

Anger Management Workshop Summary and Worksheet

Empathic Counselling Centre

Juliann Rasanayagam M.A., Registered Psychotherapist

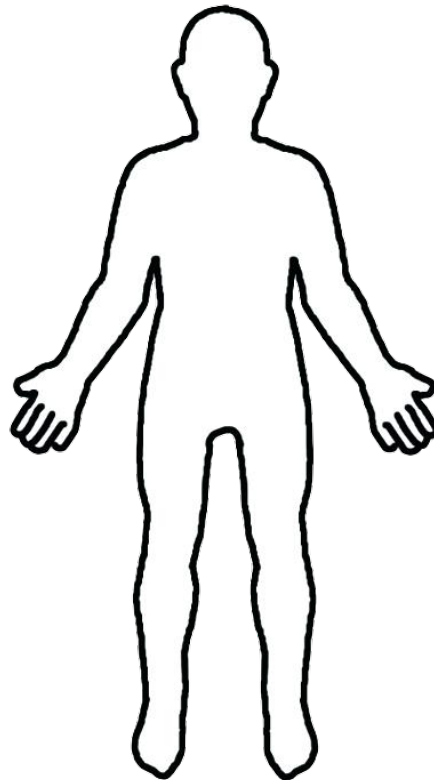
February 28, 2018

Anger Physiology Summary

The Fight or Flight Response is your physical anger response

- Your sensory organs (eyes, ears etc.) are always sending information to your brain
- Your brain interprets this as “good for me” or “bad for me”
- If “bad for me” is detected, it jumps into “fight or flight mode”
- Hormones are released from your brain and trigger the adrenal glands to release adrenaline
- Adrenaline increases your heart rate, causes your blood pressure to rise, constricts your blood vessels, and dilates air passages
- Pupils dilate and become locked on your target
- You are now ready to fight or flee

Think about the last time you became mad, where did you feel it? Use the diagram to label changes in your body when you were angry.



Use your physiological changes as a cue!

- Remember that anger is a response that creates physical changes that encourages fight or flight
- Therefore, to turn off fight or flight, we have to **reverse** these physical changes

| Reversing Physiological Changes in Anger | |
|---|---|
| <u>Physiological Change</u> | <u>Antidote</u> |
| Increased heart rate | Deep breathing |
| Tight chest | Deep breathing |
| Shallow breathing | Deep breathing |
| Clenched hands | Muscle relaxation – unclench and clench |
| Raised shoulders | Muscle relaxation- release and raise |
| Excessive energy | Physical activity- run up and down the stairs, sit-ups, push ups, running, walking fast |

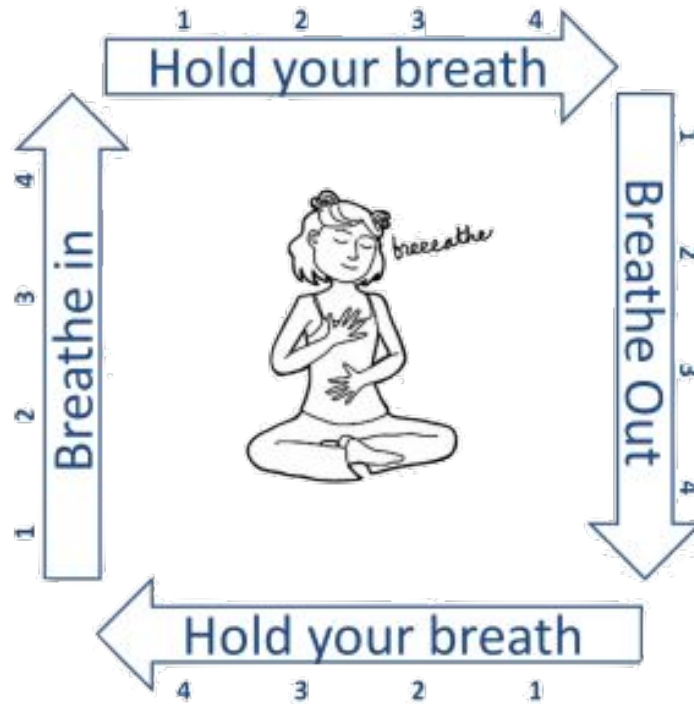
Complete the following antidote statement:

When I become angry, I feel anger in my (list parts of body where you notice changes)

Anger is a fight or flight response. In order to help me manage my anger, I have to **reverse** these changes. To do this, I have to (use antidotes above)

Use this statement and place it in your anger toolkit (at the end)

