Anger is a normal, human emotion. It is intense. Everyone gets angry and has a right to his/her anger. The trick is managing your anger effectively so that it will mobilize you in POSITIVE, not negative, directions.

The first step in ANGER MANAGEMENT is to get to know your anger by recognizing its symptoms.

**DO YOU . . .**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>physical</th>
<th>emotional</th>
<th>behavioral</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>grit your teeth?</td>
<td>feel like running away?</td>
<td>cry/yell/scream?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get a headache?</td>
<td>get depressed?</td>
<td>use substances?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get sweaty palms?</td>
<td>feel guilty?</td>
<td>get sarcastic?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get dizzy?</td>
<td>feel resentment?</td>
<td>lose sense of humor?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get red-faced?</td>
<td>become anxious?</td>
<td>become abusive?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>get a stomachache?</td>
<td>feel like lashing out?</td>
<td>withdraw?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**DOES YOUR ANGER . . .**

| last too long?            | contribute to physical problems? |
| become too intense?       | come too frequently?           |
| lead to aggression?       | flare up too quickly?          |
| impair relationships?     |                                 |
| interfere with major roles? (parent, worker, student) |                                 |
| creep out in mysterious ways? |                                 |

**ANGER INVENTORY (Rate 1-5) Rank your anger in the following situations.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 - no annoyance</th>
<th>2 - little irritated</th>
<th>3 - upset</th>
<th>4 - quite angry</th>
<th>5 - very angry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You’ve overheard people joking about you or your family.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re not being treated with respect or consideration.</td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re singled out for corrections while the actions of others go unnoticed.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>You’re hounded by a salesperson from the moment you walk into a store.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re trying to discuss something important with someone, who isn’t giving you a chance to talk or express your feelings.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone offers continual, unsolicited advice.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’re in a discussion with someone who persists in arguing about a topic s/he knows very little about.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You’ve had a busy day and the person you live with greets you with complaints about what you haven’t finished.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone is given special consideration because of his/her popularity, good looks, financial position, or family status.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Someone comments on your being overweight/underweight.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL**

Additional situations that spark YOUR anger.

...perhaps it’s time to work on your anger management skills!
I. PURPOSE:
To increase knowledge and awareness of physical, behavioral and emotional anger symptoms.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:
Oftentimes, anger is misunderstood and unrecognized. “Getting to know your anger” and confronting it is the first step in effective anger management.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:
A. 1. Distribute handouts and review. When discussing “anger inventory”, ask group members to share their totals. Remind group members that unmanaged anger will have a negative effect on physical and mental health.

2. Instruct group members to write anger vertically 3 times on the back of each handout.

   A  A  A
   N  N  N
   G  G  G
   E  E  E
   R  R  R

3. Ask that group members use the first set of letters to describe their physical anger symptoms in words or phrases, e.g.,
   A - aches
   N - nausea
   G - gritting teeth
   E - energy loss
   R - rigid posture

4. Continue using the second set for emotional symptoms, e.g.,
   A - anxious
   N - negative
   G - guilty
   E - embarrassed
   R - resentful

5. And the third set for behavioral anger symptoms, e.g.,
   A - alcohol
   N - narcotics, nicotine
   G - getting into trouble
   E - eat a lot
   R - risk - safety

6. Encourage sharing of group members’ responses by listing them on the chalkboard.

7. Process benefits of increased awareness of personal anger symptoms.

B. 1. Distribute handouts and review. When discussing “anger inventory”, ask group members to share their totals. Remind group members that unmanaged anger will have a negative effect on physical and mental health.

2. Complete handouts.

3. Direct group members into pairs for sharing of responses. Allot time for both partners to share in detail (approximately 15-20 minutes).

4. Return to large group and give each group member 1-2 minutes to summarize their anger profile. Encourage feedback from others as appropriate.

5. Process benefits of this activity.
Do you “stuff” your anger? _____

Do you tend to avoid direct confrontation? _____

"Stuffers" can deny anger...
they may not admit to themselves or to others that they are angry.
"Stuffers" may not be aware that they have the right to be angry.

