



Journal:

Essentials Collection

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Reproducible sheets:

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A free downloadable (PDF) version of this journal can be found at www.MyTherapySession.com

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:

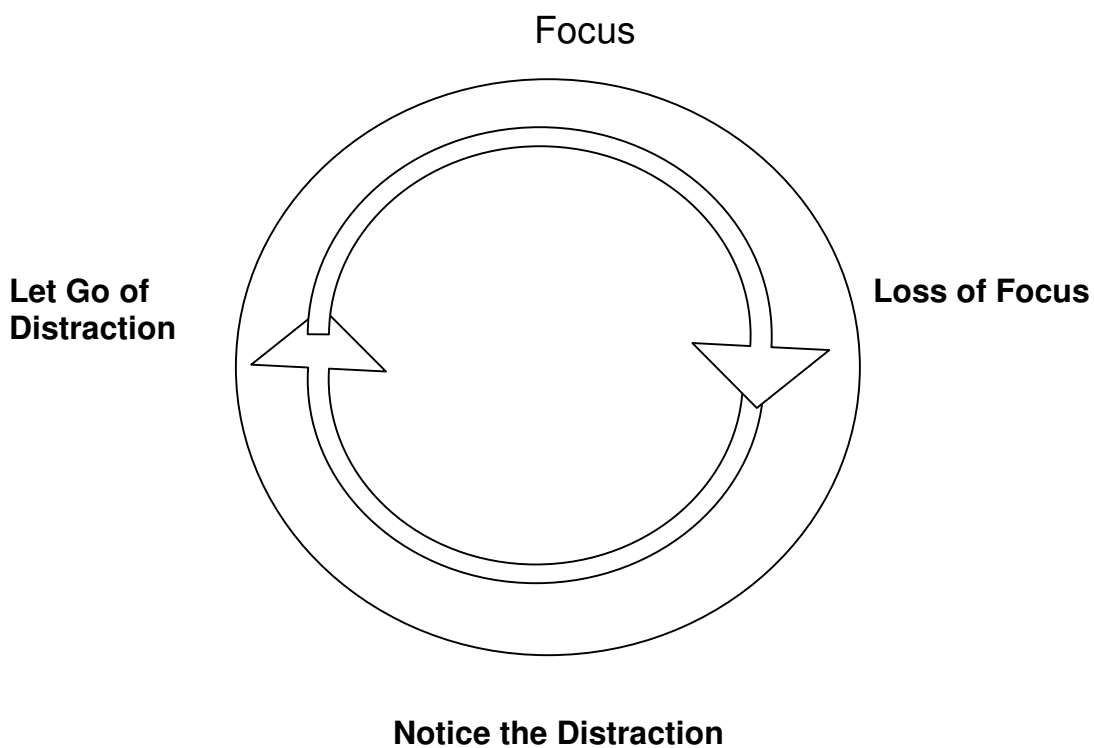
Keep it

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

4th Step - (Optional) - Destroy what you created in the 1st 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:

Pain 1

(video: 15 minutes)

Notes:

Non-addictive reduction of suffering:

Pain is _____; suffering is _____.

Discussion/Reflection:

If you cannot take away the pain, would reducing the suffering be good enough?

Objectively rate your level of pain and suffering.

Possible interventions for pain/disability:

1. Antidepressants and anticonvulsants []
2. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy []
3. Diet and exercise []
4. Distractions []
5. Doing less []
6. Endogenous opiate mechanisms []
7. Energy strategies []
8. Gate theory []
9. Herbals and complimentary medicine []
10. Imagery []
11. Interpersonal issues []

12. Non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs []

13. Steroids and surgical means []

14. Chiropractic/manipulation []

15. Related problems []

16. Sleep improvement []

17. Smoking cessation []

18. Tension reduction []

19. Meaning and purpose []

20. Others []

Can you do something about suffering?

Self-esteem and confidence concerns?

Self-Esteem and Goal Setting track []

Discussion/Reflection:

Would the reduction of your suffering be good enough?

Would reducing suffering improve things for you? Would it make it better?

Is it at least worth investing your time and energy into this possibility?

Pain 2

(video: 7 minutes)

Contemplation phase:

What are your motivations for change?

Pros:

Cons:

What losses might you incur in letting go of suffering?

Do you want to do something about your suffering problem?

Pain 3

(video: 29 minutes)

Preparation phase:

Examine various interventions

The important thing is to start!

Discussion/Reflection:

Rate your pain and suffering again.

What date will you begin your program?

