



DF 412
Choosing Your Response to Anger

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are to enable participants to:

- Define anger
- Describe the effects of anger on and off the job.
- Define anger in terms of its physical and emotional components.
- Track and analyze your response to provocative situations.
- Respond effectively when faced with a situation that causes you to be angry.

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for this training is any member of the disaster workforce.

CONTENTS

This course/unit includes at least the following sections:

- Welcome / Course Overview
- What is Anger?
- The Effects of Anger
- Choices
- Course Summary
- Evaluation

APPROXIMATE TIME

2 hours (including course pre test).

PREPARING

Use the following checklist to help you prepare for this course:

Supplies and Equipment

- Visuals 1 through 22 (Prepare the visuals, if necessary.)
- Overhead projector with screen or laptop computer with projector
- Note cards
- Chart paper, easels, and markers
- Masking tape
- Name cards
- Pens, pencils, and note paper

Handout Materials

- Participant Manual

NUMBER OF INSTRUCTORS

One or two instructors may be used to teach this course.

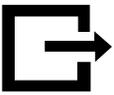
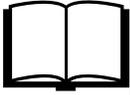
INSTRUCTOR QUALIFICATIONS

Instructors should have training or experience in **Psychology, Counseling, or Mental Health Services**, as well as previous experience working at a JFO. This course should be taught by instructors with previous disaster field experience. If you are inexperienced, request an experienced instructor to co-instruct the first session with you.

COURSE CONTENT

Instructors delivering these course materials should ensure that the course objectives are delivered in their entirety in order to have the course completion recorded in the Automated Deployment Database (ADD). Additional material may be added, based on the need of the audience to enhance the understanding of the subject matter.

ICONS

Overhead Projector 	Projector 	videotape 	Easel 	Key Point 	Instructor Note 	Check List / Evaluation form 	Graduation / Diplomas 
Thank You! / Good Job! 	Activity 	Discussion Question 	Summary Transition 	Participant Manual 	Time Saving Tip 	Participant Handout 	

REFERENCES

American Psychological Association, <http://www.apa.org/topics/topicanger.html>

Flegal, Gary, Stop Stinkin' Thinking www.garyflegal.com

Leopold, Allison Kyle, Taming your temper: is anger getting the best of you? Get over it, Current Health, Nov 2004 v31, 3, pg 20 (3)

McKay, Mathew & Rogers, Peter, 2000, The Anger Control Workbook, Oakland CA, New Harbinger Pub.

Strayhorn, Joseph, Cognitive Restructuring, published at www.psychskills.com

Wasmer Andrews, Linda, When its time for anger management training: training can help all employees – not just the worksite hothead – deal productively with emotions, HR Magazine, June 2005 v 50, 6, pg 131 (6)

You got a problem? Anger management self test Men's Health, March 2005 20, 12, 79

WELCOME / COURSE OVERVIEW



Visual 1

Begin by welcoming class

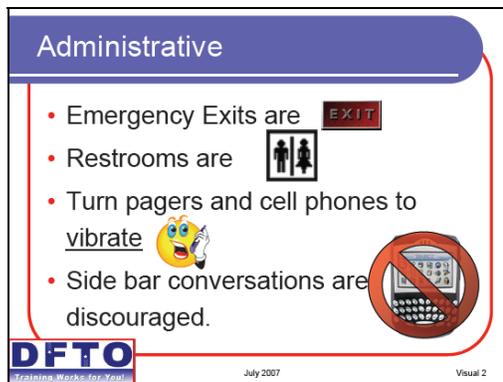
- Introduce yourself



Visual 2

Review class rules and safety items:

- Fire exits
- Restrooms
- Turn pagers and cell phones to vibrate.





Course Objectives

- Define anger.
- Describe the effects of anger on and off the job.
- Define anger in terms of physical and emotional components.
- Analyze your responses.
- Respond to anger effectively.




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Visual 3

Review the following objectives.

- Define anger
(Objective 1 page 9)
- Describe the effects of anger on and off the job.
(Objective 2 page 14)
- Define anger in terms of its physical and emotional components.
(Objective 3 pages 16 and 17)
- Track and analyze your response to provocative situations.
(Objective 4 page 18)
- Respond effectively when faced with a situation that causes you to be angry.
(Objective 5 page 20)



Draw a triangle on an easel chart. Label each corner as “what is,” “effects,” and “choices.”

Inform class participants that during the course, we will describe what anger is, the effects it has on us and others, and the choices we make in our response. There is always a choice of how to respond when feeling angry. The course will explore anger from the inside out, discuss situations that make us angry, and what we can do to avoid regretful behaviors.



You have to take action to effect change in your behavior. At the end of this course, you will be asked what you will do differently as a result of this training.



Visual 4

Have participants introduce themselves

- Name?
- Where they are from?
- Your position in the organization?
- Course expectations?

The slide is titled "Introductions" and contains the following list of questions:

- Your name?
- Where you are from?
- Your position in the organization?
- Your course expectation is?

At the bottom of the slide, there is a logo for "DFTO Training Works for You" on the left, "July 2007" in the center, and "Visual 4" on the right.



This course benefits from frank, open discussions on anger and individual response to anger and the steps that people take to control themselves under stressful situations.



NOTE:

The **Course Pre-Test** may be given as part of the class if time is available.

If time does not allow, it is recommended that the **Course Pre-Test** be completed by the participants after the class.



Handout 1

Refer participants to Handout 1, titled:

**“Course Pre-Test”
(optional)**

Allow 15 minutes to complete the assessment.

Inform them that the test is for their information only and will not be scored.