Some reasons we “stuff” are:

1] fear of hurting/offending someone. □

2] fear of being disliked or rejected. □

3] fear of losing control. □

4] feeling it’s inappropriate (not ok) to be angry. □

5] feeling unable to cope with such a strong, intense emotion. □

6] fear of damaging/losing a relationship. □

7] it’s a learned behavior (but, it can be unlearned!). □

8] trying to use a different style than the one I was raised with. □

9]

10]

Consequences/Problems:

1] anger comes out — regardless.

2] impairs relationships.

3] compromises physical and mental health.

4]

5]
I. PURPOSE:

To increase knowledge of the anger style called "stuffing".
To identify personal anger styles.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

"Stuffing" describes the passive style of coping with anger. Being able to identify a personal anger style is an early step in anger management.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES: This handout can be used in conjunction with ANGER STYLES - ESCALATING (page 5), ANGER STYLES - MANAGING I (page 6), and ANGER STYLES - MANAGING II (page 7).

A. 1. Distribute handouts.

2. Discuss, encouraging group members to offer comments regarding this anger style.

3. Attempt to list T.V./movie/book/cartoon characters, historical figures, and occupations that demonstrate the "stuffing" style.

4. Introduce the ANGER STYLES - ESCALATING page.

5. Introduce ANGER STYLES - MANAGING pages as a more effective style.

6. Process problems associated with the "stuffing" style and benefits of "managing".

B. 1. Review topic of "stuffing" briefly.

2. Encourage each group member to share a situation in which s/he "stuffed" anger, why, and consequences resulting.

3. Distribute handouts and complete as a group, recalling prior discussion.

4. Discuss benefits of greater self-awareness and ask each group member to set a short-term goal to learn effective anger management skills.
ANGER STYLES

☐ STUFFING  ☑ ESCALATING  ☐ MANAGING

Do you “escalate” to rage? _____

Do you try to control, but lose control? _____

“Escalators” blame and shame the “provoker”.

“Escalating” often leads to abusive situations.

Some reasons we escalate are:

1] feeling “I have no other choice”. ☐

2] to demonstrate an image of strength/power. ☐

3] to avoid expressing underlying emotions. ☐

4] fear of getting close to someone. ☐

5] it’s a learned behavior (but, it can be unlearned!). ☐

6] lack of communication skills. ☐

7]

8]

Consequences/Problems:

1] desired results may be short-term.

2] possible physical destruction.

3] impairs relationships.

4] compromises physical and mental health.

5] legal ramifications.

6]

7]
I. PURPOSE:
To increase knowledge of the anger style called "escalating".
To identify personal anger styles.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:
"Escalating" describes the aggressive style of coping with anger. Being able to identify a personal anger style is an early step in anger management.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES: This handout can be used in conjunction with ANGER STYLES - STUFFING (page 4), ANGER STYLES - MANAGING I (page 6), and ANGER STYLES - MANAGING II (page 7).
   A. 1. Distribute handouts.
   2. Discuss, encouraging group members to offer comments regarding this anger style.
   3. Attempt to list T.V./movie/book/cartoon characters, historical figures, and occupations that demonstrate the "escalating" style.
   4. Introduce the ANGER STYLES - STUFFING page.
   5. Introduce ANGER STYLES - MANAGING pages as a more effective style.
   6. Process problems associated with the "escalating" style and benefits of managing.
   B. 1. Review topic of "escalating" briefly.
   2. Encourage each group member to share a situation in which s/he "escalated" to anger, why, and consequences resulting.
   3. Distribute handouts and complete as a group, recalling prior discussion.
   4. Discuss benefits of greater self-awareness and ask each group member to set a short-term goal to learn effective anger management skills.
I’m really working hard on managing my anger — so . . . I need to talk to you. I feel angry when . . .

Do you “manage” your anger?

Do you allow anger to mobilize you in positive directions?

