

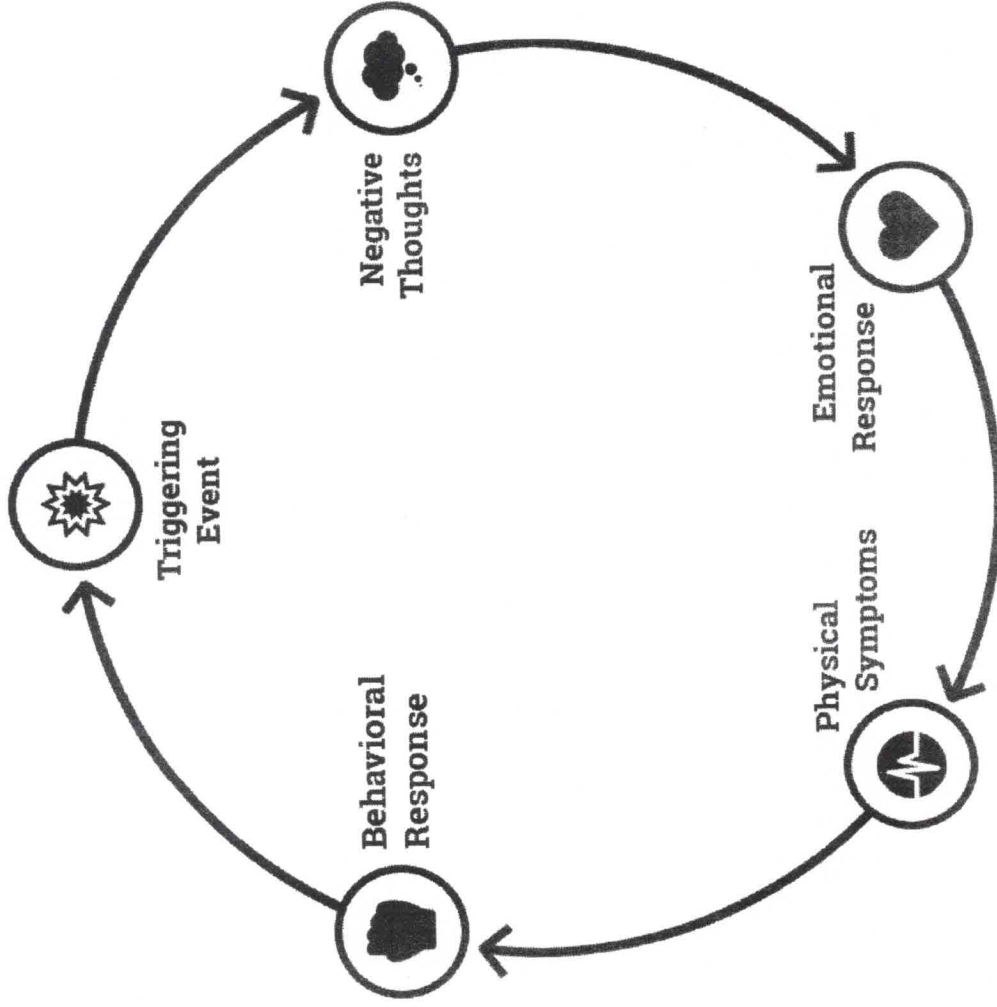
COGNITIVE RESTRUCTURING

I. Identifying Irrational Thoughts/Cognitive Distortion

D. Anger

- a) The Cycle of Anger -Pic**
- b) Cycle of Anger – Discovering**
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The Cycle of Anger



Triggering Event

An event or situation "triggers" a person's anger. Examples:

- Getting cut off while driving.
- Having a bad day at work.
- Feeling disrespected.

Negative Thoughts

Irrational and negative thoughts occur as a result of the triggering event. Examples:

- "I'm the worst parent ever."
- "The jerk who cut me off doesn't care about anyone but themselves."

Emotional Response

Negative thoughts lead to negative emotions, even if the thoughts are irrational. Examples:

- Feelings of shame and guilt due to being the "worst parent ever".
- Rage directed toward a bad driver.

