

Replacement
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Anger Management Handout

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Bringing your
handout to
every session
is required.

Module # 1: Emotional Self-Regulation Skills

What is a Devalued Self-Thought?

A *devalued self-thought* is a belief about yourself in which you judge yourself to be either inadequate or unwanted, or both. Your thought is “I’m not good enough.” These thoughts occur whenever the situation or another person does or says something suggesting that you are inadequate or disliked. Devalued self-thoughts are always in the form of a label, “I’m not good enough,” “I’m a loser,” “I’m a failure.” etc. They always follow the format, “I’m...(a something or another).”

I am a _____ I am a _____ I am a _____

A devalued-self thought is your attack on yourself. And it is irrational.

My Rewards

When your anger causes you to behave harshly or with aggression you lose benefits. Raising your voice, yelling, name calling, making threats and other behaviors that make people feel you are attacking them, may make you feel good in the immediate moment, but when your anger is over you have regrets about your behavior. You lose benefits, meaning your rewards such as, the respect of other people, favors from other people, love and affection from the people you care about, and most importantly your self-respect. These are just some of the benefits you lose due to reacting hurtfully. So, make it a law of life for yourself that you will not react hurtfully. Simply remind yourself to “remember my rewards.”

Mental Rehearsal Guide – Module 1

1. Take two relaxing breaths
2. Say these three times to yourself: “*I don’t have to get so angry. Don’t over react.*”
3. Ask yourself: “*Am I having a devalued self-thought or did I have one?*” If your answer is no, skip numbers 4 and 5.
4. Sternly tell yourself to stop it. “**Stop it! Stop it! Stop it!**”
5. Say the healing self-directive to yourself and reflect on what it means— “**Stop thinking I have to be perfect, and without faults, and that my purpose in life is to impress others. I accept myself the way I am. Everyone has faults, me too. Stop taking myself too seriously.**” (*memorize it*)
6. Ask yourself: How angry do I want to get? Pick a number 0-10.
7. Ask yourself: How will that much anger help me?
8. Tell yourself to *remember my rewards!* Think about what you lose by being hurtful and the benefits you gain when you choose not to.

My Anger Episodes:

Mental Rehearsal # 1 – Think about an anger episode you experienced and mentally rehearse it. Begin thinking about it, visualizing it in your mind from start to end. Think about how it prompted you to become angry. When you get to the *anger*

point, the point where you feel yourself getting angry, or the point where you would have felt angry, start using the “mental rehearsal guide.” Repeat that process two more times, so that you go through the guide 3 times. And think about the anger episode as you use the skills. It doesn’t matter whether the anger episode prompts you to become angry or not. You can use it whether or not you still feel angry about it. Have 3 mental rehearsal sessions a day, and do this for 15 days or more. Use a variety of anger episodes over the 15 days. You may repeat the same anger episodes if you like.

Module # 2: MAD+P Thinking Model

Review Questions:

1. Recite the Healing Directive.
2. What is the first thing you tell yourself to do when you are having a devalued self-thought?
3. What are the three questions you ask yourself when doing the mental rehearsal from module one?
4. Explain what the “My Rewards” skill is.

How are these statements distortions in thinking?

I must do well or very well and it’s awful if I don’t.

No one should talk down to me, like I was a child.

Musturbating—(or musting) involves thoughts that are *rules*—e.g. “Things must be the way I want!” It is an obsessive thinking style that is demanding, commanding, insisting, inflexible, and holding to rigid expectations. Key words and phrases in this type of thinking are: *must, mustn’t, should, shouldn’t, needs to, has to, only if, only when.*

Self-Directive:

Stop insisting (or musturbating) ... I prefer that _____, but I don’t insist on it.

Example of an M-thought and self-directive:

M-thought: “He shouldn’t use that tone of voice with me.”

Self-directive: “Stop musturbating. I prefer he didn’t use that tone, but I don’t insist on it.”

