

# Options To Anger

## Curriculum Guide



Compiled By  
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# **Options to Anger**

## **A Partnership for Change**

A meeting took place on January 26, 2000, between representatives of the Dartmouth Community Corrections and the Halifax Regional School Board. These discussions centred around the concept of partnering to offer an anger management program in some junior high schools. The concept was well received by both members of this new partnership. A concern was expressed that we should seek a program which does not focus on managing anger but would have a focus on anger prevention. That search resulted in a review of the Options to Anger program. This program was based on a sound philosophy and was very practical.

The Options to Anger program is the property of CAF Associates of Eugene, Oregon. The original program was developed in 1989 by Dr. John Crumbly. John Aarons and Wade Fraser, the Options to Anger program has been offered by them for the past twelve years. Through that time the program has been refined. On June 1 and 2, 2000, Dr. John Crumbly, John Aarons and Wade Fraser provided a two day training program to 100 participants. One half of the participants were staff of the Halifax Regional School Board, twenty were from the Department of Justice, eight from the Department of Community Services. The remainder were representatives of agencies throughout Nova Scotia. Those who attended this training went away with a new enthusiasm to make this program available.

With the program being piloted in eight junior high schools in the Fall of 2000, it was necessary to provide a more defined curriculum. The efforts of two persons, Diane Wilson and Janice Cossar, both Probation Officers, is appreciated and will be appreciated by those who use this Curriculum Guide. Diane Wilson and Janice Cossar gave freely of their time and demonstrated a high level of commitment to the production of an easy to use curriculum guide. We would also like to thank Jo-Anne West for her patience and fine work in the transcribing and composition of this guide.

October 13, 2000

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OPTIONS TO ANGER  
SESSION PLANS

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# OPTIONS TO ANGER

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## Session 1 - Introduction to Anger

materials needed:

- flip chart/markers
- pens and paper for participants (coloured pencils, if available)
- 8 1/2 x 11 envelope

hand-out # 1.1: *How I See Myself*

objective of session: participants will gain insight into:

- 1) how they view themselves
  - 2) concepts of anger and aggression
  - 3) The Naive Anger Cycle
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☆ suggested time frame: 25 minutes

### Introduction Of Facilitators And Program Outline

This program has been designed to run for seven one-hour sessions.  
Address any housekeeping items at this time.

outline: Concepts to Anger Prevention:

- Invitations
- Early Warning System
- Expression
- Taking Space
- Anchoring
- Self-Talk
- Resolution

### Introduction Of Participants

Go around the circle/room and ask participants to introduce themselves.

- tell who they live with;
- what about their anger got them here; and
- one strength (positive quality) they bring to the group

### Expectations/Ground Rules

prepared in advance on flip chart:

- attendance/punctuality (rules regarding attendance/punctuality to be determined by group/facilitator)
  - confidentiality
  - respect issues (no interrupting, name calling, put downs, excessive profanity)
  - no violence or threats
  - "I don't know" is NOT acceptable.
  - ask participants for additional suggestions
- 
-

✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

As an introduction to the negative affects of ANGER, read the following story, "The Wounds of Anger", to the group.

### **The Wounds Of Anger**

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His Father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence. Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone. The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there."

**A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one.**

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### **Exercise: Self Evaluation**

hand-out # 1.1: *How I See Myself*

- Have participants complete form and return to facilitator to be kept in a sealed envelope until last session.
  - Have participants complete form again during last session and compare results.
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✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes

### **Anger/Aggression:**

Ask the group "What is ANGER?"

Use this prompt, if necessary:

- Think of a time when you were angry recently. How would you explain "*that feeling*"?
- Provide a definition of "ANGER" - Webster's Dictionary defines it as *A feeling of displeasure caused by perceived injury, mistreatment, opposition etc., and usually shows itself in a desire to fight back at the supposed cause of the feeling.*

Ask the group "What is AGGRESSION?"

Ask for examples of aggressive behaviour, i.e.:

- pushing
- hitting
- threats
- insults

Provide a definition of "AGGRESSION".

The Oxford Dictionary defines it as:

*an unprovoked attack, hostile or destructive tendency/behaviour.*

Ask the group “Are ANGER and AGGRESSION the same?” If group suggests they are, ask them if they must always act aggressively when angry. Nearly everyone can think of an example when they were angry but did not act in an aggressive manner.

Ask group for examples from personal experiences.

Thus, the answer is anger and aggression are NOT the same. Basically, ANGER is an emotion. It is the way we feel that tells us something is wrong. AGGRESSION is a behaviour that we use to hurt or control someone else, either physically or emotionally.

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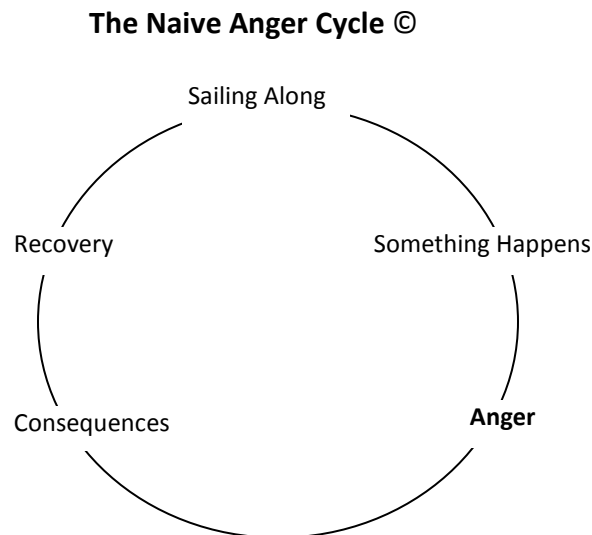
✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes.

### The Naive Anger Cycle

purpose:

To introduce the idea of cyclical behaviour, to challenge participants to notice the events which come before and after anger. *The cost of ignorance is surprise.*

- 1) Present Anger Cycle on flip chart or overhead.
- 2) Read definition. Anger works as a cycle, not in a straight line. The Naive Cycle views anger with blinders, often not recognizing anything until well into anger. Most people without any anger training can recognize the component of this cycle.
- 3) Ask group to provide an anger situation from their experience to illustrate stages of anger on flip chart or overhead. Facilitator should have an example prepared if group is unable to provide one.