My next steps will be:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

(Optional) Spiritually inclusive segment:

Cures for Insomnia

(video: 19 minutes)

Sleep and insomnia perceptions

Hours expected:

Times for sleeping:

Unrealistic expectations:

Substances:

Caffeine

Alcohol

Nicotine

Others

Medications:

Eating Causes:

Obesity

Anorexia/Hunger

Sleep Hygiene:

Alarms

Sleep environment:

Bed

Clothing

Temperature

Darkness

Quiet

Clocks

Ritual

Habits of work, eating, television

Napping

Avoid stress/stimulation

Write down then attend to what was bothering you the next day:

Medical conditions:

Psychiatric conditions:

Screens:

Other resources:

Self-Esteem and Goal Setting track

Addictions track

Diet and Exercise track

Anxiety management

Depression management

Trauma / Abuse

Loss 1

(video: 12 minutes)

Notes:

Everyone experiences loss

Blame can block grieving

Discussion/Reflection:

Is there anything I am blaming myself for when I look at my losses?

Why? (More in spiritually inclusive section)

Think about the following statement:

“Holding onto these things and punishing myself is only going to drain me of the energy I need to fix my situation right now.”

My reactions:

(Continue on blank sheets if needed)

Weaving the loss into who I am and how I will now live:

Discussion/Reflection:

Now, free of self-blame and shame, this is how I am going to weave these losses into who I am and how I am going to live the rest of my life:

“Normal Grief”

Time will heal

Shock and denial

Pain in vulnerability itself

Life changes forever

“Presence” of the lost

Anniversary reactions

Holidays are difficult

“Grief attacks”

Hopelessness and wish to be reunited

Associations

Discussion/Reflection:

Anger

Discussion/Reflection:

Is there any anger associated with the loss?

Loss 2

(video: 14 minutes)

Pathological Grief

1. Guilt

2. Blame

3. Clustered losses-Too many losses at one time

Attention is drawn to the latest one

“Should” be over the previous one(s)

Each loss requires:

Getting past the blame

Weave loss into how you will now live

4. Missed “Goodbyes”

Imagery potential

Letters

5. Honorary or “Memorial” brokenness

Caution about visiting a grave too frequently

There is greater honor in living with a memory than in the death of your own future.

Discussion/Reflection:

Clustered losses

Missed “Goodbyes”

“Honorary” or “Memorial” brokenness

6. Anger at the time of loss

7. Dying “Promise” or “Contract”

8. Rebuilding without primary support

Discussion/Reflection:

Anger at the time of death

Dying “Contracts”

Loss of primary support

9. Loss without recognition

10. Other losses

Medications and drugs during loss

Discussion/Reflection:

Unrecognized or unsupported loss

Specialized losses

Medications and drugs

Spiritually Inclusive segment:

(First, let go of blame)

Meaning / purpose - Why?

Fair?

Anger?

Bargaining with God

Survivor guilt

Ultimate reasons for loss:

Discussion/Reflection:

Assertiveness and Boundaries 1

(In context of Self-Esteem and having dealt with Trauma/Abuse)
(video: 17 minutes)

Assertiveness starts with the right to _____ and the right to _____.

Discussion/Reflection:

Can you accept your feelings?

Do you have the right to “be”?

The world is _____.

No one has your interests in mind like _____.

_____ are the sole owner of your time and physical space.

We need to be _____, _____, and _____.

Your space in the world - The pursuit of strength

Right and opportunity to use our strength

Potential for “war”

Our ultimate goal is for _____

Discussion/Reflection:

World is unsafe

You are the sole owner of your time and space

Use of strength

Potential for “war”

Ultimate goal is authentic connection in relationship

Process of change

Discussion/Reflection:

Have you done the needed “self-esteem” and/or trauma work to be here?

Contemplation

Motivations:

My potential losses:

The _____ you is always more _____ and
_____ than any false self.

Discussion/Reflection:

Motivations

Losses

Your desire

“I do have a problem and I am going to do something about it.”

Assertiveness 2

(video: 16 minutes)

Preparation:

Partnership

Physical preparation

Psychological preparation

Assertiveness is:

H _____

A _____

R _____

D _____

Discussion/Reflection:

HARD

Passive – Dishonest - Inappropriate

Aggressive – Disrespectful - Inappropriate

Empathic Assertive Responses:

Confrontational Assertive Responses:

Discussion/Reflection:

Empathic

Confrontational

Broken record

Future protections

Most difficult situations

Speed

Discussion/Reflection:

Practice

Exercise

Boundaries:

Physical

Violations

Zones of comfort

Discussion/Reflection:

Do I struggle with physical boundaries?

Verbal boundaries?

Sexual boundaries?

“Walls” or being overly trusting?

Are they adaptable to the situation?

Comfort

Practice

Resolve

Personal change

Reactions to change

Discussion/Reflection:

MY PLAN

The change(s) I will make are:

Why I am making these changes:

What other benefits to I hope to achieve with these changes?

Who will I turn to when I need help?

How will I know I am succeeding?

When do I want to start this change?

How will I learn from my mistakes?

Rewards?

Expectations?

“Going too far”

Spiritually inclusive segment:

Challenges in faith communities

1. Absolute _____
2. Absolute _____
3. Absolute _____ and _____

Discussion/Reflection: