

LESSON 12: ANGER MANAGEMENT

“(Anger) starts with madness and ends with regret.”

Abraham Hasdai



Anger is a normal human emotion that we should not try to eliminate from our lives. However, if we do not understand why we become angry and how we can manage it, difficulties result.

Anger is sometimes called a “secondary” emotion because we usually experience feelings of hurt, frustration, loss, or fear before anger develops. Think about which of these emotions might come first before you become angry in different situations. Remember that different people become angry about different things.

Allison's Story

Allison almost always had an angry look on her face. She knew she became angry a lot, but really didn't know why. She had been that way ever since she could remember. Allison was determined to never let anyone disrespect her without "paying a price." Unfortunately, it was Allison who usually ended up paying the price for her anger.

One day Allison had finally reached her limit with a girl at school who she claimed was telling lies about her. Allison was in a rage. She was so mad that she didn't think clearly. At the beginning of her lunch period, Allison found the girl and started hitting her without saying a word. Before the end of the day, Allison was suspended once again. The principal warned her that if she continued her violent behavior, she would be expelled from school.

When she returned to school, Allison met with a counselor who helped her finally discover the source of her anger. When she was three years-old her mother had died. Allison had made herself forget about the pain and grief from this horrible event. Because she had never really talked about this situation with someone, it continued to affect her life. Underneath, Allison remained angry that her mother had "left" her when she died.

Once Allison realized why she became angry so often, her counselor encouraged her to begin exploring different strategies she could use to help her get over her mother's death and control her anger. Allison still became angry sometimes, but she eventually learned to manage it much better.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why do you believe so many young people use fighting as a way to express anger?
2. What else could Allison have done when she was angry at the girl, that would have had a better outcome?
3. What would you have done if you were in a similar situation?
4. When have you felt hurt, frustration, loss, or fear before your anger developed?

What Makes you Angry?

Use the following numbers to rate how angry or frustrated you become in each situation below. Then share your answers with your counselor.

- 1 = No problem 3 = Frustrated 4 = Very Angry
- 2 = A Little Frustrated 5 = Extremely Angry

How angry do you become when someone:

Promises to do a favor for you, then forgets.	1	2	3	4	5
Ignores you.	1	2	3	4	5
Blames you for something you didn't do.	1	2	3	4	5
Yells at you for doing something wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
Threatens to hurt you.	1	2	3	4	5
Starts a bad rumor about you.	1	2	3	4	5
Steals from you.	1	2	3	4	5
Tells you a lie.	1	2	3	4	5
Tells a lie about you.	1	2	3	4	5
Other (<i>List other situations that make you angry and rate yourself on each.</i>)					

_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5
_____	1	2	3	4	5



Anger Control

The following lists provide some ideas for preventing or handling anger in positive and negative ways.

Directions: Check which of the following “Helpful” and “Unhelpful” ideas you use to control your anger. Then, discuss which of these ideas would be most appropriate for each situation from the previous page in “What Makes You Angry.”

Helpful Ideas

- Talk it out with someone
- Count to “10”
- Take a deep breath
- Find a place to be alone
- Listen to music
- Punch a pillow
- Clean or organize your room
- Scream
- Walk, jog, or run
- Write it out
- Talk to yourself
- Play with clay or Play Doh®
- Draw your feelings
- Watch TV
- Go Shopping
- Play a sport

