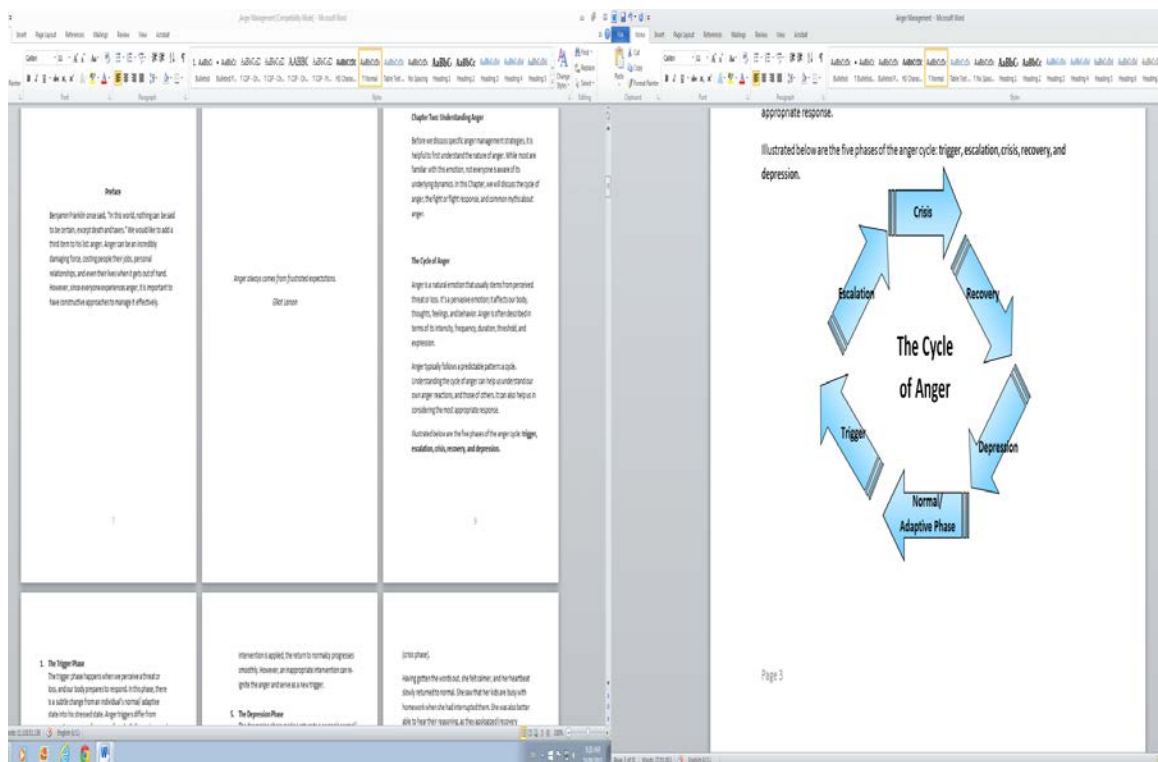
Before we discuss specific anger management strategies, it is helpful to first understand the nature of anger. While most are familiar with this emotion, not everyone is aware of its underlying dynamics. In this Chapter, we will discuss the cycle of anger, the fight or flight response, and common myths about anger.

### THE CYCLE OF ANGER

Anger is a natural emotion that usually stems from perceived threat or loss. It's a pervasive emotion; it affects our body, thoughts, feelings, and behavior. Anger is often described in terms of its intensity, frequency, duration, threshold, and expression.

Anger typically follows a predictable pattern: a cycle. Understanding the cycle of anger can help us understand our own anger reactions, and those of others. It can also help us in considering the most appropriate response.

Illustrated below are the five phases of the anger cycle: **trigger, escalation, crisis, recovery, and depression.**



## 1. The Trigger Phase

The trigger phase happens when we perceive a threat or loss, and our body prepares to respond. In this phase, there is a subtle change from an individual's normal/ adaptive state into his stressed state. Anger triggers differ from person to person, and can come from both the environment or from our thought processes.

## **2. The Escalation Phase**

In the escalation phase, there is the progressive appearance of the anger response. In this phase, our body prepares for a crisis after perceiving the trigger. This preparation is mostly physical, and is manifested through symptoms like rapid breathing, increased heart rate, and raised blood pressure. Once the escalation phase is reached there is less chance of calming down, as this is the phase where the body prepares for fight or flight (to be discussed later).

## **3. The Crisis Phase**

As previously mentioned, the escalation phase is progressive, and it is in the crisis phase that the anger reaction reaches its peak. In the crisis phase our body is on full alert, prepared to take action in response to the trigger. During this phase, logic and rationality may be limited, if not impaired because the anger instinct takes over. In extreme cases, the crisis phase means that a person may be a serious danger to himself or to other people.

## **4. The Recovery Phase**

The recovery phase happens when the anger has been spent, or at least controlled, and there is now a steady return to a person's normal/ adaptive state. In this stage, reasoning and awareness of one's self returns. If the right intervention is applied, the return to normalcy progresses smoothly. However, an inappropriate intervention can re-ignite the anger and serve as a new trigger.

## 5. The Depression Phase

The depression phase marks a return to a person's normal/ adaptive ways. Physically, this stage marks below normal vital signs, such as heart rate, so that the body can recover equilibrium. A person's full use of his faculties return at this point, and the new awareness helps a person assess what just occurred. Consequently, this stage may be marked by embarrassment, guilt, regret, and or depression.

After the depression phase is a return to a normal or adaptive phase. A new trigger, however, can start the entire cycle all over again.

Below is an example of a person going through the five stages of the anger cycle.

Josephine came home from work to see dirty plates left in the sink (trigger phase). She started to wash them, but as she was doing so she kept thinking about how inconsiderate her children are for not cleaning after themselves. She was already tired from work and does not need the extra chore. She felt the heat in her neck and the tremble in her hands as she's washing the dishes (escalation phase).

Feeling like she can't keep it to herself any longer, she stormed up the room to confront her kids. In a raised voice, she asked them how difficult could it be to wash the dishes. She told them that they are getting punished for their lack of responsibility (crisis phase).

Having gotten the words out, she felt calmer, and her heartbeat slowly returned to normal. She saw that her kids are busy with homework when she had interrupted them. She was also better able to hear their reasoning, as they apologized (recovery phase).

Josephine regretted yelling at her children and told them that she's simply tired and it's not their fault (depression phase).

NOTE: How long each phase lasts differ from person to person. Some people also skip certain phases, or else they go through them privately and/ or unconsciously.

## **UNDERSTANDING FIGHT OR FLIGHT**

The Fight or Flight theory, formulated by Walter Cannon, describes how people react to perceived threat. Basically, when faced with something that can harm us, we either aggress (fight) or withdraw (flight). It is believed that this reaction is an ingrained instinct geared towards survival.

The fight or flight instinct is manifested in bodily ways. When faced with a threat, our body releases the hormones adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol. These chemicals are designed to take us to a state of alertness and action. They result in increased energy, heart rate, slowed digestion, and above normal strength.

Understanding the fight or flight instinct can help us understand the dynamics of our anger response. The following are some of the implications of the fight and flight theory on anger management:

First, the theory underscores how anger is but a natural response. There is no morality to anger. Anger is a result of perceived harm to self, whether physical or emotional.