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### Exercise:

Instruct participants to draw a picture of themselves when angry.

Share picture with group.

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## How I See Myself Now

## Hand-Out # 1.1

Place an 'X' through a number between 1-10 to best describe yourself.

1 = low  10 = high

1) I am a good listener

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

2) I understand what others are saying.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

3) I can express myself clearly.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4) I am able to speak in a group.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5) I am assertive.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

6) I am aware of my feelings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

7) I am aware of other people's feelings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----



8) I am able to say how I am feeling.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

9) I am able to make friends.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

10) I like myself.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

11) I find it easy to trust others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

12) I feel in control of my life.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

13) I can make decisions easily.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

14) I know where I am going.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

15) I recognise when I am feeling angry.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

16) I understand what causes my anger.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Session 2 - Early Warning System

materials needed:

- flip chart/markers
- blank paper
- a watch, with second hand
- a paper bag for each participant
- markers/coloured pencils for each participant
- small pieces of paper
- pens

hand-out # 2.1: *Your Nervous System Has Two Key Reflexes*

hand-out # 2.2: *Early Warning System Worksheet*

hand-out # 2.3: *Emotions*

objective of session: Participants will gain insight into:

- 1) The Early Warning System
  - 2) The emotional and physical signs of approaching anger
  - 3) Their own Early Warning System
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✧ Suggested time frame: 25 minutes

Review expectations/ground rules

- Add any new suggestions or items to the list.

Review previous session.

- Ask group if they remember definition of "What is ANGER?" (*A feeling of displeasure caused by perceived injury, mistreatment, opposition etc., and usually shows itself in a desire to fight back at the supposed cause of the feeling.*)
  - Ask group if they remember definition of "What is AGGRESSION?" (*An unprovoked attack, hostile or destructive tendency/behaviour*). Ask group if they remember the basic difference between "ANGER" and "AGGRESSION". (*AGGRESSION is a behaviour. ANGER is an emotion.*)
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✧ Suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### Early Warning System

Provide the group with a definition/purpose of Early Warning System:  
*What occurs to you both emotionally or physically before you get angry.*

Purpose: There are two main parts to the Early Warning System:

- 1) emotions (feelings)
- 2) physical signs

### 1. Emotions (Feelings):

- Explain to the group that *ANGER* is not a primary (first) emotion.
- There are other emotions that occur before we feel anger.

#### Exercise: Feelings/Emotions Relay

- Divide the group into two equal teams. Put two desks/tables at the front of the room, and the two teams an equal distance from the tables. Place a pen/pencil and a blank piece of paper on each table.
- On the facilitator's signal, one member from each team will proceed to their corresponding table and write an EMOTION or FEELING word on the paper (one word only).

They will then return to their team and tag the next team member who will proceed to follow the same directions. This continues for three minutes. At the completion of the time frame, the facilitators will count the number of emotions/feeling words on each teams page (if same emotion is listed more than once on the same list, it only counts the first time).

\*Facilitators may want to provide small prize to winning team.\*

- Once exercise is completed, all emotions/feeling words will be transferred to flip chart (master list).
- Ask group for any additional feelings/emotions they think should be added to the list.
- Words can be added any time during upcoming sessions.

examples:

- |               |               |                 |
|---------------|---------------|-----------------|
| • afraid      | • annoyed     | • apprehensive  |
| • ashamed     | • awkward     | • betrayed      |
| • challenged  | • cheated     | • concerned     |
| • condemned   | • confused    | • deceived      |
| • defeated    | • degraded    | • demoralized   |
| • desperate   | • depressed   | • disappointed  |
| • discouraged | • embarrassed | • frightened    |
| • frustrated  | • guilty      | • hassled       |
| • helpless    | • humiliated  | • hurt          |
| • incompetent | • inhibited   | • insulted      |
| • intimidated | • jealous     | • judged        |
| • lonely      | • nervous     | • offended      |
| • overwhelmed | • persecuted  | • pressured     |
| • powerless   | • resentful   | • sad           |
| • scared      | • stupid      | • shocked       |
| • startled    | • surprised   | • terrified     |
| • threatened  | • trapped     | • uncomfortable |
| • valueless   | • vulnerable  | • worthless     |

## 2) Physical Signs:

- Distribute hand-out # 2.1 *Your Nervous System Has Two Key Reflexes* to the group.
  - Review and discuss with group.
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☆ Suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### Exercise: Paper Bag

Provide each participant with a paper bag. Instruct them to write external (outside) physical signs they experience before they get ANGRY on the outside of their paper bag.

- They can use coloured pencils, if available, to represent the signs.
  - On small pieces of paper, they are to write the internal signs they experience before they get angry. They are to place these inside the bag.
  - Go around at the completion of the exercise and have participants share what they put on the outside and inside of their bag. Create a master list on the flip chart of internal and external signs.
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☆ Suggested time frame: 10 minutes

### Exercise: Early Warning System

- Distribute hand-out #2.2 *Early Warning System Worksheet* to the group.
  - Have the group complete the worksheet individually and review as a group.
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☆ Suggested time frame: 10 minutes