Physical Symptoms

The body automatically responds to anger with several symptoms. Examples:

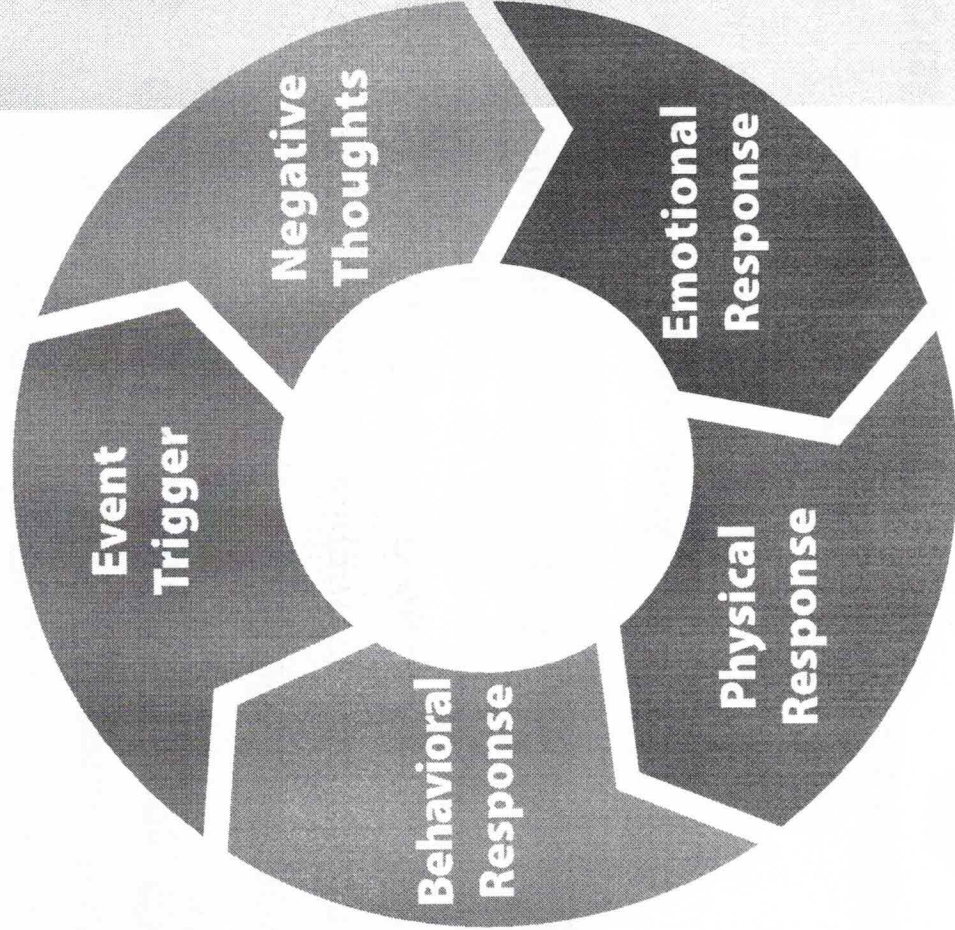
- Racing Heart
- Clenched Fists
- Sweating
- Shaking

Behavioral Response

The person reacts based upon thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms. Examples:

- Fighting
- Yelling
- Arguing
- Criticizing

The Cycle of Anger



Event Trigger An event or situation "triggers" a person's anger.

Negative Thoughts Negative and irrational thoughts result from the event trigger.

Emotional Response Negative thoughts lead to negative emotions, such as anger and frustration.

Physical Response The body responds automatically to anger, with several symptoms, such as pounding heart.

Behavioral Response The person reacts based upon thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms.

Connecting Emotions, Thoughts, and Actions

When you face a tough situation, try this strategy for understanding your emotions and thinking them through.

1 Feel the emotion. Emotional states are strong but fleeting. An emotion may last only about 90 seconds, and then passes naturally (unless it is triggered again through thinking).