Second, this theory reminds us of the need to stay in control. When we are angry, our rational self gets overridden by a basic survival instinct. There's a need to act immediately. This instinct can then result in aggressiveness, over-reactivity, and hypervigilance, which are all contrary to rational and deliberate response. Conscious effort towards self-awareness and control is needed so that this instinct does not overpower us.

## **COMMON MYTHS ABOUT ANGER**

**Here are five common myths about anger:**

### **1. Anger is a bad emotion.**

There is no such thing as a good or bad emotion; they are instinctual reactions and we don't make conscious decisions for them to come. In fact, some anger reactions are appropriate, such as the anger against discrimination, injustice, and abuse. What can be judged as positive or negative/ healthy or unhealthy is how we react to anger.

### **2. Anger needs to be 'unleashed' for it to go away.**

It's true that anger needs to be expressed in order for symptoms to be relieved. However, expressing anger in verbally or physically aggressive ways are not the only way to 'unleash' anger. Nor is

anger an excuse for a person to be aggressive. The expression of anger can be tempered by rationality and forethought.

Note that venting anger does not necessarily results into the anger disappearing, although venting can relieve the symptoms. At times, processing personal experiences, seeing concrete change and genuine forgiveness are needed for anger to go away.

### **3. Ignoring anger will make it go away.**

Generally, all kinds of emotions do not disappear when ignored. The anger just gets temporarily shelved, and will likely find other ways of getting expressed. It can get projected to another person, transformed into a physical symptom, or built up for a bigger future blow up. Some of our behaviors may even be unconscious ways of expressing anger.

While there are situations when it's inadvisable to express your anger immediately, the very least you can do is acknowledge that it exists.

### **4. You can't control your anger.**

This myth is related to the second one. As discussed earlier, the fight and flight instinct can make anger an overwhelming emotion. However, this instinct does not mean that you're but a slave to your impulses. Awareness of anger dynamics and a conscious effort to rise above your anger can help you regain control of your reactions.

## **5. If I don't get angry, people will think I am a pushover.**

It's true that a person can lose credibility if he makes rules and then ignores violations. However, anger is not the only way a person can show that there are consequences to violations. In fact, the most effective way of instilling discipline in others is to have a calm, non-emotional approach to dealing with rule-breakers. Calm and rationality can communicate strength too.

### **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Ever since he was a young boy, Jeff was known to have problems related to his anger management. He used to get angry on other children whenever they played with his toys or wouldn't allow him to join a game. As no one tried to understand Jeff and his condition, he grew up with a short temper which cost him a lot in his life. Jeff lost a total of 3 jobs and started living on a pension in a home with poor conditions.

One day, Jeff miraculously decided to approach people and ask for their advice. He thought that this way, he will be able to understand how anger works and help others get rid of theirs before it brought consequences. This way, Jeff learned a lot about the cycle of anger, its phases and also how to help others control it. He started working on building himself a career in this niche by taking courses and helping people whenever he had free time. This has provided him with a nice income, but also made people understand which aspects of anger management were myths and which were facts.

*How much more grievous  
are the consequences of  
anger than the causes of it.*

—MARCUS AURELIUS

# DO'S AND DON'TS

Now that we've established that anger is a natural, unavoidable, and instinctual reaction, let's look at how we can respond to anger appropriately. In this chapter, we will discuss the dos and don'ts in responding to anger.

## UNHELPFUL WAYS OF DEALING WITH ANGER

**The following are unhelpful ways of dealing with anger:**

**1. DON'T ignore the anger.**

Some people respond to anger by not admitting, even to themselves, that they are angry. Defense mechanisms often used to ignore anger include laughing an issue off, distracting one's self from the problem, and trivializing the trigger's impact.

**2. DON'T keep the anger inside.**

There are people who do recognize that they're angry. However, they choose to obsess about their anger in silence rather than express it. They can bear grudges for a long



time. People like this, also called ‘stuffers’, are more likely to develop hypertension compared to others. They are also likely to just ‘explode’ one day, once the anger has built to the point that they can’t keep it inside anymore.

### **3. DON’T get aggressive.**

The right to vent your anger doesn’t extend to doing it in ways that can hurt others, hurt yourself, and damage property. Aggression can be verbal or physical.

### **4. DON’T get passive-aggressive.**

Passive-aggressiveness refers to indirect and underhanded means to get back at the person who made you angry. Examples of passive-aggressive behaviors are gossiping, tardiness and backbiting.

### **5. DON’T use non-constructive communication styles.**

Avoid the use of indirect attacks and unproductive statements. These include blaming, labeling, preaching, moralizing, ordering, warning, interrogating, ridiculing and lecturing.

## **HELPFUL WAYS OF DEALING WITH ANGER**

**The following are helpful ways in dealing with anger:**

### **1. DO acknowledge that you are angry.**

It is important that you know how to recognize that you are angry, and give yourself permission to feel it. This can be as simple as

saying to yourself “I am angry.” Remember, you can’t control something you don’t admit exists!

**2. DO calm yourself before you say anything.**

In the previous discussions, we saw how there is a biological reason why anger can feel overwhelming --- our body is engaged in a fight or flight response. It helps then to defer any reactions until you have reached the return to normal/ adaptive phase of the anger cycle. Otherwise, you might end up saying or doing something that you’d later regret. Count 1 to 10!

**3. DO speak up, when something is important to you.**

This is the opposite to ‘keeping it all in.’ If a matter is important to you, so much so that keeping silent would just result in physical and mental symptoms, then let it out. If it’s not possible to speak to the person concerned, at least look for a trusted friend or a mental health professional.

**4. DO explain how you’re feeling in a manner that shows ownership and responsibility for your anger.**

Take ownership and responsibility for your feelings. This makes the anger within your control (you can’t control other people). One way to take ownership and responsibility for your anger is through the use of I-messages, which would be discussed in a later Chapter.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Unfortunate events happen all the times in most of our lives. This was also the case with Bella. After having to cope with a difficult family situation, she started to develop anger management issues which made her unable to build a career in a company. She used to get angry out of nothing and deal with her anger by trying to ignore it, keep it inside and trying to keep her calm, but these ideas only made her feel weaker.

Fortunately, Bella managed to get out of this situation thanks to a colleague who thought her a few secrets in order to make sure that she won't lose her job. This way, Bella learned to how to acknowledge that she is angry, but also how to calm herself and when to speak up. The tips helped make her regain control and respond to anger in the logical and correct way.

*People who fly  
into a rage always make  
a bad landing.*

—WILL ROGERS



## CHAPTER THREE

# GAINING CONTROL

Anger is instinctual, yes. It is an emotion that comes unbidden and we often don't have a choice whether we would be angry or not. What we can do however, is take control of our anger when it comes. In this Chapter, we will discuss ways to gain control over our anger. Specifically we will discuss recognizing warning signs, coping thoughts, relaxation techniques and ways to blow off steam.

### A WORD OF WARNING

The first step in gaining control of anger is to recognize its warning signs. You have to be aware of symptoms that your anger is about to build up, so that you can catch yourself early and make the necessary intervention.

This process involves taking yourself from the 'moment' and observing your own reactions from a third person point of view.

Warning signs of anger exists in a range. Some are very obvious; others very subtle. They differ from person to person.

Signs of anger can be physical, mental, emotional, and behavioral.