OPEN, HONEST AND DIRECT EXPRESSION is the most effective way of managing anger.
Easier said than done, huh? When expressing anger directly, keep these important skills in mind . . .

- Remind yourself that anger is a normal, human emotion — it’s OK to feel angry!
- Before open, honest and direct expression, evaluate the following —
  - What was the trigger event? Is this good timing for the listener?
- Set a specific time limit for anger discussion.
- Remember your body language —
  - firm voice — moderate tone — direct eye contact —
  - maintain personal “space” — establish an even eye level with the listener
- Don’t attack or blame the person.
- Focus on the specific behavior that triggered your anger.
- Avoid black and white thinking. (“You never . . .”).
  - Instead, “I’d prefer that . . ., then I would feel . . .”
- Use “I” statements.
  - “I” feel angry when . . .” “I” feel angry that . . .”
- Avoid statements/actions that you’ll regret later.
- Don’t drag in old issues now.
- Check for possible compromises.
- After open, honest and direct expression, close the discussion, and then move on!

When it’s over, pat yourself on the back for your assertiveness!
- Say to yourself “I (and perhaps the people around me) will be better off in the long run!”

NOW say to yourself —

“By managing my anger I took an important step in improving my sense of well-being!”
I. PURPOSE:
To increase knowledge of the anger style called “managing”.
To identify personal anger styles.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:
Managing anger is the most effective method in coping with anger situations. Managing anger by open, honest and direct expression is the most effective, yet challenging method. For many, this assertive approach takes effort, energy, time and practice.

II. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES: This handout can be used in conjunction with ANGER STYLES - STUFFING (page 4), ANGER STYLES - ESCALATING (page 5), and/or ANGER STYLES - MANAGING II (page 7).

A. 1. Distribute handouts following discussion of “stuffing” and “escalating”.
   2. Provide discussion, explanation, demonstration, role-plays, etc. of this anger management technique that would benefit the specific population.

B. 1. Distribute handouts and review.
   2. Instruct all group members to write one anger-provoking situation on a strip of paper and place in a hat.
   3. Facilitate role-plays as each group member chooses one situation from the hat.
   4. During role-play, encourage group members to follow offered guidelines for effective anger management.
   5. Process benefits of open, honest and direct expression of anger.
Do you "manage" your anger?

Do you allow anger to mobilize you in positive directions?

OPEN, HONEST AND DIRECT EXPRESSION is the most effective way of managing anger. [see Anger Styles - Managing I]

3] using the "empty chair" exercise.
   Pretend you're sitting across from the person you're angry with and say what's on your mind.
   Who is that person?

4] writing a letter to the person you're angry with.
   You could describe your anger right now, at the time of the anger event or both. You can destroy it/you can save it/you can mail it at a later date.

5] using relaxation techniques.
   Guided imagery.
   Self-help tapes.
   Music.

   "I am able to choose my anger style."
   "I am angry but I'm not going to let it ___.

7] working towards anger resolution through acceptance (learning to live with the fact that certain people and situations, past, present & future, will not change).

   Make realistic expectations:
   What is one frustrating anger situation?

Can it really change as you'd like it to in the near future?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If not...
- realize the powerlessness over the situation.
- give yourself a time limit to be angry, and then... let it go...!
- constantly remind yourself "I cannot afford to stay angry. What's at stake here?"
- recognize the need for forgiveness.
  "No painful event is allowed to contribute to my anger more than one time."
- focus on the present.

8] ________________________________________________

Additional effective anger management techniques are:

1] choosing constructive (not destructive) methods/solutions/ideas.
   A. Trying physical outlets.
      e.g. exercise, housework, crafts, etc.

   B. Problem solving and coming up with action plans.
      e.g. forming a neighborhood watch to combat vandalism.

2] involving an objective third party.
   Ask someone you trust to be a sounding board.
   Who might this be?
I. PURPOSE:

To increase knowledge of the anger style called "managing".