Awfulizing—Is an attitude that involves assigning an exaggerated pain rating to a problem. When things aren’t the way you want them to be you awfulize over them. You judge the situation to be awful and unbearable: You are thinking it is *awful, terrible, horrible, unbearable, I can’t stand it, it bothers me, I hate it when, etc.*

Self-Directive:

Stop awfulizing... stop making it out to be so bad. It’s not pleasant, but I’m not going to think it’s awful or terrible.

Example of an A-thought and self-directive:

A-thought: “I hate that he used that tone of voice with me, it’s awful!”

Self-directive: “Stop awfulizing. Stop making it out to be so bad.”

Devalued Self-thought—involves thoughts of negative self-worth (you negatively label yourself): e.g. *I’m not good enough, I’m a failure... I’m worthless... inadequate, rotten, bad, etc.*

Healing Self-Directive:

Stop thinking I have to be perfect, and without faults, and that my purpose in life is to impress others. I accept myself the way I am. Everyone has faults, me too. Stop taking myself too seriously. (memorize this)

Example of a D-thought and self-directive:

D-thought: “I’m a failure.”

Healing Self-directive: “Stop thinking I have to be perfect, and without faults, and that my purpose in life is to impress others. I accept myself the way I am. Everyone has faults, me too. Stop taking myself too seriously.”

Punishment thoughts—involve thinking that believes punishment is justified—in other words you think you have a right to inflict harm, e.g. “*He should be taught a lesson...*,” “*He needs to know what it feels like...*,” “*He deserves to be punished...*,” “*only if I get even will I be okay...*”

Self-Directive:

Stop wanting to punish or hurt. Remember my rewards.

Example of a P-thought and self-directive:

P-thought: “I have a right to get back at him.”

Self-directive: “Stop wanting to punish him. Remember my rewards.”

Module # 3: The Five Types of Anger

Review Questions

1. All self-directives begin with what word?
2. What is the self-directive for an M thought?
3. What is the self-directive for an A thought?
4. What is the self-directive for a D thought?
5. What is the self-directive for a P thought?

1. **Relational Anger**—is anger *prompted* by what someone else says or thinks about you. The person may say that you are disliked or inadequate. It involves feeling criticized, judged, belittled, disrespected, devalued. A key characteristic of relational anger is having *devalued self-thoughts*.

Protection Purpose: To protect yourself from being disrespected and devalued.

2. **Frustrative Anger**—is anger *prompted* by the blocking of a goal (or expectation) For example; you get angry because your car will not start.

Protection Purpose: To protect yourself from obstacles and hindrances.

3. **Boundary Anger**—is anger *prompted* by people who have violated your personal boundaries or you perceive are responsible for causing you to suffer an injury or loss, or you perceive as a threat to cause such suffering.

Protection Purpose:

To protect yourself from a sense of invasion, loss, or threat.

4. **Self-critical Anger**—is anger *prompted* by your criticism of your own behavior. (It is a judgment against self.) It is characterized by negative self-thoughts, especially devalued self-thoughts. Like relational anger, a key characteristic of self-critical anger is *devalued self-thoughts*.

Protection Purpose: To protect yourself from not measuring up to self-imposed expectations you have for yourself.

5. **Empathic Anger**—is anger *prompted* by people you perceive have hurt or disrespected another person or persons.

Protection Purpose: To protect someone else.

Module # 4: Identifying Anger Spikes and Triggers

Review Questions – *What type of anger are each of these:*

1. Dean says he hates himself because he forgot to go see his daughter in her school play.
2. Jennifer got angry when she saw a woman lock her dog in a car at the mall, on a hot summer day.
3. Sally was upset because she was expecting her refund check to come in the mail today, but it didn't.
4. Gina was mad at Andrew for barging into her office without knocking.
5. Robert was angry at his wife for harshly criticizing his vacation ideas.

A **spike** is an unwanted or bad behavior of another person, or a frustrating situation, such as losing your keys, or something about yourself that bothers you. These types of spikes are external—outside of you. Sometimes a spike can be internal.

Example of an internal spike: Someone steals your wallet and you become angry. First this is a boundary spike because you were violated, someone did it to you. Second it is internal because it stimulates a thought in your mind that spikes your anger. Your thought, “I wasn’t careful with my wallet,” prompts you to be angry with yourself.

A **trigger** is what you think about what happened. It is your automatic thoughts that come to mind when you experience or become aware of a spike. Triggers are internal—inside of you. It’s your thoughts that make you angry.

An anger **scenario** is when more than one anger episode occurs within a very short period of time.

State spikes in a single sentence. For example:

My daughter was bullied at school.

My wife criticized the way I drive.

Dirty dishes were left in the sink again.

Exercise: pick out the spikes in the following anger story:

Amy and Nick were married ten months when Amy’s aunt broke an ankle and needed help. So Amy went to stay with her aunt for two weeks. When the two weeks were over Nick prepared a special meal for Amy now that she was coming home. He cooked her favorite dish, which was grilled salmon, and he made all the fixings that went with it and also a special desert. He even put candles on the table. When she arrived home, she was pleased to see the nice dinner. She first went to use the bathroom before sitting down with her husband to eat the delicious meal. When she came to the table, she addressed Nick with this question, “You never change, do you?” “What does that mean?” He said with a frown. She said, “The bathroom is disgusting. You have a pile of your clothes on the floor. You know I hate looking at that.” Hearing that he said: “Look, you’re spoiling the evening. I tried to make your coming home a happy time. You can eat it by yourself.” With that he got up and walked out of the house slamming the door behind him.

Module # 5: Assertiveness Skills

Review Questions

1. What is the spike in this anger episode: Jennifer got angry when she saw a woman lock her dog in a car at the mall, on a hot summer day?
2. What is the trigger in this anger episode: Gina was mad at Andrew for barging into her office without knocking?
3. What were Gina’s M and A thoughts? Gina was mad at Andrew for barging into her office without knocking.
4. What is the self-directive for an M thought?
5. What is the self-directive for an A thought?

Assertiveness:

- presents the facts only
- does not make harsh, judgmental, or accusatory remarks
- does not provoke negative responses

Think of the assertive skill as handing someone a video recording of his behavior:

- A video recording presents the facts only
- It doesn’t add any commentary or opinions about what happened
- The person viewing the video is confronted with his words and actions only, not your comments about what is right or wrong.

Reporting the Problem - **DON'TS** Skills

Describe without evaluating—simply give the details of what you observed or heard without expressing an opinion or feelings. Use words to create a picture of what happened, or restate verbatim what was said. Give the facts only and try to be as accurate as possible. Keep your description free from evaluation or criticism, and do not talk about feelings. And do not ask questions. Asking questions makes the other person feel blamed and defensive. Remember, this is not an attack or judgmental process.

Own your feelings—once you have described the problem or restated what was said report your feelings and take *ownership* for them. Don't make statements that put the responsibility for your feeling on the other person. Don't say things like: "You made me feel ..." or "That makes me feel..." It puts the blame on the other person, causing that person to be defensive. Instead, take ownership of your feelings by using either "*I feel*" or "*I felt*." For example: "When that happened I felt hurt." and "When you speak to me like that I feel embarrassed." Use only "I feel" or "I felt."

No anger words—Expressing anger makes the other person feel defensive. Instead, talk about your primary emotions. **Anger words:** annoyed, disappointed, displeased, frustrated, aggravated, disgusted, irritated, peeved, angry, mad, steamed, pissed, furious, enraged etc. **Primary feeling words:** sad, afraid, lonely, rejected, worthless, abandoned, shamed, humiliated, ignored, embarrassed, worried, uncared about, disrespected, devalued, unloved, unappreciated, hurt, etc. Avoid using "upset," because it is vague and often communicates anger.

'—*don't look for an immediate solution*

Let the apostrophe remind you to not think that the other person must solve the problem or change his or her behavior. Allow the other person time to live with your message and internalize it. This can take several days or longer. Make it your goal to simply report the problem using the DON'TS skills. Let your satisfaction come from the fact that you reported the problem.

T—*tell what you need for things to be fixed*. "It would help if I got an apology." "I need you not to do that next time." Make your request reasonable and do this without being critical or disrespectful.

S—*speak in a normal tone of voice*. Keep your voice tone normal and polite. Use your voice to communicate respect.

Mental Rehearsal Guide – Module 5

1. **D** - Create the picture. Tell what you observed or heard without expressing an opinion or feelings.
2. **O** - State the spike. Tell the specific thing that upset you and say, "When that happened..., or when I heard that... I felt, or I feel." Remember only use "*I feel*," or "*I felt*."
3. **N** - Do not use any anger words. Use primary feeling words.
4. **'** - Tell yourself that your only goal is to report the problem.
5. **T** - Tell what you need in order for things to be fixed without being critical or angry.
6. **S** - Speak in a normal tone of voice.

Case story # 1: You are walking in the mall with your friend (or significant other). While walking you are looking at your cellphone and accidentally walk into another person and drop your phone. Your friend immediately says to you that you are "klutz." You take offence by this and report the problem using the don'ts skills.

Case story # 2: You are married. On your desk at home you have important papers you have to fill out for your job. While you are at work, your spouse straightens up your desk and moves those papers into one of the desk draws. You are not able to find the papers when you get home. You ask your spouse if he or she moved your papers and the answer you get is yes. You are upset that your papers were moved without him or her telling you, and so you report the problem using the don'ts skills.

Mental Rehearsal # 2 – Begin by choosing an anger episode in which you feel a need to confront another person about your anger. Get paper and pencil and write out exactly what and how you would say it if you were reporting the problem in real life. Writing intensifies the restructuring of your automatic thought process.

Next check to make sure what you wrote follows the DON'TS skills. Then rehearse either aloud or silently to yourself *reporting the problem* using the ideas you wrote out. *Do not* read what you wrote; do it from memory as best you can. Repeat the rehearsal aloud once more so that you complete 2 sets using the same anger episode. Do this two or three times a day for seven days or more and use a variety of anger episodes over the course of seven days.

Checklist for using DON'TS Skills

- Did I first state my observations by describing what I saw or heard?
- Were my statements free from judgmental or accusatory remarks?
- Did I refrain from asking any questions?
- Did I avoid saying things like, "You make me feel." or "You hurt me?"
- Did I report my primary feelings using only "I feel." or "I felt?"
- Did I keep any disclosure of anger out of my remarks?
- Did I state respectfully what I needed in order for things to be fixed?
- Am I accepting of the idea that I am not looking for an immediate solution from this person?

Module # 6: Analyzing Anger Episodes & Desensitizing Cognitive Triggers

Review Questions

1. Explain what "D" means in the DON'TS skills.
2. Which one is the correct way of taking *Ownership* of your feeling: (1) You made me feel sad when you didn't remember my birthday? (2) When you didn't remember my birthday, I felt sad.
3. Explain what "N" means in the DON'TS skills.
4. Explain what the apostrophe means in the DON'TS skills.
5. Explain what "T" means in the DON'TS skills.

Expanded Self-directive

An expanded self-directive is one that adds details specific to the spike. For example:

Spike: You do something nice for a friend and he fails to notice it. The underlined parts of the self-directive are the details specific to the spike.

- *Expanded Self-directive for M thought:* "**Stop** insisting. I prefer that he acknowledge me, but I don't insist on it."
- *Expanded Self-directive for A thought:* "**Stop** making it out to be so bad that he didn't acknowledge me."
- *D thought:* Simply recite the healing self-directive in its entirety.
- *Expanded Self-directive for P thought:* **Stop** wanting to punish him for not acknowledging what I did. Remember my rewards.

Mental Rehearsal Guide – Module 6

Analyze anger episodes by answering these questions:

1. What was the main spike? State this in one sentence only.
2. What type of anger was it?
3. Was my anger necessary?
4. What was my M thought?
5. State an expanded self-directive for my M thought.
6. What was my A thought?
7. State an expanded self-directive for my A thought.
8. What was my D thought?
9. Recite the entire "healing self-directive."
10. What was my P thought?
11. State an expanded self-directive for my P thought.

If it's relational or self-critical anger, your anger is never necessary.

Analyzing Anger Episodes

What was the main spike?

What type of anger was it?

Was my anger necessary?