**Physical signs** of anger include:

- rapid heart rate
- difficulty breathing
- headache
- stomachache
- sweating
- feeling hot in the face and neck
- shaking

**Mental signs** of anger include:

- difficulty concentrating
- obsessing on the situation
- thinking vengeful thoughts
- cynicism

**Emotional signs** of anger include:

- sadness
- irritability
- guilt

- resentment
- feeling like you need to hurt someone
- needing to be alone
- needing to isolate one's self
- numbness

**Behavioral signs** of anger include:

- clenching of fist
- pounding of fist on a wall/ table or any surface
- pacing
- raising one's voice
- any act of aggression/ passive-aggression

## **USING COPING THOUGHTS**

Once you realize that you are angry, or that you're about to get angry, you can start calming yourself mentally. The following are just a few mental scripts you can use to keep your anger under control.

1. Calm down first, and think this through.
2. This may not be as bad as it seems.
3. This is just one incident --- it doesn't define my life.
4. I am capable of managing this situation.
5. It's alright to be upset. / I have the right to be upset in this situation.  
/ I am angry.
6. What needs to be done immediately? (damage control/ solution-focused mode).

7. Bad things/ Mistakes do happen/ Nothings says that things will go right all the time.
8. There is no need to feel threatened here.
9. I have no control over other people and their feelings. But I have control over myself.
10. I have managed anger successfully before and I will again.

## **USING RELAXATION TECHNIQUES**

Another way to help you control your anger is to intentionally induce yourself to a state of calm. This can help especially in addressing the physical symptoms of anger.

### **Relaxation techniques that you can do include:**

#### **1. Breathing Exercises**

Deliberately controlling your breathing can help a person calm down. Ways to do this include: breathing through one's nose and exhaling through one's mouth, breathing from one's diaphragm, and breathing rhythmically.

#### **2. Meditation**

Meditation is a way of exercising mental discipline. Most meditation techniques involve increasing self-awareness, monitoring thoughts, and focusing. Meditation techniques include prayer, the repetition of a mantra, and relaxing movement or postures.

#### **3. Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**

PMR is a technique of stress management that involves mentally

inducing your muscles to tense and relax. PMR usually focuses on areas of the body where tension is commonly felt, such as the head, shoulders, and chest area. It's a way to exercise the power of the mind over the body.

#### **4. Visualization**

Visualization is the use of mental imagery to induce relaxation. Some visualization exercise involves picturing a place of serenity and comfort, such as a beach or a garden. Other visualization exercises involve imagining the release of anger in a metaphorical form. An example of this latter kind of visualization is imagining one's anger as a ball to be released to space.

#### **5. Music**

Some people find listening to music as very relaxing. The kind of music that's calming differs from person to person; traditional relaxation music includes classical pieces, acoustic sounds, and even ambient noises.

#### **6. Art and Crafts**

There are people who find working with their hands as a good way to relax. This is especially true for people who feel their tensions in their hands. Drawing pictures, paper construction and sculpting are just some of the ways to de-stress when faced with an anger trigger. Arts and crafts are helpful because it keeps a person from obsessing on the anger while he or she is still in the recovery phase of the anger cycle.

## **BLOWING OFF SOME STEAM**

Another way of controlling your anger is by getting the anger energy out-- blowing off steam. These techniques are especially helpful when you are in the crisis phase of the anger cycle.

**The following are some constructive ways of blowing off steam:**

### **1. Screaming**

If the place would allow it, screaming can help release the tensions and frustrations that come with anger. Think of the thing that angers you the most, build momentum, and let it out in one big shout. You may also scream out the words you wish you could say if the venue is appropriate; the louder the scream, the better.

### **2. Physical Activity**

Many people find exercise, sports, dancing and even just pacing about, as effective ways to vent anger. This makes sense; if the fight and flight response gears a person for physical action, then physical action might indeed be the best way to deal with the anger. Physical activity is also believed to release endorphins, our natural mood regulators.

### **3. Pillow Punching**

The need to fight back may be channeled through punching pillows. Pillows provide a safe way to release tensions; it's safe not just for the object of the anger but also for one's self. Related techniques include wringing out towels and breaking old plates.

#### **4. Writing**

If physical activities are not your thing, you can blow off steam by expressing your thoughts and feelings in writing. You can write in an unstructured way, simply putting on paper the first thing that comes to your mind. You can also be more creative about it, and channel your anger through poetry or song.

#### **5. Singing**

Here's a new one: vent your anger by going to your nearest videoke or karaoke bar. Many people find singing therapeutic, especially if the song lyrics and melody matches one's mood.

### **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Showing anger in public or even at home can make other people think of us as bad persons. Tim had to leave with this idea all of his life, just because of the simple fact that he couldn't control his anger and his actions while being angry. However, Tim started to learn that our bodies give warnings just before anger kicks in. These signs are mental and physical, therefore our behavior and the emotions we feel whenever we are angry can help us realize what's about to happen.

Tim started to use coping thoughts and relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises and meditation. He also started to practice certain actions whenever he felt angry in order to blow off some of the steam. In turn, all his work made him understand his anger together with how to avoid it in the first place.

*It is wise to direct your  
anger towards problems---  
not people; to focus your  
energies on answers--- not  
excuses.*

—WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD

# SEPARATE THE PEOPLE FROM THE PROBLEM

Anger is not just personal. It can be relational as well. When managing anger that involves other people, it helps to have a problem-oriented disposition, setting personal matters aside. This way the issue becomes an objective and workable issue.

In this chapter, we will discuss ways to separate people from the problem. Specifically, we will discuss the difference between objective and subjective language, ways to identify the problem, and how to use I-messages.



## OBJECTIVE VS. SUBJECTIVE LANGUAGE

One way to make sure that a discussion remains constructive is to use objective rather than subjective language.

Objective language involves stating your position using reference points that are observable, factual, and free from personal prejudices. Objective references do not change from person to person.

This is the opposite of subjective language, which is vague, biased, and or emotional. You are using subjective language when you are stating an opinion, assumption, belief, judgment, or rumor.

The use of objective language keeps the discussion on neutral ground. It's less threatening to a person's self-esteem and therefore keeps people from being in the defensive. More importantly, objective language can be disputed and confirmed, which ensures that the discussion can go towards a solution.

Here are some guidelines in the use of objective vs. subjective language:

### **1. State behaviors instead of personality traits.**

**Subjective:** You're an *inconsiderate* supervisor.

**Objective:** You approved the rule without consulting with us first.

### **2. Avoid vague references to frequency. Instead, use the actual numbers.**

**Subjective:** You are *always* late!

**Objective:** You were late for meetings four times in the past month.

**3. Clarify terms that can mean differently to different people.**

**Subjective:** You practice *favoritism* when you give promotions.

**Objective:** The employee ranking system is not being followed during promotions.

**4. Don't presume another person's thoughts, feelings, and intentions.**

**Subjective:** You hate me!

**Objective:** You do not talk to me when we are in a room together.

**5. Don't presume an action you did not see or hear.**

**Subjective:** She stole my wallet.

**Objective:** The wallet was in my desk when I left. It was no longer there when I came back, and she was the only person who entered the room.

## **IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM**

You can't separate people from the problem if you don't know what the problem is. A good way to move forward, in a discussion where anger is escalating, is through identifying the problem.