WHAT IS ANGER



Circle the first corner of the triangle on the easel chart.

Ask participants: **What is anger?**

Facilitate discussion.



Visual 5

Defining Anger

A feeling of displeasure resulting from injury, mistreatment, or opposition.

Usually a desire to fight back at the cause of the feeling.



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Defining Field Training Operations
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Visual 6

(Objective 1), Learning Check Question 2



Explain that this is Webster’s definition. It is individualized, in other words, what makes one person angry has no effect on another, and situational.



Visual 6



Activity 1

Inform participants that they should write triggers or tensions that make them angry. Participants can write their responses on a 3 x 5 card (do not include their names), pick up cards and mix them up and read some of the cards

Participants may also write their responses on Handout 2, titled:

“I get angry when...”

For each answer, have the class acknowledge if they agree.

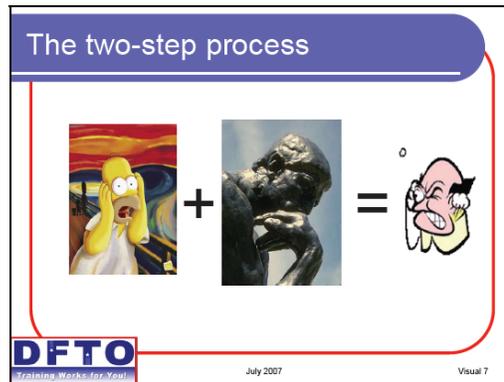


Handout 3

Refer participants to Handout 3, titled:

“Controlling Anger, Before it Controls You”

This handout may be beneficial to participants to read in their own time.



Explain the following key points:

- Anger is two-step process:
 1. Starts with experience of pain – physical or emotional (stomach ache, fatigue, feelings of rejection or loss)
 2. The second component of the anger response is trigger thoughts – interpretations, assumptions, and evaluations of a situation that make you feel victimized and deliberately harmed by others.
- You might think of the emotional/physical pain as **fuel** of anger and the trigger thoughts as a **match**. Either alone is harmless, but **pain plus trigger equals anger** (fuel + match = explosion).

Learning Check Question 3

Give example scenarios:

- You are tired and hungry (pain). Even though you've made reservations at a restaurant, when you arrive you are told there is a half-hour wait (trigger).
- You feel you deserve a promotion (pain) and someone else gets it (trigger).
- Someone in the next cubicle is playing music that annoys you (trigger).



Ask participants for examples of trigger thoughts.



Visual 8

Trigger Thoughts

- Interpretations, assumptions, evaluations
- “This guy is really trying to tick me off”
- “That sales clerk --- she acts like she’s doing me a favor to wait on me”
- “That idiot think he owns the road”



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Visual 8



Explain the following key points:

- Trigger thoughts have a major impact on your anger.
- Our own thinking might be responsible for our emotions.
- We often wrongfully attribute this feeling to the event or situation, “you make me so mad.”



Visual 9



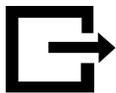
Explain the following key points:

- The components of trigger thoughts:
 1. The perception that you've been harmed and victimized.
 2. The belief that the provoking person harmed you deliberately.
 3. The belief that the provoking person was wrong to have harmed you.

Learning Check Question 5

- Common themes of trigger thought:
 - Someone is ignoring your needs
 - They don't understand
 - They are taking advantage of you
 - The person doesn't respect you

Give an example of recognizing trigger thoughts.
(Harm was done, on purpose, and it was wrong.)

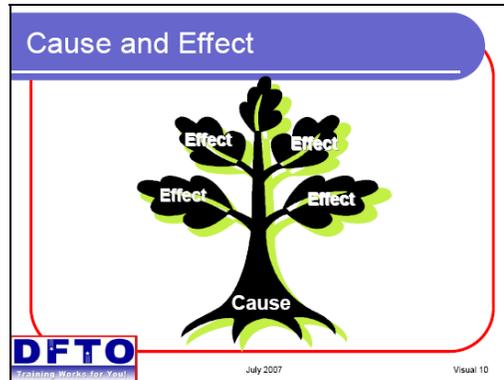


Now that we have learned what anger *is*, we will take a look at what it *does*.

THE EFFECTS OF ANGER



Visual 10



Circle the second prong on the triangle.
This unit is on the Effects of Anger.

(Objective 2)



Divide participants into small groups.

Have participants list negative and positive effects of anger.

Activity



If limited for time, simply ask for examples and list answers on an easel chart.



Ask participants for examples of the benefits of anger.
Answers may include:

- Hides emotional pain
- Gets people's attention
- Helps you change things



Explain the following key points:

- When we are stressed, we tend to want to release the tension by letting off steam in a physical way. This will only boomerang and make the situation worse.
- Often people we hide hurtful feelings by showing anger toward someone else.
- Anger only gets negative attention. Others may try to placate you but will not respect you. They may even ignore or even fear you.
- Anger is a short term fix and it is ineffective.



Ask participants for examples of the consequences of anger.

Answers may include:

- Destroy relationships
- Litigation
- Health Risks
- Punishes others



Explain the following key points:

- There are 1.7 million victimizations each year as a result of anger in the workplace. (HR Magazine, 2005)
- Of 1500 workers interviewed, half said their work was slowed because of worrying about another person's rudeness.
- There is nothing wrong with occasional, moderate anger. It creates no lasting harm– but chronic, sustained anger can be a serious health problem – resulting in hypertension and cardiovascular disease.



We will now learn how the body responds to stressful situations and how it develops into anger.



Visual 11

You must be mad!