### Exercise: Emotions

- Distribute hand-out #2.3 *Emotions* to the group.
  - Have them draw in the faces of various emotions that lead to anger.
  - Review as a group
- 
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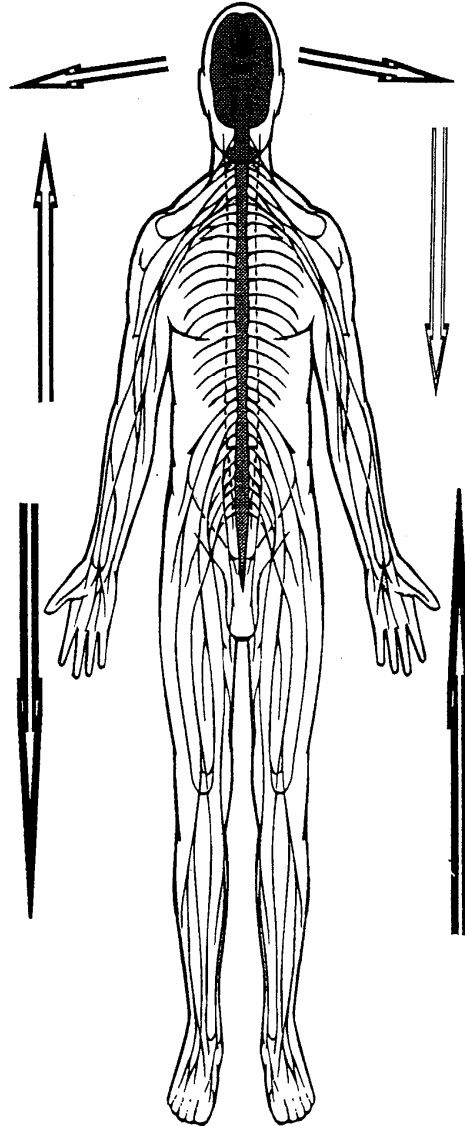
\*This last exercise is an options exercise, as there may not be sufficient time to complete it.\*

**Your Nervous System Has 2 Key Reflexes:**

**Hand-Out # 2.1**

**Stress Reflex**

- heart rate
- blood pressure
- breathing rate
- anxiety/worry
- tension & pain
- concentration
- immune system
- decision-making ability
- long-term performance
- personal effectiveness
- energy
- enthusiasm
- positive outlook
- ambition
- communication skills

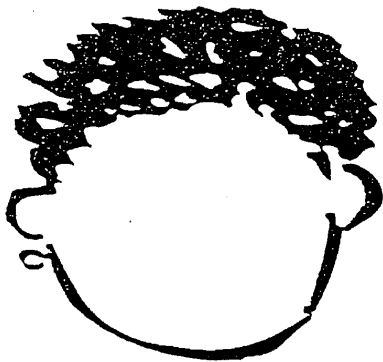


**Relaxation Reflex**

- heart rate
- blood pressure
- breathing rate
- anxiety/worry
- tension & pain
- concentration/ focus
- immune system
- decision-making-ability
- long-term performance
- personal effectiveness
- energy
- enthusiasm
- positive outlook
- ambition
- communication skills



Draw In The Emotions



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### Session 3 - Invitations

materials needed:

- 5-6 blown up balloons
- pens for each participant

hand-out # 3.1: *Invitations Worksheet*

objective of session: Participants will learn and practice the concepts of invitations.

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✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes

#### Ice Breaker

Go around the circle/room and have participants say something positive about the person on their left. Ask a few participants at the end of this exercise how it felt to give/receive compliments.

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✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

Review expectations (which should be displayed on the wall).

- Ask group if they would like to add anything.

Review previous session:

#### 1) The Early Warning System

- Ask group if they remember the definition: *What occurs to you both emotionally or physically before you get angry.*

#### 2) Emotions

- Remind group that anger is NOT a primary (first) emotion. There are always other emotions that precede anger.
- Ask group for a few examples of primary emotions, i.e. hurt, frustration, sadness, etc.

#### 3) Physical Signs

- Remind group of physical signs that precede anger, i.e. flushed face, increased heart rate, breathing and muscle tension.
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✧ suggested time frame: 20 minutes

Introduce Concept Of Invitations

Definition:

*An occurrence which provides an opportunity to react.*



Purpose:

- This concept has also been referred to as "trigger" events or "pushing buttons". Those are mechanical events which leave no choice. Invitations, however, put the responsibility on the one who reacts, not the person who throws out the invitation.
- We have a choice as to whether or not we respond to an Invitation.

Invitations

- Be sensitive to the very tiniest Invitation that presents an opportunity to react. In going backwards from most anger situations, we find a lot of *and then he said and then I said* comments. This is an excellent place to emphasize where the very first *invitation* was.
  - ✓ This is a good place to call the group on saying *They made me*.  
We believe that we are responsible for our feelings and actions and that we, not some outside forces, are in control of how we feel and act.
- Help the group classify the kinds of Invitation they experience.
  - ✓ **First** ask for examples of general Invitations; i.e. mom/dad yelling at them for being late; a friend being rude/hurtful, etc.
  - ✓ **Second** ask for examples of Invitations in each category: the categories are verbal, non-verbal, intentional and unintentional.

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✧ suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### **Exercise: Balloons**

To illustrate accumulative affect of Invitations, have previously blown up balloons to represent Invitations. For each example of an Invitation (ask group for examples), give a volunteer from the group a balloon to hold until participant can't hold any more.

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✧ suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### **hand-out # 3.1 - *Invitations Worksheet***

Have participants complete worksheet; and if time remaining in session, share responses with the group.

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## Invitations Worksheet

## Hand-Out # 3.1

1) Name two invitations that work best on me:

Examples: My brother goes into my room and takes my stuff.  
When people call me names.

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2) The biggest problems I have from getting invitations are:

Examples: I do stupid things when I get mad.  
I break things that I have to pay for.

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3) The two invitations I most like to give are:

Examples: Pulling my sister's hair.  
Playing dumb in school.

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4) List three invitations that teachers give you:

Examples: Yell at me.  
Glare at me.  
Sneak up behind me.

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5) List three invitations that parents give you:

Examples: They get strict.  
They yell at me.  
They take away my allowance.

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6) When you notice a good invitation what three things can you do without getting angry or creating a problem for someone else?

Examples: Walk away.  
Talk to someone I trust.  
Exercise.

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7) What is the most fun about giving invitations?

Example: People are funny when they get mad.

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## Session 4 - Expression

materials needed:

- flip chart/markers
- scissors
- hat or paper bag

hand-out # 4.1: *Expression/Reflection*

hand-out # 4.2: *"I" Statements*

hand-out # 4.3: *Assertiveness Skills*

objective of session: Participants will gain insight into:

- 1) "I" Statements
  - 2) Different forms of expressions: hard, soft, indirect and direct
  - 3) The Awareness Anger Cycle
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✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

Review previous session.

Ask the group the definition of Invitations: *An occurrence which provides an opportunity to react.*

Ask the group for examples of Invitations.

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✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

### **"I" Statements**

Provide the group with definition/purpose of "I" statements.