Identifying the problem focuses all energy on the crisis at hand rather than the persons involved in a conflict. The two parties focus their energies on

a common enemy that is outside of themselves, a move that puts the two opposing parties back in neutral ground.

There are many processes you can use to identify the problem. Here is one of them:

**STEP ONE:** Get as much information as you can why the other party is upset.

**STEP TWO:** Surface the other person's position. Reframe this position into a problem statement. Example: *"I can hear how upset you are. Am I right in perceiving that the problem for you is that you weren't informed of the account being sold?"*

**STEP THREE:** Review your own position. State your position in a problem statement as well. Example: *"The problem for me is that I don't have the resources to contact you. The phone lines are not working because of the storm."*

**STEP FOUR:** Having heard both positions, define the problem in a mutually acceptable way. Example: *"I hear that you'd like to be informed of any sales. On my part, I'd like to inform you, but for as long as the phone lines are dead, I can't see how I would do it. I think the issue here is about finding an alternative way to get the information to you on time while the phones are being repaired. Do you agree?"*

If the two parties agree to the problem statement, they can now both work at the surfaced problem and take the focus away from their emotions.

## USING “I” MESSAGES

An “I-message” is a message that is focused on the speaker. When you use I-messages, you take responsibility for your own feelings instead of accusing the other person of making you feel a certain way. The opposite of an I-message is a You-message.

An “I-message” is composed of the following:

1. A description of the problem or issue.

Describe the person’s behavior you are reacting to in an objective, non-blameful, and non-judgmental manner.

“When ... “

2. Its effect on you or the organization.

Describe the concrete or tangible effects of that behavior.

“The effects are ... “

3. A suggestion for alternative behavior.

“I’d prefer ... “

Here is an example of an I-message:

*“When I have to wait outside the office an extra hour because you didn’t inform me that you’d be late (problem/issue), I become agitated (effect). I prefer for you to send me a message if you will not be able to make it (alternative behavior).”*

The most important feature of I-messages is that they are neutral. There is no effort to threaten, argue, or blame in these statements. You avoid making the other person defensive, as the essence of an I-message is “I have a problem” instead of “You have a problem”. The speaker simply makes statements and takes full responsibility for his/her feelings.

### **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

By working in a shop which sells tech, Michael had to deal with people coming in with complaints about the things they bought on a daily basis. As our temper is always different, some of the persons who came in had an easy attitude while others were angry.

Michaels learned from some of his colleagues to separate people from their problem and then proceed to try and talk to them while also keeping an eye on their language and looking for their personality traits in order to know what the proper way to deal with a problem is. By identifying the problem and trying not to argue, Michael managed to calm down a high number of people throughout the days he spend working at the IT shop.

*Anyone can become  
angry---that is easy,  
but to be angry with the  
right person, at the right  
time, and for the right  
purpose and in the right  
way--- that is not within  
everyone's power and that  
is not easy.*

—ARISTOTLE

## CHAPTER FIVE

# WORKING ON THE PROBLEM

The escalation of anger in ‘hot’ situations can be easily prevented, if a system for discussing contentious issues is in place. In this Chapter, we will discuss how to work effectively on the problem. Specifically, we will tackle constructive disagreement, negotiation tips, building a consensus and identifying solutions.



## USING CONSTRUCTIVE DISAGREEMENT

There is nothing wrong with disagreement. No two people are completely similar therefore it's inevitable that they would disagree on at least one issue. There's also nothing wrong in having a position and defending it.

To make the most of a disagreement, you have to keep it constructive. The following are some of the elements of a constructive disagreement:

- **Solution-focus.** The disagreement aims to find a workable compromise at the end of the discussion.
- **Mutual Respect.** Even if the two parties do not agree with one another, courtesy is always a priority.
- **Win-Win Solution.** Constructive disagreement is not geared towards getting the “one-up” on the other person. The premium is always on finding a solution that has benefits for both parties.
- **Reasonable Concessions.** More often than not, a win-win solution means you won't get your way completely. Some degree of sacrifice is necessary to meet the other person halfway. In constructive disagreement, parties are open to making reasonable concessions for the negotiation to move forward.
- **Learning-Focus.** Parties in constructive disagreement see conflicts as opportunities to get feedback on how well a system works, so that necessary changes can be made. They also see it as a challenge to be flexible and creative in coming up with solutions for everyone's gain.

## NEGOTIATION TIPS

Negotiations are sometimes a necessary part of arriving at a solution. When two parties are in a disagreement, there has to be a process that would surface areas of bargaining. When a person is given the opportunity to present his side and argue for his or her interests, anger is less likely to escalate.

**The following are some tips on negotiation during a conflict:**

**1. Note situational factors that can influence the negotiation process.**

Context is an important element in the negotiation process. The location of the meeting, the physical arrangement of room, as well as the time the meeting is held can positively or negatively influence the participants' ability to listen and discern. For example, negotiations held in a noisy auditorium immediately after a stressful day can make participants irritable and less likely to compromise.

**2. Prepare!**

Before entering a negotiating table, make your research. Stack up on facts to back up your position, and anticipate the other party's position. Having the right information can make the negotiation process run faster and more efficiently.

**3. Communicate clearly and effectively.**

Make sure that you state your needs and interests in a way that is not open to misinterpretation. Speak in a calm and controlled

manner. Present arguments without personalization. Remember, your position can only be appreciated if it's perceived accurately.

#### **4. Focus on the process as well as the content.**

It's important that you pay attention not just to the words you and the other party are saying, but also the manner the discussion is running. For example, was everyone able to speak their position adequately, or is there an individual who dominates the conversation? Are there implicit or explicit coercions happening? Does the other person's non-verbal behavior show openness and objectivity? All these things influence result, and you want to make sure that you have the most productive negotiation process that you can.

#### **5. Keep an open-mind.**

Lastly, enter a negotiation situation with an open mind. Be willing to listen and carefully consider what the other person has to say. Anticipate the possibility that you may have to change your beliefs and assumptions. Make concessions.

## **BUILDING CONSENSUS**

Consensus means unanimous agreement on an area of contention. Arriving at a consensus is the ideal resolution of bargaining. If both parties can find a solution that is agreeable to both of them, then anger can be prevented or reduced.

**The following are some tips on how to arrive at a consensus:**

**1. Focus on interests rather than positions.**

Surface the underlying value that makes people take the position they do. For example, the interest behind a request for a salary increase may be financial security. If you can communicate to the other party that you acknowledge this need, and will only offer a position that takes financial security into consideration, then a consensus is more likely to happen.

**2. Explore options together.**

Consensus is more likely if both parties are actively involved in the solution-making process. This ensures that there is increased communication about each party's positions. It also ensures that resistances are addressed.

**3. Increase sameness / reduce differentiation.**

A consensus is more likely if you can emphasize all the things that you and the other party have in common, and minimize all the things that make you different. An increased empathy can make finding common interests easier. It may also reduce psychological barriers to compromising. An example of increasing sameness/reducing differences is an employer and employee temporarily setting aside their position disparity and looking at the problem as two stakeholders in the same organization.

## IDENTIFYING SOLUTIONS

Working on a problem involves the process of coming up with possible solutions. The following are some ways two parties in disagreement can identify solutions to their problem.

