



Journal:

# Anger

06

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# Anger

## Anger 1: Use it and Lose it!

(video: 16 minutes)

Review:

(Best accomplished having done *Self-Esteem and Goal Setting*)

Anger gives us strength, power, motivation and energy

Helps us protect others and ourselves

Necessary part of our emotional life

Distortion of anger

Anger is wrong, inappropriate and should never be experienced  
(assertiveness problems)

Overactive anger

### Discussion/Reflection:

Is anger a necessary and normal emotion?

Do I have anger problems?

Would the people closest to me think I have a problem?

Would I benefit from viewing the *Assertiveness* presentation?

## Excessive Anger Evidences:

- Violence
- “Stewing”
- “Road rage”
- Irritability and resentment
- Interpersonal problems
- Impeding love

## Purpose of anger:

- Motivation
- Energy
- Direction
- Assertiveness
- Power
- Opportunity

## Need for intentional release

## Causes

### 1. Biological

- Head injury
- Cognitive impairment
- Thyroid
- Chronic medical conditions
- Insomnia
- Medications
- Legal “drugs”-caffeine, alcohol, nicotine

## Discussion/Reflection:

Biological Factors?

2. Fear

Present and past

Threats

Insecurity

Danger

3. Frustration

4. Injury

Physical

Emotional

5. Humiliation

6. Loss

7. Mania

Discussion/Reflection:

Frustration

Injury

Humiliation

Loss

Mania

8. Psychotic symptoms

9. Illegal substances

10. Modeling (observing others)

11. Anger at ourselves

Discussion/Reflection:

Psychotic symptoms  
Illegal substances  
Modeling (observing others)  
Anger at ourselves

## Anger 2

(video: 10 minutes)

Violation of Values

Intense and personal

“Special case”

Why would anyone else’s perspective be considered?

I have a “right” to be this angry

Letting go is not condoning

“Justice”

Someone needs to pay

They need to hurt as badly or worse than I do (almost impossible!!)

Discussion/Reflection:

Sources / causes of anger

Violation of our values:

1. Unique or special case
2. Unrealistic expectation of justice
3. Conflicts about letting it go

Letting go is not condoning

Personally destructive- "Anger is like drinking a cup of poison and waiting for your enemy to die."

Possible solutions:

Get more sleep

Deal with substance issues

Deal with trauma

Others:

Dealing with violation of values

Anger is based in our values. We have been “wronged” in some way so it makes sense that we are angry and that it will be difficult to let it go. It will destroy us if we hang on to it however so perhaps we can “store it” in a non-toxic form.

Preparation:

We are going to write about the experiences that have made us the angriest. It may be necessary to write about several events, situations, people, etc.  
Your “List” - (all people and situations, then and now) of all the things you are intensely angry about:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

(Continue as needed)

## **Exercise**

Describe any suspicion of a physical or medical reason for being angry.  
(For example, head injury, cognitive impairment, chronic medical conditions, insomnia/sleep problems, medications, caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, other drugs or addictions, seizures, hormonal or other reasons):

My main sources of anger:

The person (people) I would most like to hurt / kill is (are):

My plans for how I might hurt these people are:

The things I have found to be most effective for controlling my anger are:

Rate the following items using a 0 (none) to 10 (extreme) scale:

- \_\_\_\_\_ The severity of my anger problem
- \_\_\_\_\_ How often I have thoughts of harming others
- \_\_\_\_\_ My overall risk of harming others

The extent to which I:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Would like to be less angry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Feel like anger is in my control
- \_\_\_\_\_ Am experienced/trained in relaxation/calming activities (when angry)

The extent to which my anger is based in: (0-10)

- \_\_\_\_\_ Watching and learning it as I grew up
- \_\_\_\_\_ Comparison of myself to others
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unrealistic expectations of myself
- \_\_\_\_\_ Fear
- \_\_\_\_\_ Frustration
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hurt/Injury
- \_\_\_\_\_ Humiliation
- \_\_\_\_\_ Loss
- \_\_\_\_\_ Mania
- \_\_\_\_\_ Psychotic symptoms
- \_\_\_\_\_ Illegal substances (cocaine, opiates, marijuana, benzodiazepines, etc.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being addicted
- \_\_\_\_\_ Being angry with myself
- \_\_\_\_\_ Violation of my values (being "wronged")
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other people being critical or harsh
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other people demanding too much of me
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other people not respecting or supporting me
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other people letting me down/abandoning me
- \_\_\_\_\_ Bad things in the future
- \_\_\_\_\_ Time pressures
- \_\_\_\_\_ Trouble saying "no"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Money problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Legal problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Sexual problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Immediate family relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Extended family/friends relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Job situations/relationships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Trauma or abuse

The extent to which:

- \_\_\_\_\_ I destroy things when I'm angry
- \_\_\_\_\_ I hit things when I'm angry
- \_\_\_\_\_ I hit people when I'm angry
- \_\_\_\_\_ I experience "road rage"
- \_\_\_\_\_ It would be "wrong" to let go of anger or be calm or at peace in the midst of the things that currently make me angry.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Anger could be the source of some of my physical problems
- \_\_\_\_\_ Anger could be why I haven't tolerated medicines very well
- \_\_\_\_\_ I literally pull my hair out with anger
- \_\_\_\_\_ I bite my nails with anger
- \_\_\_\_\_ I cry because of anger
- \_\_\_\_\_ I lose sleep because of anger
- \_\_\_\_\_ I drink or use drugs to deal with anger

## Anger 3

(video: 14 minutes)

### Step 1: (Keep it)

Capture exactly how angry you are in some potentially permanent form. Journaling is the most frequent way this is done. Write about each of the things you have listed. Hold nothing back. Use whatever language comes to you, color, use art, etc. Write exactly how angry you are so that, if you ever wanted to be this angry in the future, all you would have to do is read this over again and you could be. You might want to write this as a letter (that you don't intend to send) to the person or situation.