To identify personal anger styles.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Managing anger is the most effective method in coping with anger situations. This assertive approach offers many effective techniques.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES: This handout can be used in conjunction with ANGER STYLES - STUFFING (page 4), ANGER STYLES - ESCALATING (page 5), and/or ANGER STYLES - MANAGING I (page 7).

A. 1. Distribute handouts.

   2. Provide discussion, explanation, demonstration, role-plays, etc. of the anger management techniques that would benefit the specific population.


B. 1. Instruct all group members to write three anger-provoking situations on separate pieces of paper and place in a hat.

   2. Distribute handouts and review.

   3. Divide group into smaller subgroups and instruct each subgroup to choose three situations from the hat.

   4. Instruct each subgroup to identify two effective "management" techniques from the handout that would assist with each of the anger situations chosen from the hat. Allow 15-20 minutes to complete a written summary of their ideas.

   5. Return to large group and have a representative from each subgroup share their summary.

# Anger Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date &amp; Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Symptom(s):</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Triggered Your Anger Response?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Your Response:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>+ / - Generally, Do You Think You Did Well or Not So Well?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What Was Something You Did Well In This Situation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is There Something You Can Do In The Future To Better Manage Your Anger?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>

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I. PURPOSE:

To increase anger management skills by observing, recording and evaluating key events surrounding anger situations.

II. GENERAL COMMENTS:

Anger situations often happen quickly, preventing accurate assessments of details and possible patterns. Diaries assist in the assessment process by allowing the individual to recall key events (some of which may be unpleasant), to record them in a logical, organized way, and later to evaluate them.

III. POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES:

A. 1. Provide handouts and a brief description of the purpose of diaries.
   2. Elicit examples of anger situations from group members.
   3. Choose one and proceed using the diary format.
   4. Process benefits of using a diary to increase anger management skills.

B. 1. Distribute handouts and provide overview of anger diary.
   2. Give three strips of paper to each group member and instruct them to write one anger-provoking situation on each. Put all papers into a basket.
   3. Pass basket and encourage each group member to choose one strip of paper.
   4. Ask each group member to read aloud the situation and offer possible symptoms associated with it, possible responses (positive and negative), specific things done well, and which could be managed better in the future.
   5. Encourage group members to identify which situations they have written and insights gained from group activity.
   6. Encourage ongoing use of diary to monitor own anger management skills and periodic discussion of diary with others for feedback.
LIFE MANAGEMENT SKILLS II
reproducible activity handouts created for facilitators
A sampler collection of

activities of daily living
anger management
assertion
communication: verbal
communication: nonverbal
coping skills
grief/loss
humor
life balance
money management
parenting
reminiscence

safety issues
self-esteem/self-image
steps to recovery
stress management
support systems
time management

Read what the professionals are saying about Life Management Skills II . . .

"We use the handouts from this book almost daily. We have found life skills training to be a very important part of recovery."

- DAN STINSON, Men's Addiction Counselor - Hamilton, ON, Canada

"Most useful collection of handouts I have ever found in one book. Content, relevancy of material, and artwork are very appealing to both the therapist and patient. They have been a tremendous time saver for my hospitals. I have recommended these books without hesitation to all the hospitals where I do consulting work in psychiatric rehabilitation."

- ANITA COLSTON MALTUN, MA, QTR - Rolling Hills Estates, CA

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- ED DiJOSEPH, Mental Health Counselor - Hinsdale, IL

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100 INTERACTIVE ACTIVITIES
for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Recovery

by Carol A. Butler, MS Ed, RN, C
Illustrator Amy Leutenberg Brodsky, LISW
FACILITATOR'S INFORMATION

TIC-TAC-ANGER

PURPOSE
Identify anger management skills.

MATERIALS
Board, marker, pencils, ‘TIC-TAC-ANGER’ QUESTIONS, page 15,
ANSWER SHEET for ‘Game Show Host’, page 16.
(Optional) prizes or play money (SKILLS BILLS, pages 277, 278).