- **Brainstorm.** Brainstorming is the process of coming up with as many ideas as you can in the shortest time possible. It makes use of diversity of personalities in a group, so that one can come up with the widest range of fresh ideas. Quantity of ideas is more important than quality of ideas in the initial stage of brainstorming; you can filter out the bad ones later on with an in-depth review of their pros and cons.
- **Hypothesize.** Hypothesizing means coming up with ‘what if’ scenarios based on intelligent guesses. A solution can be made from imagining alternative set-ups, and studying these alternative set-ups against facts and known data.
- **Adopt a Model.** You may also look for a solution in the past. If a solution has worked before, perhaps it may work again. Find similar problems and study how it was handled. You don’t have to follow a model to the letter; you are always free to tweak it to fit the nuances of the current problem.
- **Invent Options.** If there has been no precedence for a problem, it’s time to exercise one’s creativity and think of new options. A way to go about this is to list down each party’s interests and come up proposed solutions that have benefits for each party.

- **Survey.** If the two parties can't come up with a solution between the two of them, maybe it's time to seek other people's point of view. Survey people with interest or background in the issue in contention. Find an expert if possible. Just remember though, at the end of the day the decision is still yours. Identify a solution based on facts, not on someone's opinion.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Once the company ran by John started not to make profit anymore, John decided that it was time for some changes to be put in place. This is when he started to organize different meetings in order to discuss the future of the company and work on the existing problems. By using constructive disagreement and trying to understand the point of view of everyone working for the company, John managed to understand which aspects were an issue together with what should be done in the future.

He also started to negotiate with potential investors to get their interest in the company raised. By preparing and communicating his thoughts clearly, John became managed to solve more issues in a couple of weeks than he had since the company was first built. With the tactics that he put in together with the help received from his colleagues, John understood all of the problems and started to look for solutions.

*Anger is not bad.  
Anger can be a very  
positive thing, the thing  
that moves us beyond the  
acceptance of evil.*

—JOAN CHITTISTER

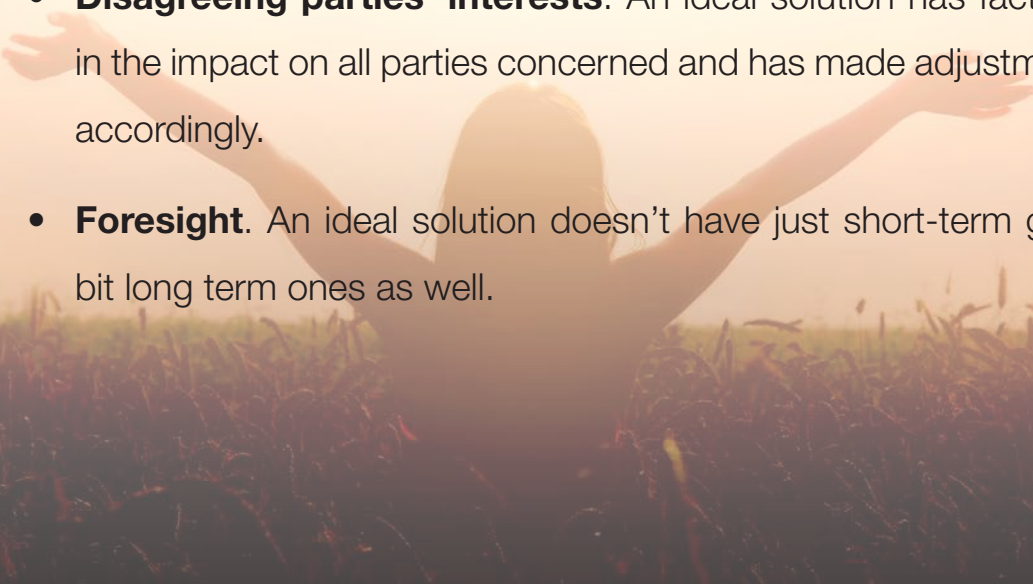
# SOLVING THE PROBLEM

After a constructive discussion of the problem, as well as review of available options, it's now time to go about solving the problem. Solving a problem lessens its 'threat' aspect, making less an anger trigger. In this chapter, we will discuss elements of solving the problem. Particularly, we would discuss choosing a solution, making a plan, and getting it done.

## CHOOSING A SOLUTION

You've already identified possible solutions to a problem. The next thing to do is how to narrow the list down to the best.

The following are some criteria you can use when choosing solutions.

- **Costs and benefits.** An ideal solution is one that has the least costs and most benefits.
  - **Disagreeing parties' interests.** An ideal solution has factored in the impact on all parties concerned and has made adjustments accordingly.
  - **Foresight.** An ideal solution doesn't have just short-term gains bit long term ones as well.
- 
- A person with long hair, seen from behind, stands in a field of tall grass. Their arms are raised in a 'V' shape, reaching towards the sky. The background is a soft, hazy sunset or sunrise, with warm orange and yellow tones. The person's silhouette is dark against the bright light.

**Obstacles.** An ideal solution has anticipated all possible obstacles in its implementation and has made plans accordingly.

**Values.** An ideal solution is one that is consistent with the mission-vision of the organization and/ or its individual members.

## **MAKING A PLAN**

You've already picked a solution for your problem. Now it's time to create a plan for its implementation.

**The following are some guidelines when making a plan.**

**1. Keep your goal(s) central to you plan.**

Every solution has a goal. The goal is the specific and measurable change that you want to achieve by implementing your solution. When you make a plan, make sure that all the steps and processes you outline are moving towards this goal.

**2. Break down your action plan into concrete steps.**

A good plan is concrete instead of abstract, specific instead of generic. Think of the different steps that you need to do in order to get to your ultimate goal and plan along those milestones. Note the deliverable per milestone. Indicate the timeline for each milestone. Identify the people responsible for each task.

**3. Note all the resources you would need.**

There are two kinds of resources: human and material. Make a list of all human and material resources that you need to execute

the action, and make sure that they are all available. If they are not available, add an extra action plan to procure them. You want to make sure that your plan is realistic given your resources.

#### **5. Plan how the solution would be evaluated.**

A good plan doesn't just include the steps to execute the program. It should also include mechanisms for monitoring progress and evaluating results. An evaluation plan ensures that needs for plan revision can be surfaced.

### **GETTING IT DONE**

An issue in contention will remain a hot issue unless the plan is implemented. It is only when concrete change can be observed that anger can be seriously addressed.

**The following are some tips in implementing a solution.**

#### **1. Stick to your plan.**

Note the what, where, when and, who of your plan and follow it to the letter. This will keep your end of the bargain explicit and easy to monitor and evaluate. Deviating from the plan can result to additional anger, especially if you deviated in areas important to the other party.

#### **2. Monitor progress and results.**

Keep track of whether or not your solution is accomplishing the goal. Make sure that you put everything on paper for ready

reference later. Log down best practices, risks and obstacles encountered.

### **3. Reward and revise accordingly.**

If the solution is working, note progress and affirm the success. This gives the two parties a sense of accomplishment. More so, the next time they have a conflict, it can serve as testament to their ability to solve a problem.

If the solution is not working, gather feedback. Surface the reason why the solution does not seem to be working. Make the necessary changes so that you can revise the plan as needed.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

After being hit hard by some family problems, Laura's mental state started to decrease. Her business also started to suffer, so she decided to get counselling. The person who came in order to help her out had a very different approach comparing to others with the same job. Instead of focusing on what's wrong, the counsellor focused on making a decision while analyzing each possible outcome of it.