4 Expand your thinking. Imagine another way of viewing the situation, a different, more helpful thought.

2 Notice your thoughts in relation to your emotions. I felt *that* and I thought *this*. Break thoughts and emotions apart into steps.

5 Notice the outcome. Be aware of your emotions might have changed.

3 Apply reason. Write a few thoughts down. For each thought, consider: Is this thought true? Is it helpful? Is it necessary to think about this now?

6 Act positively. Choose actions in a way that will make the situation better rather than making it worse.

2.3.3

REFLECTING

What?

What is the connection among emotions, thoughts, and actions? What have you learned about your own cycles of emotions?

So What?

Why is it important to be able to manage anger? In a difficult situation, how can you change how you think about or view a situation?

Now What?

What positive actions can you take using this new awareness of emotions and thoughts?

Introduction to Anger Management



Anger: a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility

Aggression: hostile or violent behavior or attitudes toward another

Feelings of anger are a normal and healthy part of being human. Learning to avoid all anger would be an impossible goal. Instead, in anger management, you will learn to avoid negative reactions to anger (such as aggression), while learning new healthy habits.

The first step in anger management is to begin learning about your own anger. To start, you will learn about triggers (the things that set you off), how you respond to anger, and how anger has affected your life.

<p>List three situations, topics, or people that often lead to you feeling angry: (ex. arguing with your partner about money, dealing with authority, poor drivers)</p>

<p>What do you do when you're angry? List ways in which you act differently when angry: (ex. shouting, arguing, throwing or breaking objects, become physically aggressive)</p>

<p>Have you ever run into problems because of your anger? If so, list them: (ex. damaged relationships, reprimanded at work, public altercations)</p>

What is Anger?

Anger is a difficult feeling. When you're angry, you might do bad things that you wouldn't do if you were happy. But did you know that it's normal to feel angry from time to time? It happens to everyone.



Draw a picture of what you look like when you're angry.

A large, empty rectangular area with rounded corners and a dashed black border, intended for drawing a picture of oneself when angry.

What's something you say only when you're angry?

A large, empty speech bubble shape with a solid black border and a pointed bottom, intended for writing a phrase said when angry.

What is Anger?

All sorts of things can make a person feel angry. Some people get mad when they have to follow a rule they don't like, or when another person is mean to them.



List some things that cause you to feel angry.

① _____

② _____

③ _____

④ _____

⑤ _____

What is Anger?

Even though it's normal to feel angry from time to time, it's never ok to be mean, break things, hurt others, or hurt yourself. Learning to control your anger is about learning new ways to act when you're upset.



Here's a list of healthy things you can do when you feel angry. Circle the ones that you might like to try.

Take deep breaths.

Draw your anger.

Do jumping jacks.

Write about your anger.

Count to 100.

Walk away.

Talk to someone.

Squeeze a stress ball.

Play outside

Listen to music.

Practice a hobby.

Coping Skills

Anger

Be Aware of Triggers

Anger triggers are the things that set you off. Knowing your triggers, and being cautious around them, will reduce the likelihood of your anger getting out of control.

How to use triggers to your advantage:

- ✓ Create a list of your triggers and review them daily. Reviewing your triggers will keep them fresh in your mind, increasing the likelihood you notice them before they become a problem.
- ✓ Oftentimes, the best way to deal with a trigger is to avoid it. This might mean making changes to your lifestyle, relationships, or daily routine.
- ✓ Because it isn't always possible to avoid triggers, have a plan when you must face them. For example, avoid touchy conversations when you are tired, hungry, or upset.

Practice Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is a simple technique that's excellent for managing emotions. Not only is deep breathing effective, it's also discreet and easy to use at any time or place.

Sit comfortably and place one hand on your abdomen. Breathe in through your nose, deeply enough that the hand on your abdomen rises. Hold the air in your lungs, and then exhale slowly through your mouth, with your lips puckered as if you are blowing through a straw. The secret is to go slow: Time the inhalation (4s), pause (4s), and exhalation (6s). Practice for 3 to 5 minutes.



Keep an Anger Log

Following an episode of anger, take a few moments to record your experience. This practice will help you identify patterns, warning signs, and triggers, while also helping you organize thoughts and work through problems.