ATTENTION GRABBER
Volunteer draws tic-tac-toe game on board.
Explain – Half the group are ‘X’, the others are ‘O’ – Teams sit facing each other.

ACTIVITY
‘Game Show Host’ draws Tic-Tac-Toe game on board. Two teams sit facing each other with
‘Host’ at board in front. At bottom of board note players’ names under ‘X’ or ‘O’ and keep
score (number of games won by each team). ‘Host’ asks alternate teams the questions; a correct
answer warrants an ‘X’ or ‘O’; teammates should collaborate on answers and some questions
require two or more people to respond. If they answer incorrectly, the opposition tries.
Continue until one team wins or all spaces are filled. If a tie occurs, the next question is the tie-
breaker. Whichever team answers correctly first, wins. Erase board, appoint another ‘Host’ and
continue until all questions have been answered. Winners get first choice of prizes; the
opponents select from the remaining prizes. If no tangible rewards are available, discuss what
everyone ‘won’ in terms of coping skills.

FOLLOW-UP
Each person tells one thing s/he learned and applies it to a current conflict.

I. Considering group size and/or pre-knowledge of material, questions may be used in a
discussion group format rather than as a game.

II. Distribute questions only about fifteen minutes before game. Teams go to separate rooms
or corners to discuss and note answers in advance.
1. True or False – Another person can push your buttons.

2. Name one feeling underneath anger.

3. Name a wrong way to handle anger.

4. Tell three positive ways to handle anger.

5. What does it mean to act like a ‘doormat’?

6. What happens to ‘doormats’?

7. What is the opposite of a ‘doormat’?

8. What happens to people who are aggressive?

9. What does assertive mean?

10. Give an example of an assertive statement.

11. Is it better to start a sentence with “I feel” or “You should”?

12. Why are “I” statements good?

13. Can we control what someone else says?

14. What is fear of abandonment?

15. Tell a time you got mad because you feared abandonment.

16. What is fear of loss of control?

17. Tell a time you were mad because you could not control a situation.

18. What is loss of face? Hint – it involves how you look to others.

19. Tell a time you were mad because you feared loss of face or looking like a fool.

20. Name two ways to handle fear of abandonment.

21. Name two ways to handle fear of loss of face.

22. Name two ways to handle fear of loss of control over people/situations.
1. True or False – Another person can push your buttons. False
2. Name one feeling underneath anger. Fear, sadness, lonely
3. Name a wrong way to handle anger. Fist fights, stuff, self-harm, getting even
4. Tell three positive ways to handle anger. Talk, walk, time out, exercise, deep breathing
5. What does it mean to act like a ‘doormat’? Passive – let people treat you badly
6. What happens to ‘doormates’? Depression, suicide, self-mutilation, addiction
7. What is the opposite of a ‘doormat’? Being aggressive/expoding
8. What happens to people who are aggressive? Relationship or legal problems
9. What does assertive mean?
   State honest feelings firmly. Say no when necessary and ask for what you need.
10. Give an example of an assertive statement. “I feel…” or “I’d appreciate it if you would…”
11. Is it better to start a sentence with “I feel” or “You should”? “I feel.”
12. Why are “I” statements good? We have a right to state how we feel or what we want/need.
13. Can we control what someone else says? No
14. What is fear of abandonment? Afraid of being left alone
15. Tell a time you got mad because you feared abandonment.
16. What is fear of loss of control?
   That someone has total control over you or you have no power over a situation.
17. Tell a time you were mad because you could not control a situation.
18. What is loss of face? Hint – it involves how you look to others.
   Thinking you look like a fool or a loser.
19. Tell a time you were mad because you feared loss of face or looking like a fool.
20. Name two ways to handle fear of abandonment.
   Recognize it. Talk to the person. Choose people who are loyal. Have a lot of support people.
21. Name two ways to handle fear of loss of face.
   Realize what people think does not matter. Know that no one can make you look foolish.
   In any situation, failure is WINNING if you learn from it.
22. Name two ways to handle fear of loss of control over people and/or situations.
   Realize you cannot control other people. You can control your reaction. You can control who you hang out with and what situations you get into. You can ask for more independence. You can prove you can handle responsibility. You have a choice to leave a relationship or job that strips your power. You can select relationships, jobs and situations wherein you have equal power.
FACILITATOR’S INFORMATION

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

PURPOSE

To practice conflict resolution steps.