1. Adrenal glands flood the body with adrenaline
2. "Fight" or "flight"
3. As energy rises, you breathe faster
4. Your heart pumps blood more quickly
5. Your body perspires to cool down

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Visual 11

Explain the *internal* cycle of anger:

1. Brain (thoughts) stimulate your adrenal glands, which flood the body with adrenaline
2. Adrenaline is the hormone that prepares you for "fight" or "flight"
3. As energy raises, you breath faster
4. As you breath faster, your heart pumps blood more quickly
5. As your temperate raises, you body perspires to cool you down

(Objective 3)



Ask participants to name external signs of anger.



Visual 12



Name the following warning signs:

- Irritable
- Impatient
- Short-temper
- Argumentative
- Sarcastic
- Frequent conflict
- Unwilling to cooperate
- Poor attendance
- Tardiness

(Objective 3), Learning Check Question 1



Explain the following key points:

- In the workplace, anger is more indirect. In addition to the warning signs, look for less obvious expressions of anger such as spreading rumors.
- Angry employees are on every level of the corporate ladder, from entry-level workers to executives.



What do you think when you start feeling angry?



Visual 13

Anger Log

- Opportunity to learn more about your anger
- Describe the components of your anger response
- Identify areas of improvement



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Visual 13

Explain that an anger log is a good way to track what prompts your anger and how you respond.

(Objective 4)



Activity 3

Refer participants to Handout 4, title:

“Anger Log”

Explain that an anger log is useful in understanding and changing behaviors. It acts as a tool to help you learn more about your anger response.

Instruct participants to complete the log using a recent event in which they experienced anger. (suggestions – traffic congestion, crowded plane, someone joking about a sensitive topic, being wrongly accused)

Directions:

1. Note an upsetting event in Column 1: **Provocative Situation**.
2. Record emotional and physical pain that existed before the anger in Column 2: **Pain/Stress**. (examples – headache, family problems)
3. Write what thoughts you feel while getting angry in Column 3: **Trigger Thoughts**.
4. Record your actual response in Column 4: **Behavior**. (examples – yell, curse)
5. In the fifth column, **Outcome**, list the consequences of your actions and if it changed anything.

Allow 5-10 minutes

Encourage participants share and discuss in small groups. **Ask** for one or two examples from the class.

Handout 4 The Anger Log

Provocative Situation	Pain/Stress	Trigger Thoughts	Behavior	Outcome

CHOICES



Visual 14

Choices

- Cognitive Restructuring
- Relaxation
- Coping thoughts
- Be Good to Yourself

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Visual 14



Circle the third prong on the triangle.

We've learned what anger is, its effects on us, and now we'll learn what choices we have to respond to it.

(Objective 5)



Explain the following key points:

- In the heat of anger, we sometimes don't realize we have choices.
- When faced with anger we have four choices for response:
 1. Cognitive Restructuring
 2. Relaxation
 3. Coping
 4. Being good to yourself

Learning Check Question 4



Visual 15

Cognitive Restructuring

- Think more useful or positive thoughts
- You feel and act what you think
- You can change what you think of yourself and how you respond to others



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Visual 15



Explain the following key points:

- “Cognitive restructuring” is to think more useful thoughts. It reduces stress, anger, and their physical and emotional symptoms.
- The basic idea of cognitive restructuring is that people’s emotions and behavior can be greatly affected by what they think.
- If people consciously change what they say and think of themselves, they can make themselves happier, kinder, more productive.
- Self-defeating thoughts, negative self-talk, and irrational beliefs are the cause of much of the stress in our lives.
- Most people are not aware of their stress-producing thinking. We can learn to recognize and change unhealthy thoughts and attitudes with cognitive thinking.



Visual 16

Identify and Correct Distortions

- *Is it really true?*
- *Am I jumping to conclusions?*
- *Am I making it worse than it really is? what will happen? (will the world end?)*
- *Am I negatively labeling?*
- *Am I generalizing (you never..)*


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Visual 16



Explain the following key points:

- Distortions:
 - Is it really true? What is the evidence? Are there facts?
 - Jumping to conclusions.
 - Is it all that bad?
 - Negative Labels. Name calling.
 - Generalizations. “You never _____. You always _____”



Activity 4

Refer participants to their anger logs.

Have participants use their anger logs to correct and restructure.

Tell them to ask these questions for each of their trigger thoughts. They should correct the distortions with a positive or neutral trigger thought.



Reinforce the various responses that correct distortions.



Visual 17

Relaxation

- Breathe deeply from diaphragm
- Use imagery
- Stretch



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Explain the following key points:

- Relaxing is a two-step process of easing tension/stress and resisting negative trigger thoughts.
- It is impossible to be relaxed and angry at the same time.
- There are numerous techniques and methods to relieving stress:
 - **Breathe.** Simply breathing from your diaphragm, rather than your chest, can help get the oxygen flowing. Try this. Breath in four seconds, hold breath for four, and exhale for four.
 - **Use imagery.** The idea here is to visualize, in detail, a place where you feel safe, comfortable, and at peace. It may be on a beach, a forest. Wherever it is, try to include as much detail as possible, the color of the grass, the smells, the breeze, etc.
 - **Stretch.** Getting up and stretching your muscles can help you relax.



Handout 5

Refer participants to Handout 5, titled:
“Stretch to Relax”

Suggest participants to read this handout and practice these stretching techniques on their own time to help them relax.



If time allows, have participants do one or more of the exercises in the handout.