- ✓ What was happening *before* the anger episode? Describe how you were feeling, and what was on your mind. Were you hungry, tired, or stressed?
- ✓ Describe the facts of what happened. What events triggered your anger? How did you react, and did your reaction change as the event continued to unfold?
- ✓ What were your thoughts and feelings *during* the anger episode? Looking back, do you see anything differently than when you were in the heat of the moment?

Coping Skills

Anger

Use Diversions

The goal of diversions is to buy yourself time. If you can distract yourself for just 30 minutes, you'll have a better chance of dealing with your anger in a healthy way. Remember, you can always return to the source of your anger later—you're just setting the problem aside for now.

go for a walk	read a book	play a sport	listen to music
watch a movie	practice a hobby	go for a run	clean or organize
do yard work	draw or paint	do a craft	cook or bake
play a game	go for a bicycle ride	write or journal	take a long bath
play an instrument	call a friend	lift weights	go swimming
go hiking in nature	take photographs	play with a pet	rearrange a room

Take a Time-out

Time-outs are a powerful tool for relationships where anger-fueled disagreements are causing problems. When someone calls a time-out, both individuals agree to walk away from the problem, and return once you have both had an opportunity to cool down.

How to use time-outs effectively:

- ✓ With your partner, plan exactly how time-outs will work. Everyone should understand the rationale behind time-outs (an opportunity to cool down—not to avoid a problem).
- ✓ What will you both do during time-outs? Plan activities that are in different rooms or different places. The list of diversions from above is a good place to begin.
- ✓ Plan to return to the problem in 30 minutes to an hour. Important problems shouldn't be ignored forever, but nothing good will come from an explosive argument.

Know Your Warning Signs

Anger warning signs are the clues your body gives you that your anger is starting to grow. When you learn to spot your warning signs, you can begin to address your anger while it's still weak.

sweating	can't get past problem	feel hot / turn red	clenched fists
headaches	becoming argumentative	raised voice	using verbal insults
pacing	aggressive body language	feel sick to stomach	go quiet / "shut down"

Triggers



Trigger: A stimulus—such as a person, place, situation, or thing—that contributes to an unwanted emotional or behavioral response.

The Problem

Describe the problem your triggers are contributing to. What's the worst-case scenario, if you are exposed to your triggers?

Trigger Categories

Just about *anything* can be a trigger. To begin exploring your own triggers, think about each of the categories listed below. Is there a specific emotion that acts as a trigger for you? How about a person or place? List your responses in the provided spaces.

Emotional State	
People	
Places	
Things	
Thoughts	
Activities / Situations	

Tips for Dealing with Triggers

- Oftentimes, the best way to deal with a trigger is to avoid it. This might mean making changes to your lifestyle, relationships, or daily routine.
- Create a strategy to deal with your triggers head on, just in case. Your strategy might include coping skills, a list of trusted people you can talk to, or rehearsed phrases to help you get out of a troublesome situation.
- Don't wait until the heat of the moment to test your coping strategy. *Practice!*

Triggers



In this section, you will develop a plan for dealing with your three biggest triggers. Review your plan regularly, and practice each of the strategies.

Describe your three biggest triggers, in detail.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for *avoiding* or *reducing exposure* to each trigger.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for dealing with each trigger head on, when they cannot be avoided.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

External and Internal Anger Triggers

See how many of these fit you and then do some "field research" in your own life, looking for the things that are triggering your anger. Some of these triggers may be real threats to you or your family and friends. Other triggers may be things most of us would call minor but for you, they just "set you off." Identifying your triggers can help you plan responses for the future.

External Anger Triggers – People, Places, and Things.