Squared Breathing Technique

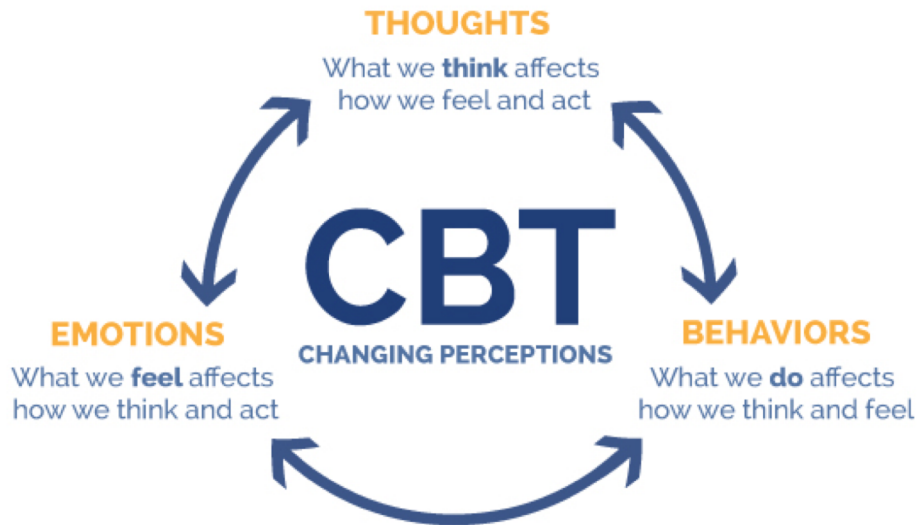


Summary of Physiological Anger Management Tools:

- Reversing physiological changes in anger (see table above)
- Squared Breathing Technique
- Personalized antidote statement

Anger and Your Mind Summary

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT)



- The nature of your thoughts can influence your emotions and behaviours
- Inappropriate thoughts can result in inappropriate emotions and behaviours
- Appropriate thoughts result in appropriate emotions and behaviours
- We have a natural tendency to think worst case scenario
- Our goal is to override the initial negative thought and replace it with a realistic thought
- Our initial thought is *usually* a negative thought: Negative Automatic Thought (NAT)
- CBT forces us to take an alternative perspective at the same situation
- This alternative perspective is based on reality – not necessarily positive
- We call this the Realistic Alternative Thought (RAT)

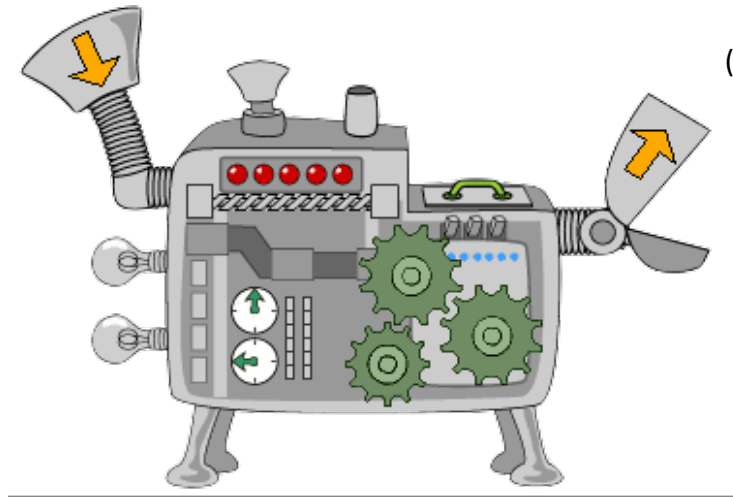
Summary of Cognitive Anger Management Tools:

- Use the Rule of Five- When you become upset, ask yourself, “Is this going to matter in 5 years? If the answer is NO, don’t spend more than 5 minutes on it and let it go. If the answer is YES, do something about it
- Discover your core belief- “I’m not good enough” or “I’m a bad person”
- Look for evidence to contradict your thoughts
- Replace NATs with RATS.

Emotion Decoder

Triggering Event

Primary Emotion
(Specific Emotion)



Secondary Emotion
(one of the six main emotions)

Use the Emotion Decoder to identify the relevant secondary emotion and then break it down into a primary emotion. Use the Emotional Description Word Wheel above for hints.

| Triggering Situation | Secondary Emotion | Primary Emotion |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| John Q Video | | |
| Scandal Video "The Boss" | | |
| You have worked hard for the past two weeks and your teacher does not acknowledge the effort that you have put into your work | | |
| Your father always compares you to his nieces and nephews, claiming that you are not as involved in the community as they are. | | |

| Trigger Situation | Secondary Emotion | Primary Emotion |
|--|-------------------|-----------------|
| After clocking in your hours and getting ready to go home, your boss asks you to stay behind to help him with moving furniture in his office, something you will not be paid for | | |
| You are pitching ideas to your group for a group project and notice that no one is paying attention to what you're saying. | | |

I Feel Statements

- Statement used to convey your feelings to another person and avoiding defensiveness
- Opposite of “you statements”
- I feel (emotion) when _____.

Meditation

1. Take a deep breath and sit with your emotion
2. Tell the emotion that you can see it
3. Accept it for what it is
4. Recognize that no emotion is permanent
5. Once your mind is clear, trust in your ability to make an appropriate response

Assertive Communication

- Communicate your needs and wishes in a positive way
- Start off with something nice, communicate your needs and then negotiate
- This is the Triple N: Nice, Needs, Negotiate

Summary of Emotional Anger Management Tools:

- Journaling/ Self check-ins
- Addressing problems as they arise so that you're not bottling it up
- Use "I feel" statements
- Meditation to help you get into your emotions
- Assertive Communication

Let's Put It All Together

- Physiological changes serve as cues to reverse the fight or flight response
- When your heart rate is back to normal, you're able to THINK
- Use this opportunity to see if there are any NATs present and replace them with RATs
- Anger management does not have to be an "in the moment" response either. It's an on-going work in progress

What's in Your Toolkit?