Visual 18

Coping Thoughts

- No matter what, I'm ok
- Getting upset won't help
- Stay cool
- I can't change with anger
- I'll just upset myself

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Visual 18

Recommend the following coping thoughts:

- This too shall pass.
- I know I can do this.
- I can always walk away.
- I will rise above this.
- Keep the bigger goal in mind (family, career, health).
- Stick to the facts.
- It's just a difference of opinion.
- I remember when I was that age.



Explain the following key points:

- All of us are works in progress – learn from your mistakes – but don't beat yourself up
- Changing habits takes time. The more ingrained your anger responses are, the more you will have to work to change
- Mentally prepare yourself for situations you know from past experiences provoke anger. Rehearse what you might say or think
- Research shows that you will have a better chance of things going well – if you *think* they will go well. Unfortunately, the opposite also holds true.



Ask audience for their ideas for coping thoughts or statements



What do you say to yourself when you realize you are getting angry?



Visual 19

Be Good to Yourself

Tired

Lonely

Craving (food, peace, etc)





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Visual 19



Explain the following key points:

- You are less likely to become angry if you are well rested, fed, and have caring relationships.
- Each of us needs time alone, time with others, appreciation for our efforts, and opportunity.
- Be proactive.
- Practice stress management.
- Avoid negative people/situations.
- Avoid saying/thinking negative things about yourself.

SUMMARY



Visual 20

Summary

- Define anger.
- Describe the effects of anger on and off the job.
- Define anger in terms of physical and emotional components.
- Analyze your responses.
- Respond to anger effectively.

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Training Works for You!

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Review the objectives.



What are the four choices we have to help us deal more effectively with anger?

Answers: Cognitive Restructuring, Relaxation, Coping, Being Good to Yourself



If time allows, ask each table of participants to discuss and share an example of each choice.



Explain the following key points:

- You always have the choice of how to respond to your anger.
- You have to take actions to change your behavior.



Visual 21

Choosing Your Response to Anger

- Your Plan
 - What will you do differently?
 - How will you measure your progress?



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Training Works for You

July 2007 Visual 21



Ask the class for examples of things they will do differently as a result of this training. How will they measure their progress?

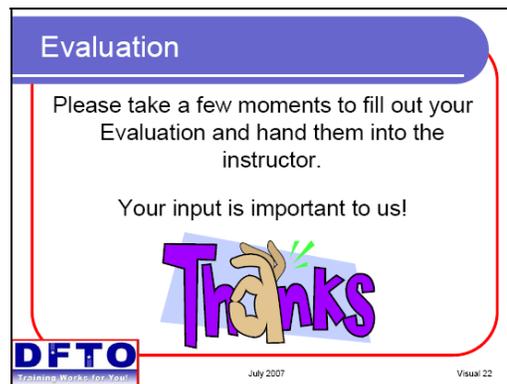
COURSE EVALUATION



Hand out the Learning Check to the participants. When the participants have completed the Learning Check, review the answers as a group activity.



Visual 22



Ask the participants to complete the course evaluation form in their student manuals.



Distribute the course completion certificates to the participants. (Optional)



Thank the participants and the instructional staff.

**COURSE PRE-TEST
Handout 1**

**How do you handle anger?
Take our test and rate your rage.**

- 1. What do you think before your job review?**
 - a. "Time to hear about my screwups"
 - b. "Time to solve some problems"
 - c. "Time to hear how vital I am"
- 2. How nervous are you?**
 - a. I'm a Kramer, unfazed by reality.
 - b. I'm a Jerry, more calm than uptight.
 - c. I'm a George, always uneasy.
- 3. What approach is more your style?**
 - a. Attracting more flies with honey.
 - b. Being feared rather than liked.
 - c. Using either, depending on the situation.
- 4. How often do you take pain relievers?**
 - a. Often. That's the breakfast of champions
 - b. Sometimes. Pain pays me weekly visits.
 - c. Never, unless I drop a piano on my foot.
- 5. When you get really steamed, you...**
 - a. Hit the speed bag for a while.
 - b. Just walk away.
 - c. Crack a joke.
- 6. Your kid throws a tantrum in public. You...**
 - a. Do anything to quiet him down.
 - b. Leave immediately and punish him at home.
 - c. Ignore him until he tires himself out.
- 7. You get cut off in traffic. What do you do?**
 - a. Swear until I get it out of my system.
 - b. Swear and try to cut him off later.
 - c. Swear that guy's gonna cause a crash.
- 8. Which scenario is the most annoying?**
 - a. Your kid refusing to go to bed.
 - b. Your car breaking down.
 - c. Your team choking in the playoffs.

**Course Pre-Test
Handout 1 (continued)
Pre-Test Scoring**



1. A = 2 points B = 1 point C = 3 points

If you think too much or too little of yourself, you're more likely to have an anger problem. "People who feel entitled to good things get angry easily," says David L. Kupfer, Ph.D., an anger-management specialist. Those with low confidence may take any comment as negative, which lights a short fuse. Trying to learn from criticism can lead to more peace.

2. A = 1 point B = 2 points C = 3 points

Anxious types often feel they lack control of the outcomes of most events, and frustration stems from this, says Jerry Deffenbacher, Ph.D., a professor of psychiatry at Colorado State University. Try DIY behavioral therapy: Think about an annoying situation and focus on staying calm. With practice, this will become a reflex in real situations.

3. A = 1 point B = 3 points C = 2 points

Lashing out regularly is a sign of an anger problem, especially if the behavior doesn't produce results, says Kupfer. Anger can be healthy if you recognize it as a symptom of something larger, he explains. To deal with frustration, Kupfer often advises patients to live with it, find a way to eliminate it, or develop a new way to solve it.