- These are things that happen to you, others do or events that upset you.
- Facing a real threat physically or financially.
- Being verbally or physically attacked or assaulted.
- Being put down or disrespect in front of others.
- An interruption to your plans.
- Frustration at things that get in your way.
- Financial losses or difficulties.
- People who do things we believe are ethically or religiously wrong.
- Unfair situations or treatment.
- Things being out of our control.
- People lie to you or let you down.
- Having your things taken or damaged by others.
- Having long waits or standing in lines.
- Traffic or people getting in your way.
- Crowds.
- People talking about you.
- Not being paid what you are owed.
- People saying bad things about you.
- Being accused of things you didn't do.
- People who do not clean up after themselves.
- Being given wrong information or directions.

Internal Triggers for anger.

Sometimes it is the things going on inside of you that can trigger anger or other negative emotions.

- Lack of sleep
- Being hungry or thirsty.
- Having your mind occupied with problems.
- Negative emotions, anxiety, depression.
- Feeling physically ill or having health problems.
- Being lonely.
- Feelings of guilt or shame.
- Believing that you are not good enough or unworthy of good things.
- Not liking yourself.

How many of these things, either external people, places or things or internal states are triggers for your anger, anxiety or other emotional issues? Once you recognize what is setting your anger off you may be able to work on reducing the impact of those triggers and avoiding the negative consequences of out of control anger.

Add any other internal or external triggers you can think of below:

The Fight-or-Flight Response

Fact Sheet

► What is the fight-or-flight response?

The **fight-or-flight response** is one of the tools your body uses to protect you from danger. When you feel threatened, the fight-or-flight response is automatically triggered, and several physiological changes prepare you to either confront or flee from the threat.

► What are the symptoms of fight-or-flight?

- Increased heart rate
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Shaking
- Racing thoughts
- Nausea / "butterflies" in stomach
- Sweating
- Difficulty concentrating
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Tensed muscles

► How is the fight-or-flight response triggered?

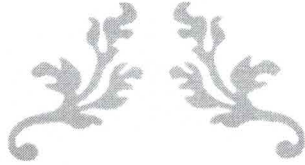
Even threats to emotional well-being, such as the fear of embarrassment before giving a presentation, can trigger the fight-or-flight response. In these cases, the symptoms often do more harm than good. An increased heart rate and sweating might help you escape from a bear, but they won't do much to help you look cool and collected during a presentation.

► Is the fight-or-flight response bad?

Everyone will experience the fight-or-flight response at times, to varying degrees. Usually, it's natural, healthy, and not a problem. However, when the fight-or-flight response leads to excessive anger, anxiety, prolonged stress, or other problems, it might be time to intervene.

► How can I manage the fight-or-flight response?

In addition to the fight-or-flight response, your body can also initiate an opposing **relaxation response**. Many symptoms of the relaxation response counteract fight-or-flight, such as slower and deeper breathing, relaxed muscles, and a slower heart rate. The relaxation response can be triggered by using relaxation skills, such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation.



ANGER SKILLS WORKSHEETS

OCRCC



Anger Thermometer Guide

- I. What is an Anger Thermometer?
- II. Anger Thermometer Exploration Questions
- III. Using a Completed Anger Thermometer
 - a. Anger Warning Signs
 - b. Coping Strategies by Anger Level
- IV. References

The anger thermometer is a technique that will help your clients learn about their anger symptoms and warning signs, and how these progress as anger escalates.