Definition:

A skill designed to express and take responsibility for your feelings, rather than blaming others.

Purpose:

Have the individual take responsibility for his/her feelings, express his/her feelings and begin to resolve outstanding issues.

On flip chart, present and discuss formula of "I" Statements.

The formula used to construct "I" Statements involves three steps:

- First clearly state the feeling ("I feel \_\_\_\_\_")
- Second, state the circumstances around which the feeling is generated. ("when \_\_\_\_\_")
- Finally, describe the consequence ("because \_\_\_\_\_")

Examples:

- 1) *I feel hurt and embarrassed **when** people make fun of the way I dress **because** I spent a lot of time trying to look nice.*
  - 2) *I feel jealous **when** you spend time with other friends **because** I am left out and not included.*
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✧ suggested time frame: 15 minutes

### **Exercise: "I" Statements**

hand-out # 4.2

Photocopy "I" Statements hand-out # 4.2 and separate each scenario by cutting them into strips. Place all 10 pieces of paper into a hat/bag. Each participant will pick one scenario out of the hat/bag. Have each participant present their selected scenario to the group, using the "I" Statement formula. Provide encouragement to each participant through this process. Once each participant has presented their "I" Statement, ask the group for other examples that could be phrased as an "I" Statement. Present these situations to the group as "I" Statements or ask for volunteers to present them to the group.

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✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

### **Exercise: Assertive Skills**

Distribute hand-out # 4.3 *Assertiveness Skills* and review with participants.

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✧ suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### **Expression**

Provide the group with definition/purpose of EXPRESSION.

Definition:

A skill designed to assist in sharing and processing feelings previously concealed by anger.

Purpose:

All means of EXPRESSION share a common purpose: familiarizing ourselves and others with our values and what we find to be meaningful. The object is to challenge people to be courageous and find appropriate ways for them to express the feelings that precede anger.

Facilitator should display on the wall the previously prepared list of emotions/feeling words.

There are several types of EXPRESSION:

- "Hard" expression: A way of using physical exertion to work out the first feeling.  
example: riding a bike
  - "Soft" expression: A quieter and more thoughtful way of working out the first feeling. example:  
writing poetry or a journal
  - "Indirect" expression: Talking to a friend, consult others to develop ideas to process the first feeling.  
This is NOT gossip. It is a healthy way of getting ideas from others.  
example: You consult a friend on how you might work things out with your mother.
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✧ suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### Exercise: Expression/Reflection

hand-out # 4.1 *Expression/Reflection*

Allow participants time to complete. Once completed, ask for some examples from participants. Start a list of examples under each category on the flip chart (4-5 examples in each category, e.g.: soft expression, hard expression, indirect expression).

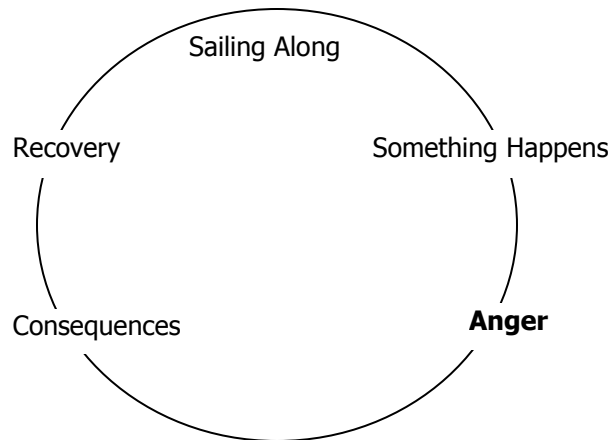
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✧ suggested time frame: 20 minutes

### The Awareness/Anger Cycle

Draw the Awareness/Anger Cycle on flip-chart prior to session.  
Provide the group with definition/purpose of Awareness/Anger Cycle.



Definition:

A cycle which assists participants in tracking events and feelings that occur before anger.

Purpose:

This assessment process encourages awareness and sensitivity to invitations, early warning signs and feelings that precede anger. It also examines places where the anger cycle can be broken.

Ask participants for examples of potential anger situations.

On the flip-chart, fill in the invitations and early warning signs that would proceed that situation. The anger situation used with the Naive Anger Cycle in Session 1 could be used again here if desired.

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**Expression Reflection**

1) What regular outlets do you have for “hard expression”?

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What is one outlet for “hard expression” that you'd like to add?

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2) What regular outlets do you have for “soft expression”?

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What is one outlet for “soft expression” that you'd like to add?

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3) What are some skills you have for “direct expression”?

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What are some skills for “direct expression” you'd like to add?

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4) What are some good resources for “indirect expression” that you have?

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What are some resources for “indirect expression” that you'd like to add?

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## **"I" Statements**

## **Hand-Out #4.2**

- 1) You are blamed by your parents for something you didn't do.
- 2) You hear a rumour that your friend is spreading lies about you.
- 3) Your teacher compliments you in front of the class for a job well done.
- 4) You're late getting home and miss curfew. Your parents gross you out in front of company.
- 5) Your teacher puts you down in class.
- 6) You catch a friend cheating in a game of cards.
- 7) Your brother (or sister) plays music too loud while you are trying to study.
- 8) A friend sticks up for you when you are being picked on in the school cafeteria.
- 9) Your friend borrows your car and returns it to you on empty.
- 10) Your parents constantly criticize your choice of friends.

## Assertiveness Skills

## Hand-Out # 4.3

- 1) Remember that it's not just what you say, but, HOW you say it. Think about how the other person would feel about the way you deliver your message.
- 2) Be polite.
- 3) Stay calm and relaxed.
- 4) Keep a comfortable distance (don't crowd or be too distant).
- 5) Stand or sit straight, keeping your hands at your sides, or on your lap.
- 6) Keep direct eye contact (unless it makes the other person uncomfortable), without staring.
- 7) Keep your voice audible and firm, but respectful, when speaking.
- 8) Make your statement brief, clean and to the point **without being abrupt or rude.**
- 9) Use "I" Statements to describe your feelings about a situation, if appropriate, not what "made" you feel that way.