MATERIALS


ATTENTION GRABBER

Two people pantomime shouting, clenching fists, one walking out and slamming door or kicking a chair.

Ask group, “What was going on?” Ask, “What are ways to resolve conflict?”

Talking and time-out are often mentioned.

Explain that we will elaborate on these.

Volunteers write each conflict resolution step on board. Briefly, discuss each step.

ACTIVITY

Clear the air. (“We need to talk” or other ‘opener.’)

Time-out (if necessary) with a time limit. (“Let’s wait one hour.”)

Set ground rules. (No physical violence, no name calling, don’t bring up the past or hit below the belt.)

Listen to the other side first. (Then they will be more receptive to your side.)

Summarize what opponent just said, incorporating feelings and/or reasons for his/her position.

Share own opinions and/or reasons.

Brainstorm all possible options.

Eliminate ridiculous or intolerable solutions.

Select a few preferable ones.

Weigh pros and cons of each.

Agree on a solution or sequence of solutions to try.

List possible 50/50 or 60/40 compromises.

FOLLOW-UP

Role-plays:

Two opponents sit at front.

Audience coaches them to take each step (from list on board).

Participants use actual conflicts they are currently facing with significant other.

VARIATION

Discuss the steps. Distribute worksheet. Participants answer and then share their responses OR pairs interview each other, document their partner’s responses, then ‘present’ partner’s situation to the group.
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

WORKSHEET

1. Clear the air. ("We need to talk" or other 'opener')
2. Time-out (if necessary) with a time limit. ("Let's wait one hour.")
3. Set ground rules.
   (No physical violence, no name calling, don’t bring up the past or hit below the belt.)
4. Listen to the other side first. (Then they will be more receptive to your side.)
5. Summarize what opponent just said, incorporating feelings and/or reasons for his/her position.
6. Share own opinions and/or reasons.
7. Brainstorm all possible options.
8. Eliminate ridiculous or intolerable solutions.
9. Select a few preferable ones.
10. Weigh pros and cons of each.
11. Agree on a solution or sequence of solutions to try.
12. List possible 50/50 or 60/40 compromises.

PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS:

What is the purpose of 'time-out'? __________________________________________________________________________

What is 'hitting below the belt'? __________________________________________________________________________

Why should we summarize what opponent said? ___________________________________________________________________

What does 'brainstorm' mean? _________________________________________________________________________________

What is a compromise? _________________________________________________________________________________________

Tell how you resolved a conflict in the past. ___________________________________________________________________

Tell about a current conflict you face:

Who? ________________________________________________________________________________________________

What about? __________________________________________________________________________________________

When did the problem start? _____________________________________________________________________________

When can you talk to the person? _________________________________________________________________________

What does he or she want and why? _________________________________________________________________________

What do you want and why? _______________________________________________________________________________

What compromises might work? ____________________________________________________________________________
DON'T LET THEM PUSH YOUR BUTTONS

PURPOSE
Identify sources of agitation and prevent angry response.

MATERIALS

ATTENTION GRABBER
Give a button to each person. Write on board, “Don't let them push your buttons.” Ask, “What does ‘push my buttons’ mean?” Each person identifies what pushes his/her buttons. (Examples: Criticism, people talking about my family, phoniness.)