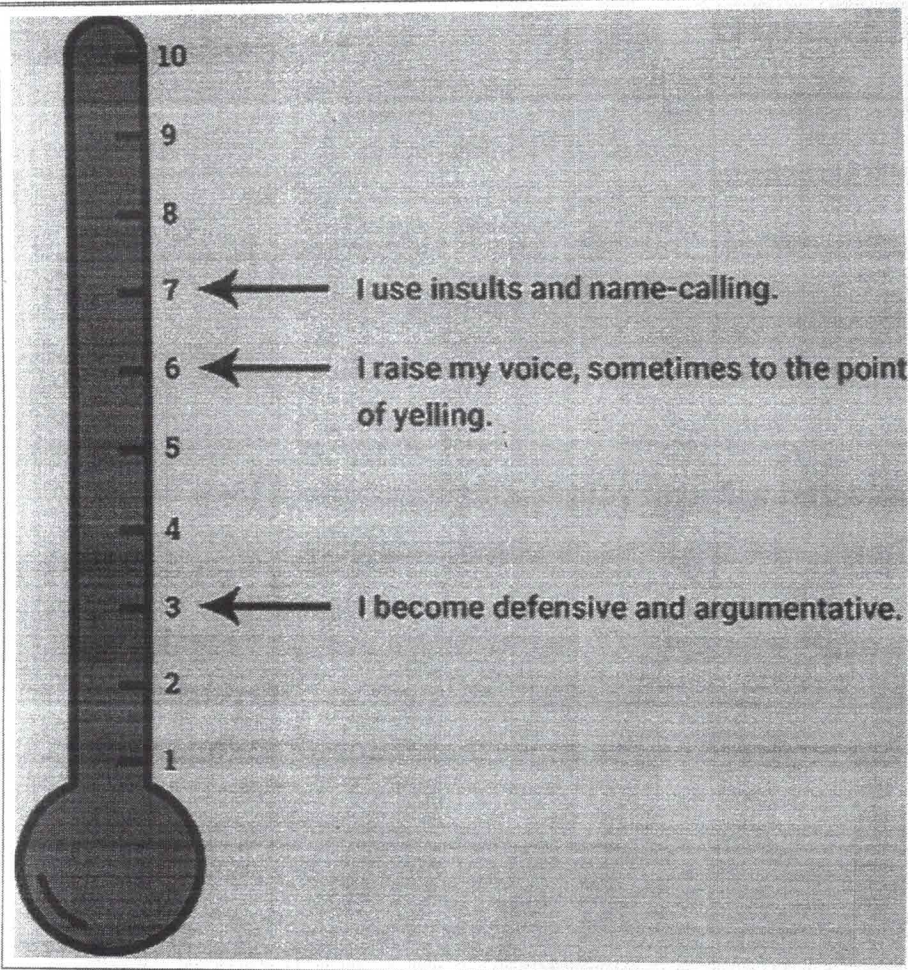
An anger thermometer is a 10-point scale where a "10" represents a person's maximum anger, and a "1" represents no anger at all. Symptoms of anger—such as balled-up fists, argumentativeness, or frustration—are recorded on the anger thermometer at the point where they begin.

Anger Thermometer

worksheet

Example: Someone who is just starting to feel angry might act defensively and argumentative. As they become more angry, they become aggressive by raising their voice

and using insults. Here's how these symptoms are recorded:



You may choose to use the anger thermometer to discuss anger triggers, as well. On the thermometer, record triggers based upon their intensity. This is a helpful way to associate specific symptoms and reactions with triggers.

Tip: Instruct your clients to begin by filling out the two extremes of their anger thermometer. What are they like at their most angry ("10") and at their least angry ("1")? These extremes tend to be the easiest to fill in, and they set the limits that all other symptoms will fall between.

Anger Thermometer Exploration Questions

Therapists can help their clients complete anger thermometers by using questions and prompts that help them identify anger symptoms. In the following prompts, the numbers can be replaced with any number on the scale.

Exploration Questions

- “Tell me about a time you were at a 10 on the anger thermometer.”
- “When you’re at a 6 on the anger thermometer, what sort of things are you thinking about?”
- “How do you feel differently when you are at a 1 on the anger thermometer compared to a 5?”
- “If a stranger saw you when you were at an 8 on the anger thermometer, how would they describe you?”
- “Try thinking about your symptoms in reverse: What do you lose as you go up the anger thermometer? For example, maybe you are friendly and talkative at a 1, but not at a 5.”

Using a Completed Anger Thermometer

Anger Warning Signs

Oftentimes, people feel that they “snap,” instantly going from having no anger to having a full-blown outburst. Using an anger thermometer can help your clients recognize their anger warning signs. Anger warning signs are the earliest symptoms of anger, which often go unnoticed, but can be used to alert a person when their anger is growing.

Anger Warning Signs

worksheet

It’s important to help your client take note of even the most subtle warning signs (the ones that appear when your client is below a “5” on the thermometer). Be thorough when completing the lower half of the anger thermometer, because recognizing these symptoms can be the deciding factor in stopping anger, or letting it grow out of control.