*I get irritated when I hear loud noise.*

NOT: *Your loud radio irritates me.*

- 10) Describe the other person's situation or objectionable behaviour (if you are requesting a change), **without** making derogatory comments about the person.

*I realize you're tired, but could you please help me sweep the floor.*

NOT: *Get up and start sweeping, you lazy bum.*

- 11) Ask, don't demand.
- 12) Avoid "should" or "ought".
- 13) Discuss sensitive issues in private. It's best not to put someone on the spot in front of other people.
- 14) Take a TIME-OUT if things escalate.



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## SESSION 5 - TAKING SPACE

materials needed:

- cassette player
- relaxation tape

hand-out # 5.1: *"I" Statement assignment*

hand-out # 5.2: *How to Take Space*

objective of session: Participants will learn how to remove themselves either physically or mentally from anger-provoking situations in order to slow down or stop the anger process.

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### Icebreaker

Go around the circle/room and ask each participant to name the place in the world they would most like to be at this moment and why.

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### Review of Previous Session

Review previous session by having participants complete "I" Statement Assignment Form 5.1 (individually or as a group).

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### Introduce Concept Of "Taking Space"

Definition:

Removing yourself, either physically or mentally, in order to take care of yourself

Purpose:

To slow down or stop the anger process. Stress that it is not to be used to load weapons and prepare for battle. Some people are familiar with the concept of "counting to ten." This strategy, at best, keeps the situation the same. Encourage participants to take space and develop a strategy to be better prepared for the next time.

### Taking Space Physically

There are five basic steps to physically taking space:

- 1) Include the first feeling with an "I" statement.
- 2) State your position.
- 3) Indicate that you need to remove yourself from the situation.
- 4) State a definite time that you will return.
- 5) Promise to work out the matter when you do return.

Give this example of Taking Space for the group:

You are at home involved in an argument with your mother, which is getting more heated by the minute. You realize you need to take space.

- 1) State your feeling - *I'm feeling frustrated...*

- 2) State your position - ... *and need to take space...*
- 3) Indicate that you will be gone - *I'm going for a walk around the block...*
- 4) State a definite time that you will return - *I will be back in a half an hour...*
- 5) Promise to work out the matter when you return - *and we will discuss this again at that time.*

The total statement now becomes: "*I'm feeling frustrated and need to take space. I'm going for a walk and will be back in a half an hour, and we will discuss this again at that time.*"

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#### **Exercise:**

Ask the group for examples of situations that illicit a feeling. Practice "taking space" with these situations, giving each participant an opportunity to practice the above-noted formula. Give the opportunity for feedback. Remember the general rule for providing feedback: kids first, then facilitators.

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#### **Taking Space Mentally**

Mentally taking space involves such things as (ask the group to provide examples) - if they have difficulty, present ideas such as basic relaxation skills, i.e., tightening and relaxing muscles, visualization and deep breathing.

#### **Exercise**

- 1) It's preferable to play relaxation music during this exercise. Explain to the group that you are going to teach them a relaxation technique which was developed by psychologists and that it is similar to some meditation exercises. You need to briefly explain that it involves both physical exercises and mental exercises, that it is easy to learn and that after they have practiced it, they can do it almost anywhere at any time.
- 2) You must ensure that the group is quiet and serious. Some participants may tend to make fun of the exercise to cover their anxiety or embarrassment. If so, firmly correct them and request their cooperation.
- 3) Point out that they will feel very refreshed after the exercise.
- 4) Present the following instructions slowly and with a calm, soothing voice:
  - I am going to give you instructions. Listen carefully and do what I suggest. I shall be asking you to concentrate on sensations you will be feeling. I shall ask you questions. Don't answer them. They are just to get you to attend to the sensations and feelings you will experience.
  - Sit with your back straight and your feet, flat on the floor. Relax your hands and arms on your lap. Close your eyes if you like.
  - Begin breathing slowly and deeply. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
  - Pay attention to your breath. Is each breath reaching down to your upper chest? Your lower chest? Your abdomen? Allow the breathing to deepen (about one minute). Now keep breathing deeply and focus your awareness to your feet. How do they feel? Are they hot? Cold? Comfortable? Uncomfortable? Just be aware of how they feel.

- Continue breathing deeply. Allow your awareness to move up your body and focus in your abdomen. How do you feel here? Are you aware of hunger? Fullness? Pain or discomfort? How do you feel inside?
- Now allow your awareness to move up to the centre of your chest. Centre your attention on the steady beating of your heart. Take time just to be with your heartbeat. Don't think about it.
- Now focus on your fingertips and see if you can feel the blood pulsing there.
- Now allow your awareness to focus on the muscles in your shoulders and neck. How do they feel? Are they relaxed? Sore? Tired? Does your head feel heavy? Don't ask why, or try to do anything -just be aware.
- Now focus your awareness in your mind. Picture, in your mind, a large open field covered in deep grass up to your waste. The grass is green, the sky above is deep blue. A light, warm breeze is blowing. Feel the breeze on your skin.
- Each thought that enters your mind becomes a brightly coloured balloon. Watch them float. Just let them go. Focus your awareness, once again, in your feet, then let it move quickly back up your body. Notice how your body feels. As your awareness reaches your head, slowly open your eyes and wake up fully alert and refreshed.

This example demonstrates the use of relaxation skills to take space mentally. During the exercise we just completed, we touched on relaxation skills and visualization skills (going to that special place in your mind). Let's create a list of enjoyable places/memories that help us care about ourselves.

Ask each participant to offer a past experience or memory of a place or event where they felt relaxed and safe. If a participant cannot state such a place or event, help them to create an imaginary place they can escape to in their mind.

Once you have taken space mentally or physically, the time should be used to relax, as we have demonstrated, and to also work on identifying the first feeling. This will enable us to be better prepared to address the reason we felt it necessary to take space in the first place.

There are four key things NOT to do when taking space:

- 1) Blame others
- 2) Deny your feelings
- 3) Debate the matter
- 4) Order others to do something

## "I" Statements

## Hand-Out # 5.1

Assignment: Create some "I" statements for these practice situations.

- 1) You really value your tools and someone leaves them lying all over the driveway.

