



OWNING & DISCHARGING ANGER

Owning Anger Involves:

Taking personal responsibility for your feelings and for your actions resulting from your feelings.

Basic Rules of Owning Anger:

- Do your best to get away from the persistent thought that someone “made you” feel angry. People will do things that you don’t like or that offend or hurt you but ultimately when it’s all said and done, managing your anger is your responsibility and it originates within you. For example, why can one person do the same exact thing to two people but one may get angry and one person may not? It is because anger is an internal feeling and it is personal for all of us based on our thoughts, values and experiences thus we are responsible for how we deal with it.
- Anger is NOT an excuse for aggression or acting out. Example: “Why did you beat him up?”....”Because he made me angry” – Not OK!!!!!!
- Anger can exist without aggression. (Everyone gets angry but not everyone is aggressive)
- Avoid blaming and excuse making when owning anger, for example:

“He made me do it”

“If only you would...”

In life it is inevitable that others at times may be insensitive, rude, disappointing, inconsiderate, unfair, and even at times mean. That is a reality but nevertheless, in spite of those types of situations, it is still possible to manage your words and actions without letting anger take over control of you

BASIC COPING SKILLS FOR OWNING ANGER:

You’ve heard it before (because it works if you practice it) - Taking a time out to think BEFORE reacting is the simplest and most effective anger management tool. (I.e. count to 10, breathe, and relax). Do not make important decisions (that you may regret) based solely on emotion, especially when that emotion is anger.

Think about how many times your anger got you into trouble you could have avoided if you would just have stopped to think first, before acting...

Use **CONSEQUENTIAL THINKING SKILLS**: Always consider the repercussions before reacting to anger...this is easier said than done, but it emphasizes the need to take time outs and to self-calm before responding to anger to give yourself a chance to **THINK CLEARLY**



DISCHARGING ANGER

Unhealthy Ways to Discharge Anger: (discuss examples that may or may not apply to you)

1. **Direct Aggression:** (verbal or physical or both) Hurting those who hurt you
2. **Displaced Aggression:** (also can be verbal or physical or both) lashing out at an innocent third party. (I.e. picking an argument with spouse after a bad day at work)
3. **Passive Aggression:** Striking back in sneaky, subtle ways such as revenge, sarcasm, indirect attempts to hurt others feelings.
4. **Acting Out:** Doing totally unrelated negative things based on angry feelings (i.e. using drugs/alcohol, getting into trouble at school/work, vandalism, road rage, getting in trouble with the law)

Healthy Ways to Discharge Anger: (come up with specific strategies that can help you)

1. **Sublimating:** Diffusing anger through socially acceptable or healthy areas (i.e. sports, exercise)
2. **Coping and Expressing:**
 - A. **Direct:** Assertively (not aggressively) telling others how you feel in a calm, respectful way
 - B. **Indirect:** Talking about it with an uninvolved but concerned person or group, (“getting it off of your chest”) – Try to do this with someone who helps calm you down and rethink the situation in a more positive light. Simply just “venting” to someone who fuels your fire even more can backfire

KEY OBSTACLE: Breaking Bad Habits – To effectively manage anger one must make a conscious effort to CHANGE old negative anger expression patterns. It takes time and effort and does not happen overnight, but it can be done!

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Who here thinks that they may have a problem with anger? How do you know?
2. How does your family deal with anger? What works? What doesn't?
3. What are some of the things that you can do to reduce anger outbursts in your personal life and within your family?
4. What are some of the obstacles that may get in the way of learning to better manage anger in the future and what can be done about them?
5. What is one thing each of us as individuals can work on changing to better manage anger as a result of today's group?