4. A = 3 points B = 2 points C = 1 point

Hostility can cause muscle pain (as well as insulin resistance and heart disease), Kupfer says. It may sound New Age-y, but sniff lavender oil—a study shows that they scent significantly reduced anger-driven frustration levels. Or you could book a massage. In another study, chronic headache sufferers felt less pain after just a week of regular massage.

5. A = 3 points B = 2 points C = 1 point

The cliché... about pounding a pillow as a release is "a bad idea," says Deffenbacher. "While you're venting, you're thinking about the person you're mad at," which makes you more likely to be aggressive next time you see him. Walking a way means you're not learning to cope. Laughing can work—the pause gives you a chance to let your feelings out.

**Course Pre-Test
Handout 1 (continued)
Pre-Test Scoring**



6. A = 2 points B = 3 point C = 1 point

Ignoring the outburst is the best way to teach a child that tantrums don't work, Kupfer explains. If you have that kind of patience, congratulations—you're coping with frustration. Punishment just makes your child feel bad, when he needs to learn how to express emotions properly, not stifle them. Discuss what's proper when both of you have calmed down.

7. A = 2 points B = 3 points C = 1 point

Using hostile language, even in your head, breeds more resentment, says Deffenbacher. And trying to retaliate also means you're holding on to anger. Kupfer says try to think reasonably: It won't delay my trip. Or change your route: An Ohio State study shows that commuters who look at vegetation instead of pavement experience less frustration.

8. A = 1 point B = 2 points C = 3 points

Frustration over trials that have solutions is fine. But anger about something you have no control over can wreck your well-being. "If you pay attention to what you're thinking and feeling, rather than go on autopilot, you'll be able to blunt irrational anger," Deffenbacher says. If the Red Sox can do it, your team will win—eventually.

18 to 24 points = You'd have frightened Attila the Hun.

11 to 17 points = You're so balanced it's annoying.

10 points or less = You can chill like the Dalai Lama.

**I GET ANGRY WHEN....
Handout 2**



Purpose: To outline situations at or outside the JFO or DRC that can trigger tension and angry responses.

Directions:

1. Take 5 minutes to fill in as many (or few) of the blanks listed below as you can.
2. Remember, do not use any names or details that would give away any person's name.

I get angry when _____

CONTROLLING ANGER BEFORE IT CONTROLS YOU

Handout 3



We all know what anger is, and we've all felt it: whether as a fleeting annoyance or as full-fledged rage.

What is Anger?

Anger is a completely normal, usually healthy, human emotion. But when it gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to problems—problems at work, in your personal relationships, and in the overall quality of your life. And it can make you feel as though you're at the mercy of an unpredictable and powerful emotion. This brochure is meant to help you understand and control anger.

The Nature of Anger

Anger is "an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage," according to Charles Spielberger, PhD, a psychologist who specializes in the study of anger. Like other emotions, it is accompanied by physiological and biological changes; when you get angry, your heart rate and blood pressure go up, as do the levels of your energy hormones, adrenaline, and noradrenalin.

Anger can be caused by both external and internal events. You could be angry at a specific person (Such as a coworker or supervisor) or event (a traffic jam, a canceled flight), or your anger could be caused by worrying or brooding about your personal problems. Memories of traumatic or enraging events can also trigger angry feelings.

Expressing Anger

The instinctive, natural way to express anger is to respond aggressively. Anger is a natural, adaptive response to threats; it inspires powerful, often aggressive, feelings and behaviors, which allow us to fight and to defend ourselves when we are attacked. A certain amount of anger, therefore, is necessary to our survival.

On the other hand, we can't physically lash out at every person or object that irritates or annoys us; laws, social norms, and common sense place limits on how far our anger can take us.

People use a variety of both conscious and unconscious processes to deal with your angry feelings. The three main approaches are expressing, suppressing, and calming. Expressing your angry feelings in an assertive—not aggressive—manner is the healthiest way to express anger. To do this, you have to learn how to make clear what your needs are, and how to get them met, without hurting others. Being assertive doesn't mean being pushy or demanding; it means being respectful of yourself and others.

Anger can be suppressed, and then converted or redirected. This happens when you hold in your anger, stop thinking about it, and focus on something positive.

Controlling Anger Before It Controls You Handout 3 (continued)



The aim is to inhibit or suppress your anger and convert it into more constructive behavior. The danger in this type of response is that if it isn't allowed outward expression, your anger can turn inward—on yourself. Anger turned inward may cause hypertension, high blood pressure, or depression.

Unexpressed anger can create other problems. It can lead to pathological expressions of anger, such as passive-aggressive behavior (getting back at people indirectly, without telling them why, rather than confronting them head-on) or a personality that seems perpetually cynical and hostile. People who are constantly putting others down, criticizing everything, and making cynical comments haven't learned how to constructively express your anger. Not surprisingly, they aren't likely to have many successful relationships.

Finally, you can calm down inside. This means not just controlling your outward behavior, but also controlling your internal responses, taking steps to lower your heart rate, calm yourself down, and let the feelings subside.

As Dr. Spielberger notes, "when none of these three techniques work, that's when someone—or something—is going to get hurt."

Anger Management

The goal of anger management is to reduce both your emotional feelings and the physiological arousal that anger causes. You can't get rid of, or avoid, the things or the people that enrage you, nor can you change them, but you can learn to control your reactions.

Are You Too Angry?

There are psychological tests that measure the intensity of angry feelings, how prone to anger you are, and how well you handle it. But chances are good that if you do have a problem with anger, you already know it. If you find yourself acting in ways that seem out of control and frightening, you might need help finding better ways to deal with this emotion.

