

ANGER (PART 1): IDENTIFYING OUR STYLE

GOALS:

- To identify different anger responses.
- To begin to analyze certain aspects of our anger.

RATIONALE:

This lesson focuses on how we respond when we're angry. This topic is explored in two sessions: (1) expressing our anger, (2) steps leading to anger resolution.

Anger and other feelings are expressed differently from one culture to another. You may want to spend time in this or the following lesson exploring these differences. Such discussion will help participants put their own styles into larger perspective.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

Flipchart, markers, six separate signs posted around the room, each describing an anger style: (1) Bottle and Blast, (2) Bottle and Cap, (3) TNT, (4) Cold Shoulder/Iceberg, (5) Nag and Carp, (6) Kick the Dog, copies of **Anger Situation Worksheet** for each participant.



METHOD:**Warm up: Anger Responses**

Have participants fill out their responses to the following statement:

"When I am angry I _____, and immediately I feel
(behaviour)
_____, and later I feel _____."
(emotion) (emotion, if different from first.)

For example: When I am angry I yell/sulk, etc. and immediately I feel foolish/guilty, etc.

Exercise 1: Anger Styles

Post signs around the room representing the different anger styles (see *What's Your Style?*). Define each style by asking the group what each one means to them. Ask participants to consider which is their predominant style. Then ask participants to move to the sign which most closely characterizes their predominant anger style. Discuss the following questions and record the answers.

Questions to Consider:

- What do your responses tell you about your predominant anger style?
- Which of the categories best describe you?

Theory: See Theory Box

Exercise 2: Styles

Divide participants into triads or group them according to their predominant anger style. Ask them to discuss the following questions and record the answers:

- Where did you learn this anger style? (father, mother, peers)
- What are the pay-offs of this style? (e.g. cold shoulder might prevent a confrontation)
- What are the negative consequences of this style? (e.g. cold shoulder might lead to a lack of intimacy, loneliness)
- How does this anger style affect you physically? (e.g. headaches, ulcers)
- How do you imagine others are affected by your style? (e.g. hurt, defensive)

Return to the total group and have each triad share highlights from their group.

Exercise 3: Anger Situation Worksheet

Using the ***Anger Situation Worksheet*** as a guide, ask participants to think of a situation in which they are experiencing anger. Instruct participants to complete the statements which seem most relevant to their situation. After participants have spent some time working privately on their ***Anger Situation Worksheets***, have them pair up and help each other to clarify and define the situation further. Ask participants to bring back their ***Anger Situation Worksheet*** to the next session.

EVALUATION:

THEORY BOX

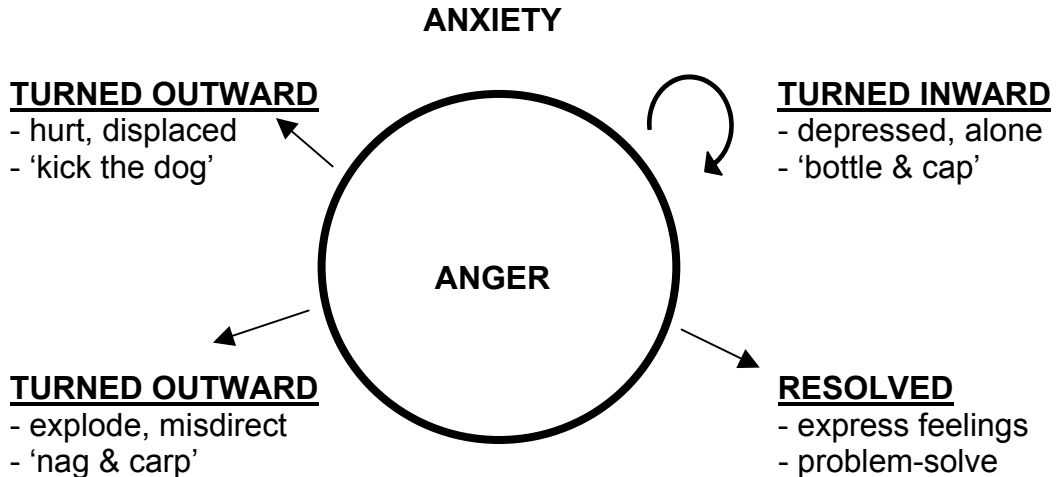
TWO COMMON SOURCES OF ANGER

THREAT

- power issue

FRUSTRATION

- unmet needs



- ◆ To help us better understand our anger, it is helpful to simplify the topic by identifying two common sources – **Threat** and Frustration. The first implies that our personal power is being threatened in some way, while the second implies that our needs are not being met.
- ◆ We then feel either – **Helpless** or Hurt which leads to a state of **Anxiety**. Since anxiety is an intolerable state, we find different ways to relieve the tension:
 - If we feel we deserve the situation, we may begin to feel guilty and blame ourselves. Rather than discharging the anger, we turn it inward and become angry with ourselves, which leads to more anxiety and further feelings of hurt and helplessness.
 - Alternatively, we may blame everything outside of ourselves for our situation and discharge our feelings by yelling, crying, throwing things or even hitting others who may or may not be involved.

THEORY BOX cont'd

- ◆ Some of the more productive and positive ways to discharge our feelings and anxieties are through physical exercise and verbal communication. If we don't find some way to release the tension or share our feelings, we may not fully learn from the experience.
- ◆ The most satisfying and long term way of dealing with anger is to share with the person *most* connected with our anger, in a problem-solving manner – see ANGER, PART 2. However, it is important to remember that such direct methods of sharing may be culturally inappropriate for some individuals. Often a third party is used as a go-between the two parties. In a diverse society, we need to be sensitive to the variety of ways people express their feelings.

WHAT'S YOUR STYLE?



Bottle and Blast:

You bottle up your anger and then let it out all at once in an explosive manner.

Bottle and Cap:

You keep it all inside.

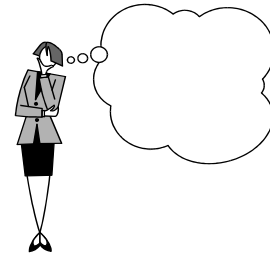


TNT:

You usually explode right away; you have a very short fuse.

Cold Shoulder/Iceberg:

You are cold and usually give people 'the silent treatment'.



Nag and Carp:

You are constantly nagging someone to do something.

Kick the Dog:

You misdirect your anger and take it out on something or someone else.



ANGER SITUATION WORKSHEET

1. The situation in which I find myself angry is _____
2. The person most connected with this situation is _____
because he/she is _____
3. Basically I am frustrated with _____
and/or threatened by _____
4. My expectations are _____
5. I am feeling powerless because _____
6. What this says about me is _____
7. My anger affecting me in this way _____
8. What I need to share with is _____
9. If I didn't share it with _____ it would mean _____
10. If I did share, it could mean _____
11. The worst thing that could happen is _____
12. What I have usually done in this situation is _____
13. What I plan to do now is _____