*I feel* \_\_\_\_\_ *when* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *because* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- 2) You hear a rumour that your girlfriend/boyfriend is dating someone else.

*I feel* \_\_\_\_\_ *when* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *because* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- 3) You make a terrible mistake and your parents/friends stand by you and support you.

*I feel* \_\_\_\_\_ *when* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *because* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- 4) You fall asleep at your desk in school and are awakened by the teacher \_\_\_\_\_ slapping the desk.

*I feel* \_\_\_\_\_ *when* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *because* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

- 5) You are five minutes late coming home. You are very seldom late, but your parents ground you for the weekend anyway.

*I feel* \_\_\_\_\_ *when* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ *because* \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

If you notice warning signs ....

"I'm **beginning to feel** angry and I **need to take space.**"

Make "I" statements. Do not blame anyone else for your anger.

Leave the situation for at least one hour ....

It takes about one hour for us to physically recuperate from anger arousal. (Prior to even thinking about returning - at work or school, we may not be able to take an hour - take what you can, without creating other difficulties. Go to the washroom, for example.)

Do not drink, drive or use illicit drugs...

Go jogging, walk to a coffee shop, or do some other physical activity that will keep you busy but will not get you worked up.

Take time to calm down...

Think positive thoughts. Think of ways of making the situation better.

After one hour, check your warning signs...

- If you are calm, consider whether or not it is a good idea to return to the situation.
- If you are not calm, telephone the appropriate person to explain that you will need another ½ hour/hour to calm down - arrange another time for a phone call.

Check in...

- If you have decided to return, tell the appropriate person that you are back from your time-out and talk about the issues that caused you to escalate (if not too charged, and both people want to talk about it).  
OR
- If you have decided not to return, telephone the appropriate person to explain your reasons for making this decision and assure them that you will discuss the situation with them further at a later date.

**IF YOUR WARNING SIGNS FLARE UP ....  
TAKE SPACE AGAIN.!!**

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## Session 6 - Anchoring And Self-Talk

materials needed:

- flip chart/markers
- paper and pens for each participant

no hand-outs

objective of session: Participants will gain insight into developing skills regarding anchoring and self-talk.

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✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

Review previous session.

- Last session we talked about Taking Space both mentally and physically.
  - Ask group if they remember the definition of TAKING SPACE:  
*Removing yourself either mentally or physically in order to take care of yourself*
  - Ask group if they remember the purpose of TAKING SPACE:  
*The purpose is to slow down or stop the anger process*
- 
- 

### Anchoring

Provide the group with a definition of ANCHORING:

Physically relaxing your body, stretching, developing a comfortable posture and being aware of your breathing.

Purpose:

To reconnect with the Earth, slow down the process of anger and physically relax for a moment. It relieves tension from the areas which relate to your early warning signs. It is difficult to continue with your anger when you are relaxed.

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✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes

### Exercise:

Have everyone get up and relax their bodies. Remember these hints:

- Feet shoulder width apart
- Hands hanging limply at one's side
- Knees flexible
- Hips underneath shoulders
- Notice breathing - slow it down - hear it

Anchoring allows you to immediately respond to the feelings you are experiencing. In a very short amount of time, you can physically relax your body to a point where you are better prepared to address the feelings you are experiencing.

When taking space and following the relaxation skills we learned last session, you are addressing your need to relax in the long-term, so when you come back to a situation you will be better prepared.

### Self-Talk

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There are three steps to focus yourself on getting your attention, realizing your self-worth and putting the whole matter into perspective:

- 1) Attention getters - a word or short phrase used to get your attention and/or refocus the invitation.
- 2) Affirmations - statements that are always positive and true about the individual.
- 3) Unhooks - putting it all into perspective with a couple of words that remind us of the big picture.

Purpose:

To get your attention, emphasize your value and increase your perspective. In general, we make lousy decisions when we are headed toward anger. Such decisions are often filled with feelings of hurt, fear, revenge, etc. They help things go from bad to worse and the result is often regretted later on. People often make these decisions when they feel badly about themselves. This is a process to help change the way we feel and make better decisions.

1) Attention Getters:

This is a thought stopping procedure. Recall previous sessions when it was discussed that you can use your body reactions to indicate to your mind that you are in a dangerous position (Early Warning Signs). This included such things as feeling tension in your voice, clenching your fists, raising your voice, etc.

With attention getters, when you recognize the Early Warning Signs, that is the time to say STOP to yourself. It is like seeing a stop sign in the street. It is a signal for you to realize that you are on the road to anger if you do not listen to the warning. The warning should tell you to slow down and consider what is happening and what you are saying to yourself. Give yourself a chance to relax before deciding how to respond to the situation.

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✧ suggested time frame: 15 minutes

**Exercise:**

On a pre-prepared flip chart, have 4 or 5 different shapes that resemble street signs. Ask participants to give examples of words or phrases that would be used to get their attention. Place words and phrases in the signs.

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✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes

Introduce the concept of empathy by explaining to participants that other people have many concerns in their lives that we all need to be sensitive to.

**Empathy Exercise**

Place chairs/desks in a circle. The facilitator reads out the experiences below. If participants have had a similar experience, they switch seats with someone else. Participants will learn that others have had similar experiences and/or need understanding.

- ever been embarrassed in front of the class
- ever flunked a test
- ever heard or seen your parents argue
- ever been sad because of your home life
- ever wished you had more friends
- ever wanted to ask someone an important question but did not know how to ask
- who has been made fun of who has wished you looked different

- ever been yelled at
- wished your parents were together or got along better
- nervous standing in front of the class
- knows somebody who died
- had your feelings hurt
- got butterflies in your stomach

✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes

**Affirmations:**

Statements that are always positive and always true about the individual.

Discuss with participants that:

- we are more likely to accept invitations to anger if we do not feel good about ourselves.
- it is sometimes difficult to give ourselves affirmations.
- if we feel good about ourselves, we are less likely to accept invitations.

Brainstorm on flip chart a foundation of vocabulary words for affirmations with participants. It may be helpful if you frame it by saying: "What words would describe a special friend or someone you really care about?"

suggestions:

affectionate	brave	confident	creative
capable	kind	likeable	happy
courteous	dependable	determined	easygoing
eager	organized	smart	trusting
friendly	good listener	generous	helpful
honest	talkative	energetic	loyal
funny			

Now the participants can personalize the Affirmations by stating:

"I am \_\_\_\_\_."