Together with this, he also guided Laura towards making a plan needed to fix both the problems with the business, but also her family problems. Getting everything that they had planned together was just a matter of time as the final outcome had already been calculated before a decision was made in the first place. Because of this, Laura managed to overcome most of the issues she had to face.

*Everyone has a hot button.  
Who is pushing yours?  
While you probably cannot  
control that person, you  
CAN control the way you  
react to them.*

—ANONYMOUS

# A PERSONAL PLAN

Anger is deeply personal. Effective anger management should take into consideration individual anger dynamics and tailor-fit interventions to them. In this Chapter we will discuss what hot buttons are, how to identify your personal hot buttons, and how you can be benefitted by keeping a personal anger log.

## UNDERSTANDING HOT BUTTONS

Hot buttons are triggers that make us react with anger. They are not necessarily the real cause of our anger, but they can be the one that



'lights the fuse'. Triggers vary in the intensity of the anger reaction they can evoke; some can evoke uncontrollable rage while others merely mild irritation.

Hot buttons can be things that fall short of your expectations, block your goals, attack your self-esteem, violate your values, and/ or give you a feeling of loss or helplessness. A hot button is usually one that elicits an intense reaction in a person, or the one that frequently sparks anger.

These hot buttons can be:

- a. Something we **observe** (e.g. injustices happening to other people)
- b. Something we **think** (e.g. the thinking that we are always the target of a particular person's mockery)
- c. Something we **feel** (e.g. the feeling of being helpless)
- d. Something we **do** (e.g. rescuing someone in a jam even if they don't deserve our help)
- e. Any **combination** of the four

## **IDENTIFYING YOUR HOT BUTTONS**

Hot buttons differ from person to person. Our personal histories influence what would make us angry. Some triggers are caused by conditioning, modeling, and unresolved issues.

A key to seeing if a hot button is the real cause of the anger, or just a trigger, is to see if your anger reaction is proportionate to what the

situation calls for. If you're angrier than you should be, perhaps there is an underlying emotional issue that needs to be surfaced.

Awareness of your hot buttons is already winning half the battle against anger. If you know what can evoke your anger, you can watch out for them.

## **A PERSONAL ANGER LOG**

More often than not, anger reactions appear in patterns. This means that there is a predictable structure that the anger reactions follow. This pattern is unique to each individual.

Unfortunately, it is difficult to notice this pattern unless you take that third person point of view and study your anger reactions from a distance.

Here is where keeping a personal anger log would help. A personal anger log is a diary of anger reactions including symptoms, triggers and coping styles. It is a way of increasing awareness of anger patterns unique to the individual. With awareness, one can better identify ways to prevent and cope with anger when it comes.

Keeping a personal anger log is also a good way to blow off steam. You may treat it as a diary. Instead of a structured table, as the one that will be presented later, you can make an unstructured one to note your free floating ideas and feelings.

Here is a sample template for a personal anger log:

MY PERSONAL ANGER LOG FOR WEEK 1							
Date/ Time	Symptom	Before the anger, these are what I was				My Response to the Anger	Effect of my Anger Response
		see	think	feel	do		
1.							
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
Insights							

## PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION

In school, Jackson used to get in trouble on a regular basis due to the fact that he would get angry very often. It wasn't until college that learned how to cope with the situation and started to understand his hot buttons. By identifying them and having a personal anger log, Jackson learned the trick needed to make people not push his 'hot buttons'.

Knowing how to escape from a situation which could potentially light the fuse and make you angry was an idea developed over some time by Jackson which in turn thought him a number of important things, such as identifying patterns in his anger or the person he got angry with most of the times. Avoiding these situations led him to a more peaceful life, free of the hassle of getting angry out of nothing.

*In the long run, we shape  
our lives, and we shape  
ourselves. The process  
never ends until we die.  
And the choices we make  
are ultimately our own  
responsibility.*

—ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

# THE TRIPLE A APPROACH

Anger is exacerbated by a feeling of victimization and helplessness. It helps to know then that we always have at least three options when dealing with an anger-provoking situation: you can alter, avoid or accept.

## ALTER

You are not a victim of your situation; you always have the option of taking a deliberate and well-thought out response to an anger-provoking situation. Your options typically fall into three categories: alter, avoid, or accept.



Alter means that you initiate change. You can change things in your environment that are within your control. You can also initiate changes within yourself.

**The following are ways that you can change to deal with anger more effectively.**

**1. Change non-productive habits.**

If you know that you have a particular way of doing things that often result into an anger situation, perhaps it's time to break the pattern. For example, if you know that mediating a family quarrel while your mind is tired from work often leads to blow-ups, then re-schedule family meetings to times when you're more relaxed.

**2. Respectfully ask others to change their behavior and be willing to do the same.**

You can't control other people's thoughts, feelings, and behavior. You can, however, let them know that you'd appreciate a change. Waiting for lightning to strike people with habits that irritate you will never get you anywhere, perhaps proactive communication can.

**3. Change the way you view a situation.**

Sometimes, it's our interpretation of a situation that makes us angry, rather than the situation itself. What you can do is change your way of thinking. For example, irrational thoughts like "I have to be perfect at all times" usually result in anger directed at one's

self when failures happen. Maybe if you start thinking “It’s alright to fail now and then,” things would get easier.

#### **4. Change the way you react to a situation.**

You can also deliberately change the way you respond. Anger usually begets anger; we raise our voice when someone raises their voice to us. But if you take a moment and find other ways to respond, then maybe you can manage your anger better.

### **AVOID**

Avoid means steering clear of situations that can make you angry.

The following are ‘avoid’ ways that you can do to deal with anger more effectively.

#### **1. Steer clear of people who make you upset.**

Anger is often triggered by interactions with difficult people, or people who just ‘rub you the wrong way.’ If you know that a person is eliciting an intense anger reaction in you, and you feel that you can’t control it, then perhaps it’s best that you just take action to avoid this individual.

#### **2. Steer clear of your ‘hot buttons.’**

One of the advantages of knowing your hot buttons is that it enables you to structure your day in such a way that avoids them. For example, if too many deadlines make you angry and stressed, then learn time management --- or don’t take more projects than you can handle. Saying ‘no’ is a good avoid response.

### **3. Remove yourself from a stressful situation immediately.**

Another avoid intervention is to immediately remove yourself from a situation that might escalate your anger. For example, if a peer provokes your anger, you don't have to stay around to listen to what he has to say. You can opt to walk away and address the issue another day.

## **ACCEPT**

Unfortunately, there are some things that we cannot change nor avoid. In this case, we have to accept them. This is true in many things that involve unrecoverable losses, like an accident or financial collapse.

**The following are examples of accept responses to dealing with anger:**

#### **1. Find learning.**

When you have no choice but to accept a situation, make the most of it by distilling the lessons from the experience. This way you can recover control by making proactive changes to prevent the situation from happening again.

#### **2. Seek higher purpose.**

Finding meaning can help in managing anger. Interpreting a situation based on one's faith life, or personal philosophy, can lessen its threatening impact on the self. For instance, there are people who think that every negative experience is an opportunity, a call for change.