Why Are Some People More Angry Than Others?

According to Jerry Deffenbacher, PhD, a psychologist who specializes in anger management, some people really are more "hotheaded" than others are; they get angry more easily and more intensely than the average person does. There are also those who don't show your anger in loud spectacular ways but are chronically irritable and grumpy. Easily angered people don't always curse and throw things; sometimes they withdraw socially, sulk, or get physically ill.

People who are easily angered generally have what some psychologists call a low tolerance for frustration, meaning simply that they feel that they should not have to be subjected to frustration, inconvenience, or annoyance. They can't take things in stride, and they're particularly infuriated if the situation seems somehow unjust: for example, being corrected for a minor mistake.

Controlling Anger Before It Controls You Handout 3 (continued)



What makes these people this way? A number of things. One cause may be genetic or physiological: There is evidence that some children are born irritable, touchy, and easily angered, and that these signs are present from a very early age. Another may be socio-cultural. Anger is often regarded as negative; we're taught that it's all right to express anxiety, depression, or other emotions but not to express anger. As a result, we don't learn how to handle it or channel it constructively.

Research has also found that family background plays a role. Typically, people who are easily angered come from families that are disruptive, chaotic, and not skilled at emotional communications.

Is It Good To "Let it All Hang Out?"

Psychologists now say that this is a dangerous myth. Some people use this theory as a license to hurt others. Research has found that "letting it rip" with anger actually escalates anger and aggression and does nothing to help you (or the person you're angry with) resolve the situation.

It's best to find out what it is that triggers your anger, and then to develop strategies to keep those triggers from tipping you over the edge.

Strategies To Keep Anger At Bay

Relaxation

Simple relaxation tools, such as deep breathing and relaxing imagery, can help calm down angry feelings. There are books and courses that can teach you relaxation techniques, and once you learn the techniques, you can call upon them in any situation. If you are involved in a relationship where both partners are hot-tempered, it might be a good idea for both of you to learn these techniques.

Some simple steps you can try:

Breathe deeply, from your diaphragm; breathing from your chest won't relax you. Picture your breath coming up from your "gut."

Slowly repeat a calm word or phrase such as "relax," "take it easy." Repeat it to yourself while breathing deeply.

Use imagery; visualize a relaxing experience, from either your memory or your imagination.

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

Practice these techniques daily. Learn to use them automatically when you're in a tense situation.

Controlling Anger Before It Controls You Handout 3 (continued)



Cognitive Restructuring

Simply put, this means changing the way you think. Angry people tend to curse, swear, or speak in highly colorful terms that reflect your inner thoughts. When you're angry, your thinking can get very exaggerated and overly dramatic. Try replacing these thoughts with more rational ones. For instance, instead of telling yourself, "oh, it's awful, it's terrible, everything's ruined," tell yourself, "it's frustrating, and it's understandable that I'm upset about it, but it's not the end of the world and getting angry is not going to fix it anyhow."

Be careful of words like "never" or "always" when talking about yourself or someone else. "This !&*%@ machine never works," or "you're always forgetting things" are not just inaccurate, they also serve to make you feel that your anger is justified and that there's no way to solve the problem.

They also alienate and humiliate people who might otherwise be willing to work with you on a solution.

Remind yourself that getting angry is not going to fix anything, that it won't make you feel better (and may actually make you feel worse).

Logic defeats anger, because anger, even when it's justified, can quickly become irrational. So use cold hard logic on yourself. Remind yourself that the world is "not out to get you," you're just experiencing some of the rough spots of daily life. Do this each time you feel anger getting the best of you, and it'll help you get a more balanced perspective. Angry people tend to demand things: fairness, appreciation, agreement, willingness to do things your way. Everyone wants these things, and we are all hurt and disappointed when we don't get them, but angry people demand them, and when your demands aren't met, your disappointment becomes anger. As part of your cognitive restructuring, angry people need to become aware of your demanding nature and translate your expectations into desires. In other words, saying, "I would like" something is healthier than saying, "I demand" or "I must have" something. When you're unable to get what you want, you will experience the normal reactions—frustration, disappointment, hurt—but not anger. Some angry people use this anger as a way to avoid feeling hurt, but that doesn't mean the hurt goes away.

Problem Solving

Sometimes, our anger and frustration are caused by very real and inescapable problems in our lives. Not all anger is misplaced, and often it's a healthy, natural response to these difficulties. There is also a cultural belief that every problem has a solution, and it adds to our frustration to find out that this isn't always the case. The best attitude to bring to such a situation, then, is not to focus on finding the solution, but rather on how you handle and face the problem.

Controlling Anger Before It Controls You Handout 3 (continued)



Make a plan, and check your progress along the way. Resolve to give it your best, but also not to punish yourself if an answer doesn't come right away. If you can approach it with your best intentions and efforts and make a serious attempt to face it head-on, you will be less likely to lose patience and fall into all-or-nothing thinking, even if the problem does not get solved right away.

Better Communication

Angry people tend to jump to—and act on—conclusions, and some of those conclusions can be very inaccurate. The first thing to do if you're in a heated discussion is slow down and think through your responses. Don't say the first thing that comes into your head, but slow down and think carefully about what you want to say. At the same time, listen carefully to what the other person is saying and take your time before answering.

Listen, too, to what is underlying the anger. For instance, you like a certain amount of freedom and personal space, and your "significant other" wants more connection and closeness. If he or she starts complaining about your activities, don't retaliate by painting your partner as a jailer, a warden, or an albatross around your neck.