ACTIVITY
Tape buttons to top of worksheets. Participants answer questions regarding most recent time they got really angry at a significant person. Elicit that our buttons get pushed because we allow it. We give someone the power to choose upsetting thoughts. Offer example: People call us “fatso” or unpleasant names. We’re upset because we DECIDE to care about that opinion. Our esteem is threatened by being overweight and we think – “This is awful. They shouldn’t call me names. I have to punch them.” Alternatives: We can DECIDE “Name callers are ignorant and I don’t want them as friends. They’re cruel or insecure. I am worthwhile and attractive person regardless of my weight. It’s unfortunate they said it but not the end of the world. Who is to say they ‘shouldn’t’ do it? People do things they ‘shouldn’t’ do all the time and I can’t stop them. Punching them will get me in trouble. I can tell them how I feel, ask them to stop, tell someone in authority and decide to ignore them.”

FOLLOW-UP
Participants discuss their worksheet answers.

VARIATION
PET PEEVES – people write their pet peeves anonymously on slips of paper – some may apply to peers. Put slips of paper in box. They take turns reading one, writing it on board, leading brainstorming sessions and listing ways to handle the person and/or peeve.
WORKSHEET

THE MOST RECENT TIME I WAS REALLY ANGRY AT A SIGNIFICANT PERSON: 

Who was it?

What did this person do to 'push my buttons'?

Where did it occur?

When?

Why did this person do it? Why did it upset me?

How did I handle it?

How could I have NOT let this person 'push my buttons'?

(The other person's behavior is the same but I use different thoughts/feelings/actions in response.)
FACILITATOR'S INFORMATION

PASSIVE, AGGRESSIVE, ASSERTIVE

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE</th>
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<th>PAGES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL *A *YP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

PURPOSE

Discuss aggressive, passive, assertive and passive-aggressive behaviors and their outcomes. Practice assertion.

MATERIALS


ATTENTION GRABBER

Place carpet near door. “What is this?” Elicit – “doormat.” Elicit/discuss that doormats get stepped on, stuff anger and explode or become depressed and/or harmful to themselves. A participant writes on board “DOORMAT = PASSIVE.” Volunteers write on board “EXPLODE = AGGRESSIVE”, “SNEAKY = PASSIVE AGGRESSIVE” and “NICE BUT FIRM = ASSERTIVE.” Examples: “I feel...”, “Please...”, “No” and “Be honest.”

ACTIVITY

Pass around container with CUT-UPS. They take turns reading a situation and giving an example of each response with its expected outcome. (They should recognize assertion as effective and the others as maladaptive.) This activity is preferable for hyperactive and/or gregarious people. See variation below for people exhibiting lethargy.

FOLLOW-UP

Personalize concepts by each group member:
1. telling a time s/he was passive, aggressive, passive-aggressive and assertive – and the outcomes.
2. role playing a current situation requiring assertion.

VARIATION

Use terms “STUFF”, “ESCALATE”, “SNEAKY”, “HANDLE” – one on each of four walls. Tape bag with papers overflowing to one wall (STUFF); a picture of a tornado on the second wall (ESCALATE), a mask (SNEAKY) on the third wall; a diagram of a hand or handle on the fourth wall (HANDLE). When a situation is read, everyone goes to the wall representing his/her initial inclination. Each describes the behavior and its likely outcome. Let the ‘handlers’ be ‘the voice of reason’ – peers learn from them. If no one selected ‘handle,’ a volunteer must go to that wall/sign and describe assertive behavior and its benefits specific to the situation.
## Passive, Aggressive, Assertive

### Situations for Adults

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Your family disapproves of your partner.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>People behind you at the movies are talking loudly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>You bought a defective product.</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Your car was repaired but continues to malfunction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>You are being physically, emotionally, sexually or financially abused.</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>A friend calls during your favorite TV show.</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Your in-laws continually intrude.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Your partner listens to phone calls or goes through your mail or personal belongings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Your friend, family or partner continually puts you down.</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>You want to be clean and sober but people push you to drink and/or use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>People ask to borrow money or cigarettes or items you do not want to lend.</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>People borrow and do not repay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Friends want you to help them move and you do not want to injure your back.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Someone asks about your age, weight, illness or other personal questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>You are unjustly accused of wrongdoing.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Someone is flirting with your partner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>You think your partner may be having an affair.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Your roommate or partner is sloppy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>You want a new job, raise or promotion.</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>A partner requests time alone.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>A boss or co-worker takes credit for your idea.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>People (whose friendship you seek or with whom you must work) ignore you.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>You want to return to school or work and friends or family try to discourage you.</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Your partner, roommate or family does not help with household chores.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Your children are defiant and/or disobedient.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>You suspect your teenager is sexually active.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>You suspect your teenager drinks and/or uses drugs.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Your kids dislike your partner or your partner dislikes your kids.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SITUATIONS for YOUNG PEOPLE