Anger warning signs are different for everyone, but often include some of the following. What are your client’s early anger warning signs?

becoming argumentative	slightly raising voice	going quiet or "shutting down"
sweating	becoming defensive	feeling hot

nagging about the problem	pacing	using personal attacks
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Coping Strategies by Anger Level

Use the completed anger thermometer to plan coping strategies according to anger intensity. At what point should someone use a relaxation skill, and at what point should someone simply walk away? What coping skills should be used in the case of extreme anger, when a situation has grown out of control?

For example, if a person's "3" on the anger thermometer is "becoming argumentative", a good coping strategy may be to practice deep breathing. It is likely safe to practice a relaxation skill at this low level of anger, and deep breathing is an incompatible behavior with arguing (you cannot argue while practicing deep breathing).

However, if the situation escalates to a "5" and is at risk of escalating further, it may be best for the person to walk away. At an "8", it is probably more appropriate to make a plan to call a friend, or resort to a safety plan.

Keep in mind that the best coping strategies vary from person to person, but using an anger thermometer provides an excellent framework for discussion.

Anger Warning Signs

Sometimes anger can affect what you say or do before you even recognize how you're feeling. You may become so used to the feeling of anger that you don't notice it, sort of like how you can hear the sound of an air condition, or the humming of a refrigerator, but block it from your mind.

Even if you aren't aware of your anger, it influences how you behave. The first step to managing anger is learning to recognize your personal warning signs that will tip you off about how you're feeling.

How do you react when you feel angry? Some of these warning signs might start when you are only a little irritated, and others might start when you are very angry. *Circle the warning signs that apply to you.*

Mind goes blank	Insult the other person	Face turns red
Body or hands shake	Start sweating	Throw things
Heavy or fast breathing	Stare at the other person aggressively	Scowl or make an angry face
Scream, raise voice, or yell	Clench fists	Feel sick to the stomach
Punch walls	Feel hot	Become aggressive
Become argumentative	Go quiet and "shut down"	Crying
Pace around the room	Headaches	Can't stop thinking about the problem

Anger Stop Signs



Anger starts out small, and slowly grows. When your anger is small, you might not even notice it. This is when you are just starting to feel upset about something, but it still doesn't seem like a big deal. Someone at this point might say they are "annoyed".

Draw what you look like when your anger is *small*. This is when you're just a little bit angry.



If your anger has the chance to grow too big, it becomes hard to control. It's like a car without brakes, crashing through everything in its path. It's very hard to stop. Someone who's this angry might yell, hit, cry, or try to break things.