My **M**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **M**-thoughts

My **A**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **A**-thoughts

My **D**-Thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **D**-thoughts

My **P**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **P**-thoughts

Analyzing Anger Episodes

What was the main spike?

What type of anger was it?

Was my anger necessary?

My **M**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **M**-thoughts

My **A**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **A**-thoughts

My **D**-Thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **D**-thoughts

My **P**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **P**-thoughts

Analyzing Anger Episodes

What was the main spike?

What type of anger was it?

Was my anger necessary?

My **M**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **M**-thoughts

My **A**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **A**-thoughts

My **D**-Thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **D**-thoughts

My **P**-thoughts

Expanded Self-Directive for **P**-thoughts

Mental Rehearsal # 3 – Using the two extra forms in this handout, analyze anger episodes by (1) answering the questions and identifying your MAD+P thoughts, and write them down. (2) Write out the expanded self-directives for your MAD+P thoughts. Next visualize in your mind the anger episode from start to end. When you get to the *anger point*, the point where you feel angry, or the point where you would have felt angry, begin speaking to yourself your expanded self-directives; say them to yourself two or three times, and as you do make every effort to obey your directives to stop your MAD+P thoughts. Repeat the exercise two more times so that you complete three sets using the same anger episode. Do this two or three times a day for seven days or more and use a variety of anger episodes over the course of seven days.

Module # 7: Desensitizing Devalued-self Thoughts

- Review Questions
1. Name the 5 types of anger
 2. What would your M thought be if you became angry because someone stole your wallet?
 3. What would your A thought be if you became angry because someone stole your wallet?
 4. What would your D thought be if you became angry because someone laughed at and mocked the way you speak?
 5. What would be the self-directive for extinguishing your punishment thought because you were laughed at and mocked?

Why do you believe your devalued-self thoughts? For three reasons:

1. The situation you are aware of reawakens your _____.
2. You do not separate your _____ from your behavior or the other person’s attitude.
3. You have developed the habit of taking care of your emotional needs _____.

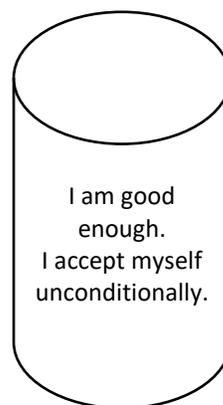
Devalued self-thoughts hurt because _____ them.

The theory behind desensitizing devalued self-thoughts:

1. **Recognize how you devalue yourself** during anger episodes. Learn to identify your D-thoughts as explained in module # 2.
2. **Separate your personality from your behavior or the other person’s attitude.** Protect your personality, do not attack it. Instead of thinking: “I’m a failure,” focus on your behavior, for example, “Today I didn’t do as well as I hoped.” When the problem involves another person’s attitude, focus on his attitude, instead of labeling yourself, for example, “This person is annoyed with me today.” Instead of, “I’m a reject.”
3. **Stop putting irrational expectations on yourself.** Thinking that you must be perfect and without faults and that your purpose is to impress others is irrational. Learn to apply the healing self-directive.
4. **Develop the habit of being emotionally self-reliant.** Tell yourself to stop looking for external validation; and make the decision to accept yourself unconditionally.



← This is a self-attack on your personality. It is motivated by irrational expectations you have of yourself.



← This is rational and a healthy self-opinion.

Mental Rehearsal Guide – Module 7

1. Think about an anger episode in which you experienced a devalued-self thought.
2. Identify and state your devalued-self thought.
3. Reflect on the D-thought while doing the skills below.
4. Ask yourself: Am I attacking my personality instead of focusing on my behavior or the other person's attitude?
5. Say this to yourself: "I didn't do as well as I hoped *this time*." Or, "This person is annoyed with me *today*." Instead of, "I'm a failure or a reject."
6. Ask yourself: Am I putting irrational expectations on myself by insisting on having to be perfect, or that I must always impress other people? Then tell yourself to stop it and then recite the healing self-directive to yourself. **"Stop thinking I have to be perfect, and without faults, and that my purpose in life is to impress others. I accept myself the way I am. Everyone has faults, me too. Stop taking myself too seriously."**
7. Answer this question: Why should I think negatively about myself because someone else thinks negatively about me? Really, why should I?
8. Ask yourself: Am I looking for external validation? Do I really need it?