1. Someone borrows something and does not return it or breaks it.
2. You are asked to baby-sit and the kid gets on your nerves.
3. Someone cuts in front of you in line.
4. Someone you dislike wants friendship or a relationship.
5. You want friendship or a relationship with someone who seems to ignore you.
6. You want to be clean and sober and people are urging you to use drugs or drink alcohol.
7. Someone cheats at a game.
8. Someone asks to copy your answers on a test or homework.
9. You are asked your weight and don’t want to tell.
10. You do not understand a school assignment.
11. Someone asks to borrow something you don’t want to lend.
12. Someone is listening to your phone conversation, reading your mail or going through your things.
13. You are called a nasty name.
14. Someone takes your seat.
15. Someone asks nosey questions about your family or your health/medication.
16. Teachers or parents accuse you of something you
17. Someone is trying to turn your friend against you or trying to break-up a relationship.
18. You are being emotionally, financially, physically or sexually abused.
19. Someone tries to start a fight.
20. Someone says mean things about you or your family.
21. You want to see a TV program or video and your friend or family wants to see another.
22. People say you can’t join their club, game or clique.
23. People whisper, talk or laugh around you.
24. It upsets you to see your parents fight.
25. Your parents have a substance abuse problem.
26. Your grades are dropping.
27. Friends want you to ditch school with them.
28. You have trouble reading/writing and fear people will make fun of you.
FACILITATOR’S INFORMATION

“What’s Going On With Them?”

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<td>3</td>
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**PURPOSE**

Develop empathy and avoid taking perceived affronts or attacks personally.

**MATERIALS**

Board, marker, container for CUT-UPS, pencils,
‘WHAT’S GOING ON WITH THEM’ CUT-UPS, FOR ADULTS, page 18
and FOR YOUNG PEOPLE, page 19.

**ATTENTION GRABBER**

Two volunteers, coached before group, role play a name-calling incident. Ask group – “What’s going on?” Group members will probably assume the name-caller is mad at the other person. Ask, “What else could it be?” Elicit idea they could be displacing anger or putting someone down because they feel inferior (or other possibilities.)

**ACTIVITY**

Each reads one CUT-UP, and states what could be going on. Note: Purpose of this is NOT to encourage ‘mind reading’ or assumption but to avoid taking offense and to ‘cut people some slack’ who may have underlying issues or problems. Example: “Someone flips you off for no reason”. Infer they are angry with someone or something else and avoid taking it personally. This activity fosters awareness of underlying reasons for behavior.

**FOLLOW-UP**

Discuss the ‘bottom line’ that we really do not know what motivates behavior but should not take things personally, become insulted or retaliate. If possible, we need to ask the person what is going on (do reality checks). Emphasize that most people are doing the best they can despite the appearance of ‘bad’ behavior.

**VARIATION**

Keep CUT-UP page intact. Distribute as a worksheet. Individuals, dyads or teams write brief answers, then reconvene as whole group and compare responses.
<p>| | | |</p>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>They brag about their looks, love life or accomplishments.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>They yell or snap at you when you’ve done nothing wrong.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>They’re angry because you spend time with family, friends or other interests.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>A person close to you ‘clams-up’.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Your co-worker is often late or absent.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Someone forgot something very important you recently revealed.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>They brag about how smart they are.</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>They make funny faces.</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>They are real quiet.</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>They call people names.</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>They give people dirty looks.</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>They do disgusting things like smearing boogers on tables.</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>