### **3. Vent to a friend.**

If you can't do anything but accept a situation, at the very least find someone to share your experience with. Venting with a trusted friend or a mental health professional can help you integrate the experience better in your life. This can help you move on faster and more effectively.

### **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Helen's boss was the type of person who could not be managed by anyone, but also who used to oppress his employees. After being treated in a bad manner for many months, Helen finally decided that it was time for her to take action. She knew she couldn't afford to lose the job, so she made some research and found out about the triple A approach from her aunt.

It works by making a decision on whether to alter, avoid or accept a situation. The principle is simple and managed to pay off regardless of which of the A is put into use. By trying to alter the situations that her boss put her into, but also avoiding the worst and accepting the ones which couldn't generate a scandal allowed Helen to continue working without facing many problems, while she also started to have a bit more influence on the decisions that her boss made and how he approached her.

*He who angers you,  
conquers you.*

—ELIZABETH KENNY

# DEALING WITH ANGRY PEOPLE

It is not just our own anger that can get overwhelming. Another person's blow up can also trigger intense reactions in us, including shock, fear, and even reactive rage. In this Chapter we will discuss how we can effectively deal with angry people. Specifically we will talk about the Energy Curve, de-escalation techniques, and guidelines on when to back away and what to do.

## UNDERSTANDING THE ENERGY CURVE

One of the tricky things about handling another person's anger is reacting in a way that will not escalate the anger. This is where an understanding of the Energy Curve can help.



The Energy Curve shows the pattern commonly found in angry reactions. It shows how angry reactions progress in stages, and in each stage there are appropriate responses.

Below is an illustration of the Energy Curve:

**Here are some key points to note about the Energy Curve:**

- 1. RATIONAL BEHAVIOR.** The baseline of the curve is rational behavior. This is the stage when a reasonable discussion about the cause of the anger can happen. Before an angry reaction, a person is said to be in that 'rational' frame of mind. However, once the angry reaction takes root, people go into a state of mind not conducive to reasoning. It is important then to get the person *back* to a rational frame of mind.

IMPLICATION: You cannot reason with a person during these times: when their anger is taking off, at the height of their anger/ rage and even at the point when they are cooling down! You'll just waste a perfectly good argument.

- 2. TAKE OFF.** Angry reaction slowly builds momentum, and the point when the anger is gaining energy is called the 'take off' stage. The way anger builds in intensity differs from person to person. For example, some people start with hostile facial reactions, which progresses to shouting, and which progresses to hitting the table. Other people build up anger in less obvious ways, they start with keeping quiet and then progresses to physically withdrawing

themselves from other people. The anger would continue to build energy until it reaches its peak.

IMPLICATION: Anger naturally builds energy during the take off phase. Arguing back at this point in fact, any conversation would just be futile. Don't react! Respond.

**3. SLOW DOWN.** In this stage is the most intense of the person's reaction. It is a turning point; the reaction stops gaining momentum and begins a steady decline.

**4. COOL DOWN.** Once the angry reaction has reached its height, it will start to subside. You can tell by observing the person's behavior --- often their voices go down to a level tone, they are not moving their hands as much and they seem to breathe easier. Unless provoked further, the person will run out of steam. However, if you start arguing to the person or agitating the person even during this stage, the reaction can take off once again.

IMPLICATION: Only when the angry reaction has slowed down can you introduce supportive behavior. Supportive behavior can be any statement that acknowledges the anger, example: "I can see that this is an upsetting experience for you."

**5. BACK TO RATIONAL BEHAVIOR.** Once the individual has returned to this stage, you can begin to start talking about the problem reasonably. You may even start problem solving at this point.

SUMMARY: When a person is angry, just let them vent! It's the fastest way to deal with the situation.

## DE-ESCALATION TECHNIQUES

De-escalation techniques are skilled interventions designed to facilitate a person's cooling down process, reduce the possibility of getting verbally or physically hurt, and gain control of the situation.

The following are examples of de-escalation techniques:

### **Practice active listening.**

Most of the time, all an angry person needs is an opportunity to tell someone how they feel, and have their anger acknowledged. Seeing that you are genuinely listening to their grievance can help lessen the intensity of their angry reaction.

The following are some helpful components of active listening:

- 1. Show non-verbally that you are listening:** Make sure that your posture shows openness. Establish eye contact. Speak in a soft, well-modulated, non-threatening tone of voice.
- 2. Reflect:** Re-state what you hear from the person. Example: "This is what I heard from you: You are mad because the package did not arrive on time." You can also mirror back their body language in a tentative but objective, non-judgmental fashion. Example: "I can see that you're really upset. You are clasp the desk very tightly."

**3. Clarify:** Help the person make sense of their garbled, confusing, and or illogical statements. “Could you help me explain to me a bit more about what happened in the cafeteria? What do you mean by ‘he bullied you’?”

**Increase personal space:** Anger can escalate if a person feels that he is being stifled. Make sure your body language is non-threatening. Create distance between you and the person.

**Help the person recover a sense of control:** Angry people may feel victimized by a situation, and may need to recover even a small sense of control. You can help do this by:

- a) Giving them choices.
- b) Example: “Would you like to move to a different area and talk?”
- c) Seeking their permission to speak.
- d) Example: May I tell what I think about what just happened?
- e) Focusing on immediate solutions.
- f) Example: “What do you think we can do today to help solve this issue?”

**Orient them to immediacy:** People temporarily loses track of their immediate surroundings at the height of getting overwhelmed. Orienting the person to the time, his location, and who he is with can help de-escalate a person. It helps a person feel less threatened if he knows where he is and how he got there. The goal also is to shift him from attending to his overwhelming feelings to recovering rationality.

**Invite criticism:** Ask the angry person to voice his or her criticism of yourself or the situation more fully. You might say something like, “Go ahead. Tell me everything that has you upset. Don’t hold anything back. I want to hear all you have to say.”

**Agree if possible. If not, agree to disagree:** There are cases when anger is triggered by a legitimate grievance. In these cases, it can help a person lose steam by hearing someone validate the presence of injustice. At the very least, agreeing that a person has a right to the opinion they have can help de-escalate anger.

**Reiterate your support:** Emphasize your willingness to help. Example: “Okay. I don’t know how this thing could have happened, but you have my assurance that I’ll stay with you until we figure it out.”

**Set limits:** Tell the person that you are willing to listen, but you’d appreciate that the tones down the expression of his anger.

Example is: “I’m listening right now. I’d like to talk, but without the shouting. When you shout it is distracting, and if this issue is important to you, then I want to be able to concentrate without hearing you raise your voice. Can we start again? How did I upset you? “

## WHEN TO BACK AWAY AND WHAT TO DO NEXT

Not all angry reactions can be effectively dealt with. Here are situations when it is more advisable to back away:

### **1. When you are too affected by an issue to view it objectively.**

De-escalating anger requires that you can take yourself out of an issue, even temporarily, and look at it objectively. However, if the issue has personal meaning for us, or we are too tired to properly intervene, then we don't have the resources to de-escalate the anger.

WHAT TO DO: Withdraw from the situation and talk to someone you trust about your own feelings.

### **2. When there are warning signs for verbal and/ or physical violence.**

Your priority is always your well-being and safety.

Warning signs for violence include a history of violent behavior, severe rage for seemingly minor reasons, possession of weapons and threats of violence.

WHAT TO DO: Get as far away from the person as you can! Go to a public place.