A devalued-self thought is your attack on yourself. And it is irrational.

Mental Rehearsal # 4 – Use the mental rehearsal guide in this module for seven days or more, three times a day. Each time you do the mental rehearsal, do it twice. Three times a day, run through the guide twice. Use a variety of anger episodes over the course of seven days. Each episode must have a devalued-self thought (relational or self-critical anger).

Module # 8: Frustrative Anger & Important Extras

Review Questions

Someone close to you makes fun of and mocks the way you drive and so you become angry.

1. What would be an expanded self-directive for the M thought in this anger episode?
2. What would be an expanded self-directive for the A thought in this anger episode?
3. What would be an expanded self-directive for the D thought in this anger episode?
4. What would be an expanded self-directive for the P thought in this anger episode?
5. What are the three questions used to do the mental rehearsal in module one?

What is the main difference between frustrative and relational anger?

Answer: Frustrative anger does not have a _____, and relational anger does.

Low Frustration Tolerance (LFT) means easily frustrated and intolerant of disappointments.

The best way to develop *frustration tolerance* is to accept the reality that frustration _____, because it does.

Venting Anger - A common misconception is that venting anger helps relieve it. Just the opposite is true, it worsens your anger. It hardens your anger response by fueling it. Punching a pillow, screaming, slamming doors, or talking about your anger all make your anger worse. That is because venting anger is rehearsing anger. No matter how you rehearse it what you are doing is solidifying your MAD+P thoughts that drive it. Each time you let off steam you are arousing your anger which has the effect of causing it to become a habit. It also does not resolve the conflict that prompted your anger.

Module # 9: Relapse Prevention and Maintenance Plan

Review Questions

1. What is the difference between relational anger and frustrative anger?
2. Recite the Healing Directive
3. Explain what “D” means in the DON’TS skills.
4. Explain what “O” means in the DON’TS skills.

Over a period of time, when individuals with problem anger complete an anger management program, whether it be a class or private therapy sessions they too often relapse back into their old problem anger habits. This is because problem anger has a tendency to grow back. It grows back because the distorted automatic thoughts that cause it are not completely deleted. Through the exercise of using anger controlling self-directives and mental rehearsals MAD+P automatic thoughts *fade*, but they do not completely disappear. The more you confront your MAD+P thoughts the more they will fade. It is for this reason that repeated exposure doing mental rehearsals using self-directives is so effective. But left alone without any attention, anger provoking automatic thoughts will grow back in intensity. In order to prevent this from happening you will need to follow a maintenance and relapse prevention plan.

Daily for the next two years have a daily anger management quiet time, in which you read and reflect on the *daily reflection questions* and read and review this handout once or twice a week. Your daily quiet time doesn’t need to be more than five minutes. Get into the routine daily of reflecting on your anger habit. Think about any anger episodes you may have had in the past 24 hours and think about your MAD+P thoughts connected to your anger and think about the self-directives that would have helped you self-regulate your anger.

At least once a week do any one of the four anger mental rehearsals.

Daily Reflection Questions

- How angry did I get in the past 24 hours? How did it help me?
- Did I experience a devalued self-thought in the past 24 hours?
- Did I show aggression verbally or otherwise in the past 24 hours?
- Did I think about my rewards in the past 24 hours?
- Did I neutralize my MAD+P thoughts using expanded self-directives?
- With what problems could I have used the DON’TS skills?
- Did read or review even one paragraph in this handout today?

Definition of Anger: *Anger is the emotional drive to protect yourself from anything you perceive as a threat. Anger has a single purpose, which is protection. Anger is a secondary emotion, meaning it is always preceded by some other emotion. Emotions that precede anger are all fear-based emotions. Nothing outside of us makes us angry. Anger is always caused (triggered) by our thoughts. Simply stated, anger is caused by MAD+P thoughts. For this reason, we are always responsible for our anger.*