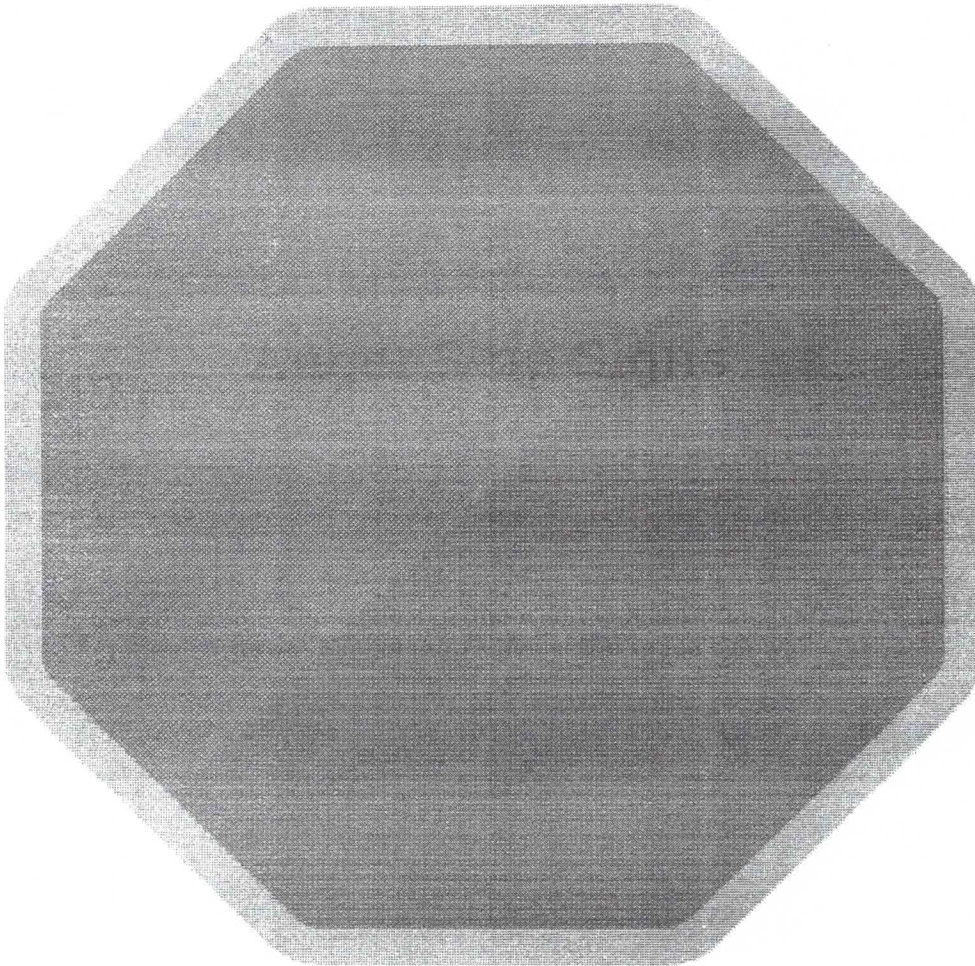
Draw what you look like when your anger is *big*. This is when you're very angry.

Anger Stop Signs



Anger stop signs are clues that your body uses to let you know your anger is growing. These clues start to appear while your anger is still small. If you notice them in time, you can hit the brakes, and take control of your anger before it grows too big.

Everyone has their own anger stop signs. It's important to learn what yours are, so you can spot them in the future. Write your anger stop signs in the space below.



Common Anger Stop Signs

My face feels hot.

I start to shake.

I raise my voice.

I go quiet.

My eyes get watery.

I try to bother people.

I can't think straight.

I feel annoyed.

I want to hit something.

Anger Management Skills

Recognize your Anger Early

If you're yelling, it's probably too late. Learn the warning signs that you're getting angry so you can change the situation quickly. Some common signs are feeling hot, raising voices, balling of fists, shaking, and arguing.

Take a Timeout

Temporarily leave the situation that is making you angry. If other people are involved, explain to them that you need a few minutes alone to calm down. Problems usually aren't solved when one or more people are angry.

Deep Breathing

Take a minute to just breathe. Count your breaths: four seconds inhaling, four seconds holding your breath, and four seconds exhaling. Really keep track of time, or you might cheat yourself! The counting helps take your mind off the situation as well.

Exercise

Exercise serves as an emotional release. Chemicals released in your brain during the course of exercise create a sense of relaxation and happiness.

Express your Anger

Once you've calmed down, express your frustration. Try to be assertive, but not confrontational. Expressing your anger will help avoid the same problems in the future.

Think of the Consequences

What will be the outcome of your next anger-fueled action? Will arguing convince the other person that you're right? Will you be happier after the fight?

Visualization

Imagine a relaxing experience. What do you see, smell, hear, feel, and taste? Maybe you're on a beach with sand between your toes and waves crashing in the distance. Spend a few minutes imagining every detail of your relaxing scene.

Daily Mood Chart

	Happy	Sad	Mad	Tired	Excited	Anxious	Other	Notes
6 AM - 8 AM								
8 AM - 10 AM								
10 AM - 12 PM								
12 PM - 2 PM								
2 PM - 4 PM								
4 PM - 6 PM								
6 PM - 8 PM								
8 PM - 10 PM								
10 PM - 12 AM								
12 AM - 2 AM								
2 AM - 4 AM								
4 AM - 6 AM								