### **3. When there is influence of mood-altering substances.**

No de-escalating technique can help you deal with a person who has taken alcohol and mood-altering drugs (both legal e.g. some anti-depressants, and illegal e.g. hallucinogens).

WHAT TO DO: Disengage from the conversation and talk to them when they're sober!

#### **4. When no amount of rational intervention seems to work.**

There are moments when a person is hell-bent on raging, and the anger will escalate regardless of what intervention you use. It is possible that the strength of the anger is significantly more than the person's resources to cope. This is signaled by a tendency for the anger to still take off even after slowing down and cooling down, despite the absence of provocation.

WHAT TO DO: Disengage from the conversation and re-schedule the talk for another time.

#### **5. When there are signs of serious mental health conditions.**

While there are no categories of anger disorders in the Diagnostic Manual of Mental Disorders-IV (the reference of most mental health professionals), some serious mental health conditions are related to anger. In these cases, intensive therapy and/or psychiatric medications may be most appropriate. As a rule, people who suffer impairment of reality testing cannot be expected to be rational or reasonable.

Signs to watch out for: persecutory or paranoid delusions, hallucinations, past history of violence based on delusions.

*Chronic and rigid* patterns of the use of anger as coping mechanism may point to a personality disorder.

WHAT TO DO: Compassionate understanding is key! However, disengage yourself immediately as some psychotic symptoms are correlated with a tendency towards violence. Refer to the appropriate mental health professional.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

Dealing with angry people when you're not one of them can be a very challenging task for many of us. Just like others, Peter started to have his anger triggered whenever he had to deal with angrier people in his family or on the street.

Because of the fact that his family has been known for anger management issues, Peter started applying what he called the energy curve technique which allowed him to handle his family's anger and not escalating it to a worse form. By using his logic to depict on which point of the energy curve people he interacted with were, Peter started to find ways in dealing with people easier and keeping their anger under control. By being known to do this by a growing number of people, many started coming to him in order to learn the secret or having some tension taken off their backs.

*If you do not wish to be  
prone to anger, do not feed  
the habit. Give it nothing  
which may tend to its  
increase.*

—EPICTETUS

# PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

So far, we've presented to you different techniques that can help you manage your anger better. In this Chapter, we will show how these different techniques come together. We will also give additional tips to help you in practicing these anger management techniques more effectively.

## PROCESS OVERVIEW

The following is a summary of all the anger management techniques discussed in this book. The techniques can be summarized into four main steps: be informed, be self-aware, take control, and take action.



<b>BE INFORMED</b>	<b>BE SELF-AWARE</b>	<b>TAKE CONTROL</b>	<b>TAKE ACTION</b>
<p><b>Know...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*the anger cycle</li> <li>*the fight and flight response</li> <li>* do's and don'ts of anger management</li> </ul>	<p><b>Study...</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*your warning signs</li> <li>*your hot buttons</li> <li>* your helpful ways of dealing with anger</li> <li>*your unhelpful ways of dealing with anger</li> <li>*personal anger dynamics</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*use coping thoughts</li> <li>*try relaxation techniques</li> <li>*blow off steam</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Alter, Accept, Avoid</li> <li>*Identify the problem</li> <li>*Disagree constructively</li> <li>*Negotiate</li> <li>*Find a solution, Build a consensus</li> <li>*Make a plan, Get it done</li> <li>*De-escalate the other person's anger</li> <li>*Back away when needed</li> </ul>

## **PUTTING IT INTO ACTION**

The following are tips in putting anger management techniques into action:

### **1. Find your motivation**

As with any plan towards behavioral change, it helps to sustain your motivation. Habits are hard to break and unless there is something strong that can inspire you to change, your efforts may not get followed through. So find your motivation! You can remember a negative effect of anger in your life, such as health

problems or poor quality of relationships, and use it to encourage. You may also picture how things could be different if you can manage your anger better.

## **2. Choose only one change at a time.**

Don't expect change to happen overnight. After all, these may be lifetime habits that you are trying to change. Instead, stick to managing one issue at a time. Develop goals that are realistic, otherwise you might just end up frustrating yourself.

## **3. Reward yourself for your successes.**

If you've successfully managed to change, affirm yourself! Any success, no matter how small, shows that you are capable.

## **4. Choose an accountability partner.**

It helps to not keep your goals to yourself. Instead, select a trusted friend who knows what you are trying to accomplish. This friend can encourage you when you need additional motivation, can spur you to action when you're lagging, and can check if you are working at the pace you promised you would.

## **5. Seek a mental health professional.**

If you're really struggling with anger problems, or you just need additional support, remember: you can always seek a mental health professional. Counselors, therapists, and psychiatrist are all trained to address anger and its impact on your life.

## **PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATION**

After graduating the psychology university in the city she lived in, Dana knew that she would be able to handle almost any situation in which anger was a key factor. Knowing a good number of anger management techniques allowed her to get under other people's skin and take control of the situations that she was put in.

Dana didn't keep a constant job as she loved change. In turn, this made her improve the anger management abilities she had. Putting them into action was not a hard job at all, as the continuing number of changes in the people she worked with always gave Dana the dose of excitement that she needed in order to put what she had learnt to good use.

*This feeling, finally, that  
we may change things  
- this is at the center of  
everything we are. Lose  
that... lose everything.*

—SIR DAVID HARE

# CLOSING THOUGHTS

- **Yogi Berra:** In theory there is no difference between theory and practice. In practice there is.
- **Dwight Eisenhower:** Plans are nothing; planning is everything.
- **Jonas Salk:** The reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.





**Rick Chisholm** made history when he single-handedly changed the professional Audio Visual industry by breaking all the rules and capitalised over 50% market share in Australia with very little capital, no partners, mergers or lenders and set up the first franchise operation of its kind in the world in the late 1990's and early 2000's.

As a 7x founder of companies and 30x businesses such as Innovest, AI Machine, Lightsounds, LSW, Light Emotion with revenue in excess of \$300 million and having employed more than 1,000 staff over the last 35 years. Rick is known as the Start-Up and SME Guru and is Author of a number of books including Business Success for Life. Unlike many mentors, he actually walks the talk and has a number of businesses under management in such areas as Automation, Events management, Importing, Distribution, Retailing and E-commerce.

His BIG passion is Business Education empowering Businesses Owners through knowledge and skills. Whilst Rick has experienced great success, he has also endured many failures. Rick has faced and overcome the exact same challenges you are facing now.



**Tala Chisholm** is an SME specialist who has owned and managed several small to medium sized businesses in the last 20 years, several of which were eventually sold. She has extensive experience in the fields of retail, franchising, licensing, dealerships, education, importing, distribution and consulting.

Her expertise lies in building and implementing customised cross-platform database and software solutions for businesses, automation, IT, web marketing, advertising, graphic design, business administration, process refinement and implementation. Her business experience ranges from bricks-and-mortar Giftware retailing to highly technical fields such as Security, CCTV, Entertainment Lighting and Audio sales, hire and installations as well as e-commerce.

Throughout her career she also trained and mentored Franchise business owners as well as internal division managers. Some areas of training included retail operations, management practices, business strategy, accounting, cash-flow, marketing, customer service and IT. She has also headed up the drafting of Operating Compliance Manuals for Franchise operations and implementation of all the elements involved.

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