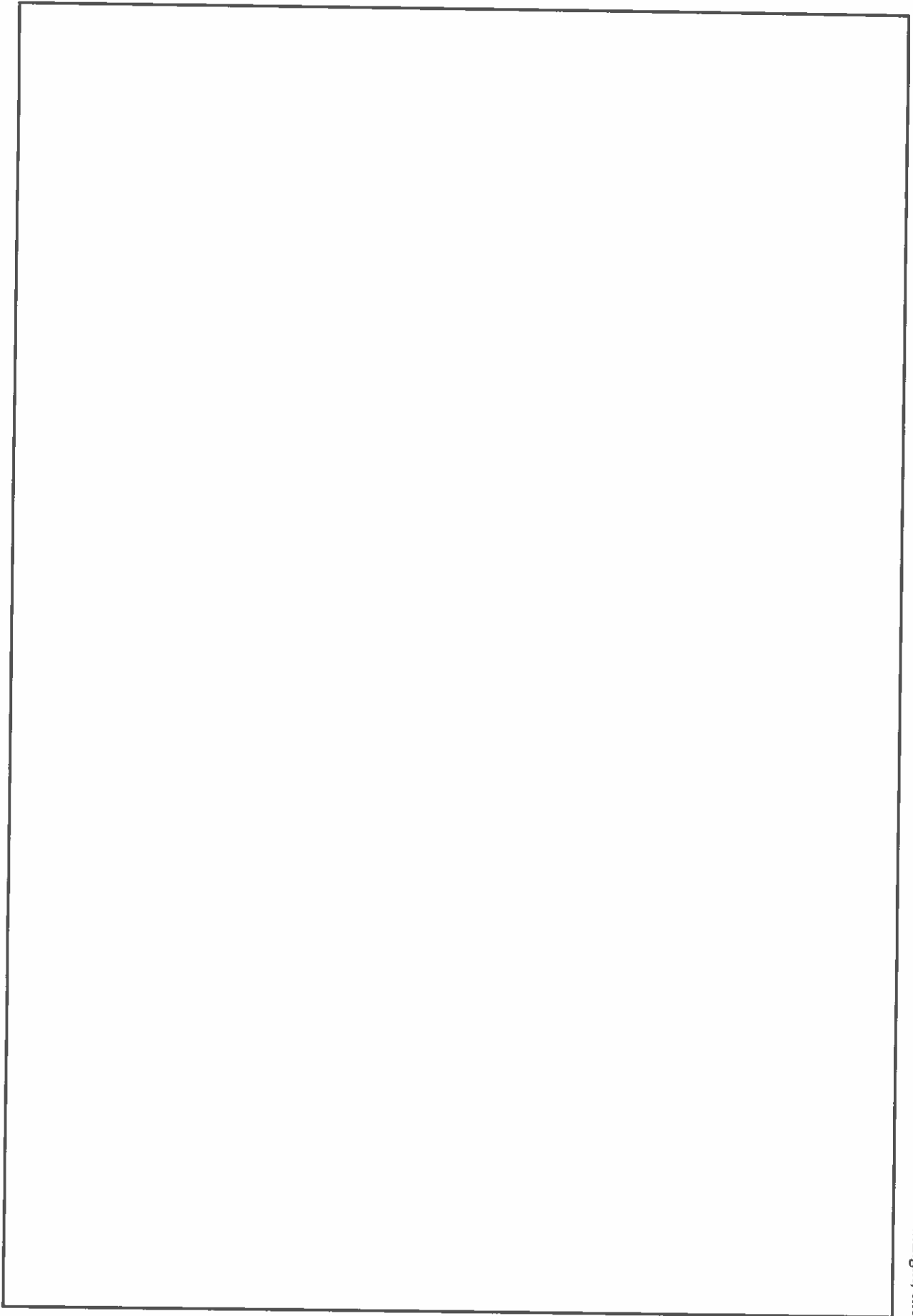
Unhelpful Ideas

- Eat a lot more (or less)
- Drive fast
- Use drugs/alcohol/inhalants
- Fight
- Threaten to hurt someone
- Hurt yourself
- Withdraw from everyone
- Blame it on someone else
- Take it out on an animal
- Destroy property
- Start a rumor
- Run away from home
- Skip class or school
- Laugh at the person
- Yell, cuss at the person
- Give an obscene gesture

Optional Activities

1. Look through a magazine or newspaper for examples of people who were angry. How did they deal with their anger? What was the outcome?
2. Interview people in highly stressful jobs who have to deal with their anger. Ask them what they do to control their anger.
3. Visit a juvenile detention center.
4. Discuss the meaning of the following: "Anger is like a bomb. . .to make it safe, disarm its fuse."





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