It's natural to get defensive when you're criticized, but don't fight back. Instead, listen to what's underlying the words: the message that this person might feel neglected and unloved. It may take a lot of patient questioning on your part, and it may require some breathing space, but don't let your anger—or a partner's—let a discussion spin out of control. Keeping your cool can keep the situation from becoming a disastrous one.

Using Humor

"Silly humor" can help defuse rage in a number of ways. For one thing, it can help you get a more balanced perspective. When you get angry and call someone a name or refer to them in some imaginative phrase, stop and picture what that word would literally look like. If you're at work and you think of a coworker as a "dirtbag" or a "single-cell life form," for example, picture a large bag full of dirt (or an amoeba) sitting at your colleague's desk, talking on the phone, going to meetings. Do this whenever a name comes into your head about another person. If you can, draw a picture of what the actual thing might look like. This will take a lot of the edge off your fury; and humor can always be relied on to help unknot a tense situation.

The underlying message of highly angry people, Dr. Deffenbacher says, is "things ought a go my way!" Angry people tend to feel that they are morally right, that any blocking or changing of your plans is an unbearable indignity and that they should NOT have to suffer this way. Maybe other people do, but not them!

Controlling Anger Before It Controls You Handout 3 (continued)



When you feel that urge, he suggests, picture yourself as a god or goddess, a supreme ruler, who owns the streets and stores and office space, striding alone and having your way in all situations while others defer to you. The more detail you can get into your imaginary scenes, the more chances you have to realize that maybe you are being unreasonable; you'll also realize how unimportant the things you're angry about really are. There are two cautions in using humor. First, don't try to just "laugh off" your problems; rather, use humor to help yourself face them more constructively. Second, don't give in to harsh, sarcastic humor; that's just another form of unhealthy anger expression.

What these techniques have in common is a refusal to take yourself too seriously. Anger is a serious emotion, but it's often accompanied by ideas that, if examined, can make you laugh.

Changing Your Environment

Sometimes it's our immediate surroundings that give us cause for irritation and fury. Problems and responsibilities can weigh on you and make you feel angry at the "trap" you seem to have fallen into and all the people and things that form that trap.

Give yourself a break. Make sure you have some "personal time" scheduled for times of the day that you know are particularly stressful. One example is the working mother who has a standing rule that when she comes home from work, for the first 15 minutes "nobody talks to Mom unless the house is on fire." After this brief quiet time, she feels better prepared to handle demands from her kids without blowing up at them.

Some Other Tips for Easing Up on Yourself

Timing: If you and your spouse tend to fight when you discuss things at night—perhaps you're tired, or distracted, or maybe it's just habit—try changing the times when you talk about important matters so these talks don't turn into arguments.

Avoidance: If your child's chaotic room makes you furious every time you walk by it, shut the door. Don't make yourself look at what infuriates you. Don't say, "well, my child should clean up the room so I won't have to be angry!" That's not the point. The point is to keep yourself calm.

Finding alternatives: If your daily commute through traffic leaves you in a state of rage and frustration, give yourself a project—learn or map out a different route, one that's less congested or more scenic. Or find another alternative, such as a bus or commuter train.

Controlling Anger Before It Controls You Handout 3 (continued)



Do You Need Counseling?

If you feel that your anger is really out of control, if it is having an impact on your relationships and on important parts of your life, you might consider counseling to learn how to handle it better. A psychologist or other licensed mental health professional can work with you in developing a range of techniques for changing your thinking and your behavior.

When you talk to a prospective therapist, tell her or him that you have problems with anger that you want to work on, and ask about his or her approach to anger management. Make sure this isn't only a course of action designed to "put you in touch with your feelings and express them"—that may be precisely what your problem is. With counseling, psychologists say, a highly angry person can move closer to a middle range of anger in about 8 to 10 weeks, depending on the circumstances and the techniques used.

What About Assertiveness Training?

It's true that angry people need to learn to become assertive (rather than aggressive), but most books and courses on developing assertiveness are aimed at people who don't feel enough anger. These people are more passive and acquiescent than the average person; they tend to let others walk all over them. That isn't something that most angry people do. Still, these books can contain some useful tactics to use in frustrating situations.

Remember, you can't eliminate anger—and it wouldn't be a good idea if you could. In spite of all your efforts, things will happen that will cause you anger; and sometimes it will be justifiable anger. Life will be filled with frustration, pain, loss, and the unpredictable actions of others. You can't change that; but you can change the way you let such events affect you. Controlling your angry responses can keep them from making you even more unhappy in the long run.

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ANGER LOG
Handout 4



Purpose: To learn more about the components of your anger responses. The log is divided into 5 columns. The first column is labeled provocative situation. Here you briefly note the upsetting event that preceded your anger. The second column is labeled Pain/stress. There you record the emotional and physical pain that existed before your anger. It might be a headache or that you are late for an important meeting. The third column, Trigger Thoughts, is where you write down what you are thinking while getting angry. In the Behavior column you record what you actually did and in the Outcome column, the results. In other words what were the consequences?

Provocative Situation	Pain/Stress	Trigger Thoughts	Behavior	Outcome
<i>Person cuts me off and I miss my exit on the expressway</i>	<i>Stressed from waking up late and hungry from missing breakfast</i>	<i>Idiot thinks she owns the road because she drives a mini-van</i>	<i>Yelled and shouted obscenities</i>	<i>Was in a crabby mood when I got to work</i>

The Anger Log¹



Provocative Situation	Pain/Stress	Trigger Thoughts	Behavior	Outcome

¹ Adapted from the Anger Control Workbook, McKay, Matthew and Rogers, Peter, 2000 New Harbinger Pub., Oakland, CA

STRETCH TO RELAX

Handout 5

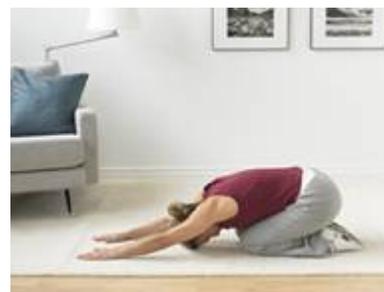


One of the best and simplest ways to relax is to stretch. Stretching improves coordination, balance, circulation and posture, and what's more, it feels great. Here are some fantastic stretches that are perfect for all-over flexibility and relaxation. Keep these stretching tips in mind when doing the following exercises:

- Do not bounce or bob when you stretch - this is not effective, and you can lead to injury.
- Stretch slowly to the point where a slight tension can be felt; you should not feel any pain.
- Never stretch torn or injured muscles unless you have consulted with your doctor.
- Hold each stretch for 20 - 30 seconds.
- Always complete each stretch for both sides of your body, when applicable.

Shoulders

1. Find an area of the floor that will give you enough room to stretch out. Use a mat or towel for comfort.
2. Get down on your hands and knees. Your knees should be hip-width apart with your hands directly under your shoulders. Your back should be flat.
3. Sit back on your legs so that you're resting on your heels. Stretch your arms out in front of you as you rest your forehead on the floor (use a small pillow if this puts too much strain on your back).
4. Hold the stretch for 20 to 30 seconds.



Chest

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, with your chin down and your hands clasped behind your back.
2. Pull your shoulders down and back so that your shoulder blades are touching.
3. Tighten your abdomen so that your lower back does not arch.
4. Hold for 20 - 30 seconds.



Arms & Shoulders

1. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Reach up with your right arm, bend your right elbow and bring your hand down, behind your head and between your shoulder blades.
3. With your left arm, reach up and grab your right elbow, pulling your elbow toward your head.
4. Hold for 20 - 30 seconds, return to start position. Repeat with left arm.



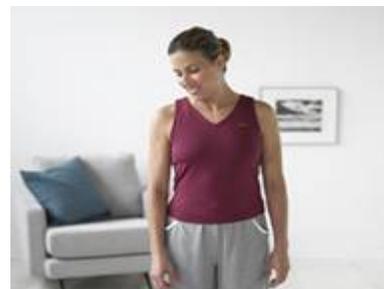
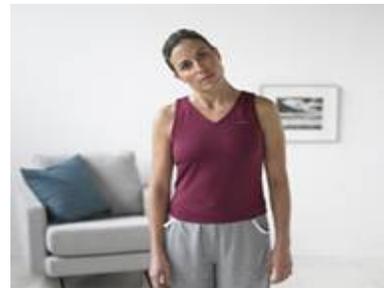
Lower Back

1. Lie on your back, with your hands behind your head, elbows on the floor.
2. Keep your feet and legs together; bend your legs at the knees, so that your thighs and calves are at a 90-degree angle.
3. Roll both knees over to the floor on the right while also keeping your shoulders on the floor.
4. Hold for 20 - 30 seconds, return to the start position. Repeat on the left side.



Neck & Trapezius

1. Keeping your shoulders relaxed, tilt your head to one side.
2. Slowly look down at the floor while maintaining the tilted position.
3. Hold at the point of mild stretch.



www.Kraftfoods.com/healthyliving/articles/stretchorelax accessed Jan 27, 2006

Learning Check



1. Identify three warning signs of anger.

2. Define ANGER:

3. Anger is a Three step process.

TRUE

FALSE

4. We can chose how we respond to Anger.

TRUE

FALSE

5. A TRIGGER Thought is what kind of thought:

- a. a thought that invokes happy or pleasant thoughts
- b. a thought that makes you feel sad
- c. a thought that makes you feel victimized or harmed

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Learning Check
Answer Key



1. Identify three warning signs of anger. **Page 17**

Irritable, Impatient, Short-temper, Argumentative, Sarcastic,
Frequent conflict, Unwilling to cooperate, Poor attendance, Tardiness

2. Define ANGER: **Page 9**

A feeling of displeasure resulting from injury, mistreatment or opposition
Usually a desire to fight back at the cause of the feeling

3. Anger is a Three Step process.

TRUE

FALSE **Page 11**

4. We can chose how we respond to Anger.

TRUE **Page 20**

FALSE

5. A TRIGGER Thought is what kind of thought:

a. a thought that invokes happy or pleasant thoughts

b. a thought that makes you feel sad

c. **a thought that makes you feel victimized or harmed** **Page 13**

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Please take a moment to complete the following items. Your input may help to improve future training sessions. Thank you!



Date of Course _____

Name of Instructor(s) _____ **Disaster Number** _____

1. The instructor was knowledgeable and well-prepared.

___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

2. The instructor provided time for questions and review and encouraged group participation.

___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

3. The instructor related the material to disaster work and used FEMA-related examples.

___ Strongly Agree ___ Agree ___ Disagree ___ Strongly Disagree

Comments: _____

4. Based on your Requestor/Supervisor/Program Manager's expectations from this course, will you be able to meet or exceed them? Why? Or why not?

5. Overall, how would you rate this course.

___ Excellent ___ Very Good ___ Good ___ Adequate ___ Poor

6. Please list additional training that would benefit your JFO work or benefit the JFO workforce in general.