✧ suggested time frame: 10 minutes

**Exercise: Affirmations**

Provide each participant with paper and pen. Participants create a picture of their name, where each letter of their name represents something positive and true about themselves: D - dazzling I - independent A - articulate N - nice E – energetic.

Have participants pass in their picture to facilitators to be displayed on wall at the beginning of the next session.



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## Session 7 - The Resolution Cycle

materials needed:

- flip chart/markers
- pens/pencils
- "How I See Myself Now" forms from Session #1

hand-out # 7.1: *The Resolution Cycle*

hand-out # 7.2: *How I See Myself Now*

objective of session: Participants will gain insight into:

- 1) the skill of resolution
- 2) the resolution cycle
- 3) how to use the resolution cycle to resolve anger situations

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☆ suggested time frame: 15 minutes

Review of the concepts of anger prevention.

Ask participants to provide definitions and examples of each of the following:

- 1) Earl Warning System - what occurs to you both physically and emotionally before you get angry (examples under physically would be "red face", under emotional would be "fear").
- 2) Invitations - an occurrence which provides an opportunity to react.
- 3) Expression - a skill designed to assist in sharing and processing feelings previously concealed by anger.  
Ask participants to provide examples of:
  - a) Hard expression - running, punching bag
  - b) Soft expression - writing poetry or writing in a journal
  - c) Direct expression - use of "I" statements
  - d) Indirect expression - talk to a friend or counsellor.
- 4) Taking Space - removing yourself either mentally or physically in order to take care of yourself. (Examples of **taking space** mentally would be relaxation skills and visualization, taking space physically would be removing yourself from the source of conflict with a plan to return to resolve conflict at a later time. *I am frustrated and need to take space. I am going for a walk around the block. I will be back in half an hour and we will discuss this again at that time.*)
- 5) Anchoring – physically relaxing your body, stretching, developing a comfortable posture and notice your breathing. Ask participants the purpose of anchoring (slows down the anger process and relieves tension).
- 6) Self-Talk – three steps to focus yourself on getting our attention, realising yourself and worth and putting the whole matter into perspective.
  - a) Attention getters – a word or short phrase used to get your attention and/or refocus the invitation (*stop, chill-out*).
  - b) Affirmations – statements that are always positive and true about yourself (*I am a loyal friend.*)
  - c) Unhooks – putting it all into perspective with a few words that help remind us of the big picture (*Life is too short.*).

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✧ suggested time frame: 5 minutes

### Resolution

Provide the group with definition of RESOLUTION and review resolution skills:

A willingness to resolve the situation while maintaining respect for yourself and others.

The skill of resolution and recovery can occur at, any point in the anger cycle. Its use promotes confidence and increases emotional strength while at the same time reducing the likelihood of increased conflict.

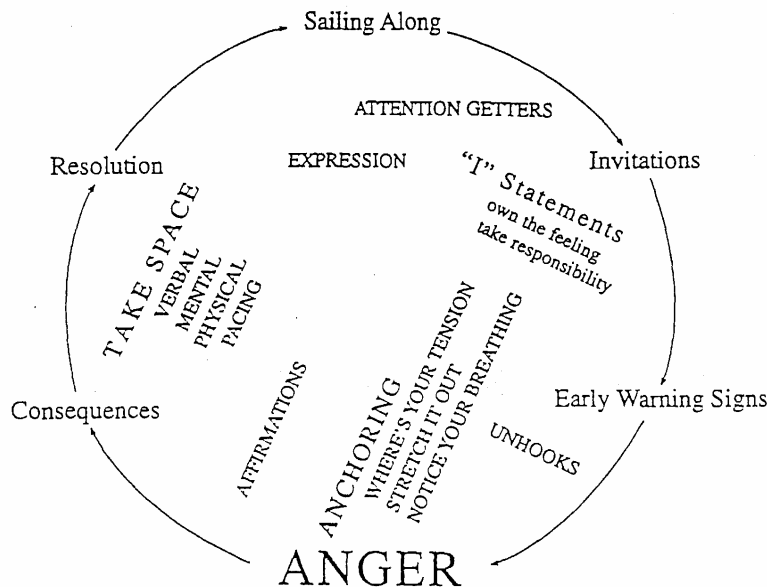
Recovery skills may include the following:

- 1) Concentrate on the first feeling. If you got to anger, go back and figure out the first feeling.
  - 2) Share your first feeling. This is important for you. Don't try to debate or convince the other person. Also, it is your feeling, you don't have to justify it to anyone.
  - 3) Give up on "winning". Winning with anger management skills is treating both parties with respect.
  - 4) Concentrate on being **courageous**. Be honest and willing to own your own imperfections.
  - 5) Order no one, blame no one, demand nothing.
  - 6) Conflict resolution depends on you, not anyone else.
  - 7) Slow things down. Give yourself time to think. Quick decisions are poor decisions.
  - 8) Take space, anchor and use positive self thought.
  - 9) Be courageous.. Remember courage is rarely the easy thing to do.
  - 10) You pick the next and share it with your presenters.
- 
- 

✧ suggested time frame: 15 minutes

### Resolution Cycle

Provide the group with definition and purpose of the RESOLUTION CYCLE. A jumbled but realistic look at the skills and concepts of anger management.



Purpose:

To remind participants of the skills and encourage their use of any place on the road to or from anger. The use of these skills promotes empowerment, self respect and the respect of others.

Distribute the *Resolution Cycle* (hand-out #7.1) to the participants (also have it pre-prepared on the flip chart). Take the anger provoking situation example from the *Naive Anger Cycle* and using the skills learned in the class, discuss what could be done differently this time or using a new anger-provoking situation example provided by the participants take them through the *resolution cycle* using the skills learned in class to handle the situation appropriately.

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☆ suggested time frame: 15 minutes

### **Exercise: Self-Evaluation**

Distribute hand-out #7.2 entitled *How I See Myself*. Have participants complete *How I See Myself Form* (the same form as completed in Session 1) and once completed hand back the forms from the first sessions that have been stored in sealed envelopes. Have participants compare the two forms noting any changes from first session. Ask participants to share changes with the group.