The first thing I am angry about is...

or

Dear \_\_\_\_\_, I am angry at you about \_\_\_\_\_ ... because \_\_\_\_\_...

(Some people alternatively like to scream into a tape recorder or express themselves in art, but do whatever technique you think will work best for you now.)

(Continued on blank sheets as needed)

Step 1: (Keep it) - continued

## Step 2 - Lessons learned

Anger is a useful (perhaps God-given) ability and is there to help protect our loved ones and ourselves and make the world a better place, so there are valuable “lessons learned” about our anger that are worth capturing about this experience.

My lessons learned from my anger are: (e.g. when I have a chance, I am going to help, donate, advocate for, etc. people that have suffered like me. I’m going to stop smoking, drinking, etc. since I have realized how dependent I was on those things. I’m going to spend more time with my family, etc.)

(Continued on blank sheets as needed)

### Discussion/Reflection/Application:

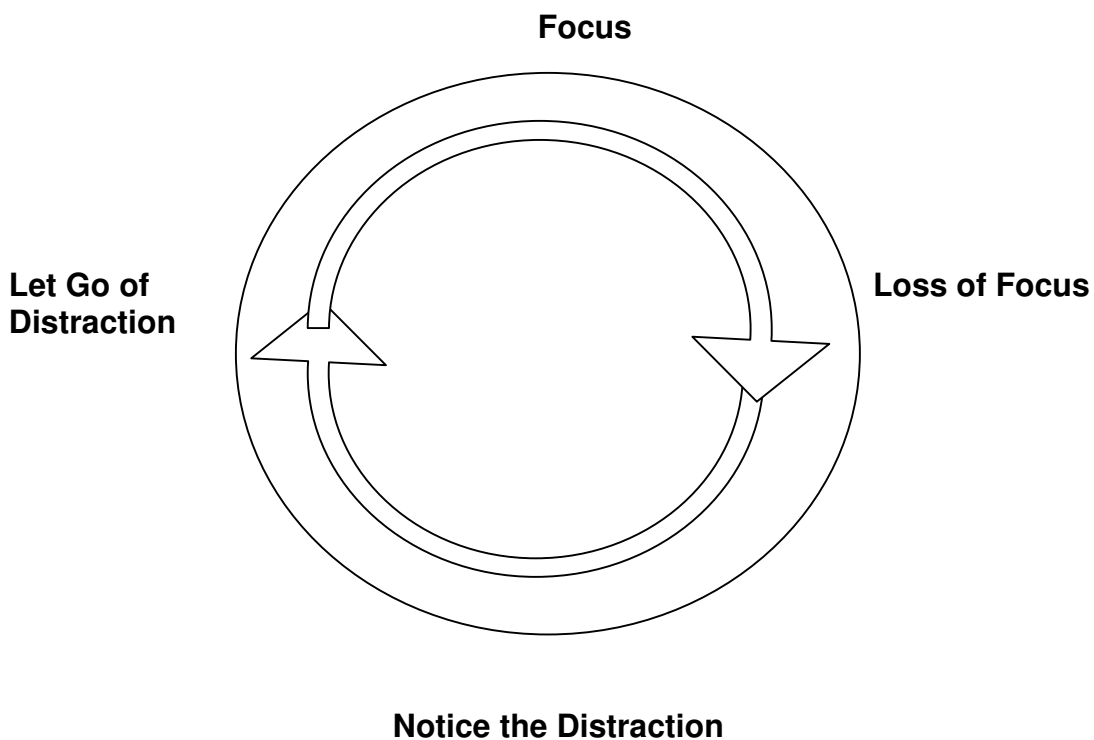
Keep it

Lessons learned

### Step 3- Letting go of the anger

The anger is going to destroy me if I don't let it go. (Plus, it is probably not affecting the person I'm angry at anyway.) So, now, that I have fully validated my feelings through step 1, (plus I could be angry in the future if I really wanted to) and having gotten from it what I need right now (step 2), I am going to let it go.

### Circle of Liberation (Terry Fralich, LCPC)



### Discussion/Reflection/Application:

Circle of Liberation

Other ways:

Writing “as if” your goal has been accomplished

Visualization

Artistic expression

Quotes

4<sup>th</sup> Step - (Optional) - Destroy what you created in the 1<sup>st</sup> step  
(Don't do it too soon)

Discussion/Reflection/Application:

I write this description of the process and how it feels to let go of my  
anger:

*Spiritually inclusive segment:*

Anger as a God-given emotion

Care not to devalue it

Could label as “toxic”

Forgiveness

Reconciliation and restitution

Let justice be delivered by God

*Discussion/Reflection/Application:*