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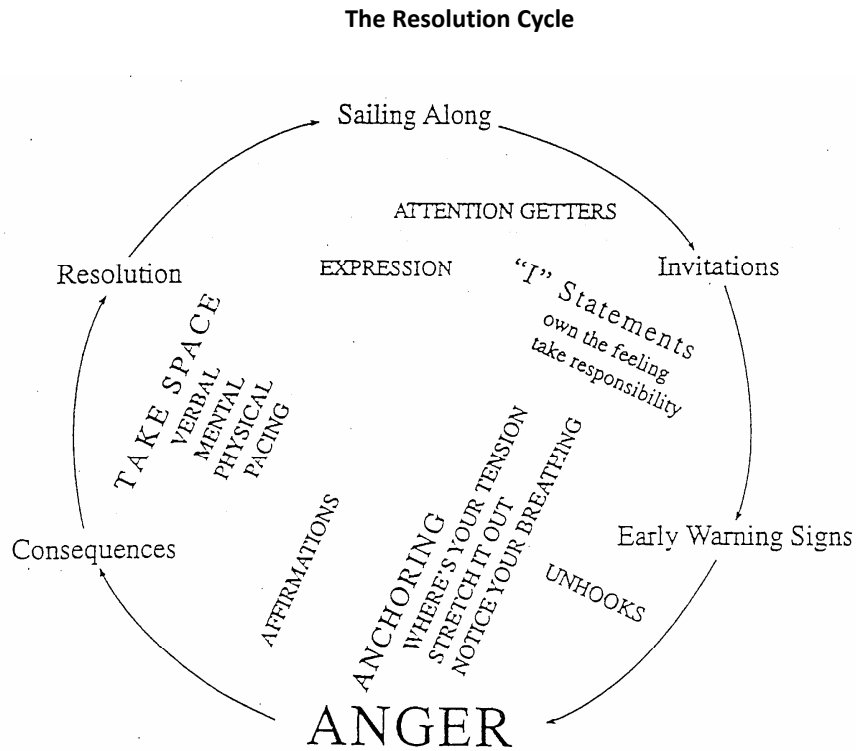
\*The time remaining at the end of this session provides a good opportunity to reward participants for their successful completion of this program. Certificates of participation are an effective way of acknowledging the achievements of youth involved.\*

## The Resolution Cycle

## Hand-Out # 7.1

Assignment:

Take the same example from the Naive Cycle and, using the skills learned in this class, tell us what you would do differently this time.



## How I See Myself Now

## Hand-Out # 7.2

Place an 'X' through a number between 1-10 to best describe yourself.

1 = low  $\boxtimes$  10 = high

1) I am a good listener

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

2) I understand what others are saying.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

3) I can express myself clearly.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

4) I am able to speak in a group.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

5) I am assertive.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

6) I am aware of my feelings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

7) I am aware of other people's feelings.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

8) I am able to say how I am feeling.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

9) I am able to make friends.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

10) I like myself.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

11) I find it easy to trust others.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

12) I feel in control of my life.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

13) I can make decisions easily.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

14) I know where I am going.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

15) I recognise when I am feeling angry.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

16) I understand what causes my anger.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix**

### **Ice Breakers And Energizers**

#### **Team On An Island**

In this activity, group members must stand on this "island" without touching the floor, as a group. (The island is a piece of flip chart paper on the floor). Facilitators act as spotters as each successful attempt is followed by folding the paper in half.

#### **Descriptive Name Game**

One group member begins by giving a descriptive adjective about themselves in conjunction with their name (i.e. I'm Jamming Julie). The next group member follows by giving the former person's descriptive name first, then their own, (i.e. That's Jamming Julie and I'm Dazzling Darrell). The next person must give the two names before their own. Follow this procedure until all group members have gone.

#### **Truth And Lie**

One group member begins by telling the group two true things about themselves and one false thing about themselves. They do not indicate which things are true or which thing is false. One by one, group members guess which things they think are true and which thing they think is false. After everyone has guessed, the person reveals the things which were true/false. Follow this procedure until all group members have gone.

#### **Zip, Zap, Zop**

All group members stand in a circle. One member is selected to start the game. With hands together in a pointing motion, they will point directly at another group member stating "ZIP". The member who is being pointed must now point to another participant and state "ZAP". This participant then points to another participant, stating "ZOP". This participant then points to another person and begins again with "ZIP". This sequence of "ZIP, ZAP, ZOP" continues until someone gets mixed up, confused or takes too long to respond. They are then eliminated. This continues until one person remains.

# OPTIONS TO ANGER EVALUATION

(To be completed by Participant)

Program Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

Please help us improve our program by answering the following questions. We are interested in your opinions, whether they are positive or negative. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

1. What part of the options to Anger Program was most helpful to you.?

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Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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2. What part of the options to Anger was least helpful to you.?

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Why? \_\_\_\_\_

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3. What changes would you suggest for future Options to Anger Programs?

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4. Time allotted for the program was:  too short  about right  too long

5. Material covered in the Options to Anger Program was:  
 too basic  about right  too advanced

6. The different exercises helped me understand the material?  yes  no

Comments:

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7. Hand-outs were helpful?  yes  no

8. I would rate the options to Anger Program overall as:  
 excellent  good  fair  poor

9. Additional Comments:

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## Options To Anger Teacher Feedback

\_\_\_\_\_ recently completed the Options To Anger Program.  
*(name of participant)*

We would appreciate your feedback and observations.

Improvement In Student's Behaviour?

None

Some

Significant

Additional Comments:

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Please return this completed form to the Guidance Counsellor.

# Anger Management Program Evaluation

(To be completed by Facilitator)

Program Dates: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Facilitators: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ # of sessions attended / \_\_\_\_\_ # of sessions missed

participation:

	frequently	sometimes	never
active			
passive			
disruptive			

increased insight:       considerable       some       very little

demonstrated skills:       considerable       some       very little

motivation to use skills:  considerable       some       very little

recommended to repeat program?       yes       no

comments:

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