

Session 1 – Anger Management Module

The Basics of Anger Management

Anger Basics

Anger affects your body.

When you get angry, your body creates energy.

Here's what happens:

- Adrenaline and other chemicals enter your bloodstream.
- Your heart pumps faster.
- Your blood flows more quickly.
- Your muscles tense.

Everyone gets angry sometimes.

Handling anger well can help you:

- Overcome problems.
- Reach your goals.
- Stay healthy.
- Feel better about yourself.

Anger has a purpose.

- Anger is a signal that something is wrong.
- Anger as an attempt to gain power over others.
- Anger as a way to increase social distance and minimize intimacy.
- Anger as a defense against shame.
- Anger as a defense against other feelings.

But too much anger or uncontrolled anger can cause problems.

It can cause:

- Problems in your relationships with family and friends
- Problems at work
- Legal and financial troubles
- Physical and mental health problems
- Uncontrolled anger can lead to aggression.
- Verbal or physical assaults.

You may lose control and attack others physically or verbally.

For example, you may:

- Throw or break things
- Yell, insult, or threaten
- Slap, shove, kick, or hit

Abuse

Tension and frustration may build. Family members may become your target, even if your anger has little to do with them. The abuse may be:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Sexual

Other criminal behavior

Anger is often a driving force behind:

- Destruction of property
- Murder
- Other violent crimes

What causes anger?

The causes vary depending on the person and situation. Some common causes of anger include:

- **Stress:**

Stress related to work, family, health and money problems may make you feel anxious and irritable.

- **Frustration:**

You may get angry if you fail to reach a goal or if you feel things are out of your control.

- **Fear:**

Anger is a natural response to threats of violence, or to physical or verbal abuse.

- **Annoyance:**

You may react in anger to minor irritations and daily hassles.

- **Disappointment:**

Anger often results when expectations and desires aren't met.

- **Resentment:**

You may feel angry when you've been hurt, rejected or offended.

Triggers: HALT = Hungry, Anxious, Lonely & Tired

- Hunger isn't only about food. People can be hungry for food, love, attention, money, fame, etc. Whatever you hunger for the most may make you more likely to get angry when you don't get it.
- Anxiety makes anger more dangerous. Combine the two and you have "scared anger", that "totally trapped", "back against the wall", "fight for your life", "desperate feeling". "Blind rage", the worst kind of violence, can be the result.
- Loneliness can give a person too much time to think. One danger when you're alone is that you can start thinking over and over again about how others have hurt, abandoned, and betrayed you.
- Tired isn't only about physical fatigue. Just like hunger, the word "tired" may refer to emotional as well as physical states. You may be tired of working long days, but also feel unappreciated at home, overwhelmed by responsibilities and demands, or feel helpless about something important, etc.

Choices

Getting angry is a choice, your choice. This section is designed to help you sort out the real crises from the phony ones.

Anger can make sense in some situations, however all 4 of the following criteria must be met:

- Somebody is doing something you really don't like **and**
- It's having a strong effect on you **and**
- The other person can actually change their behavior **and**
- It is within your responsibility to get involved.

It is not within your responsibility to get involved when:

- It's really none of your business.
- The situation is relatively unimportant.
- It's about something you can't change.
- You could handle the problem just as well without getting angry.
- You hurt or scare people with your anger.
- You will get in trouble if you get mad.
- You'll do more harm than good by getting upset.
- The answer to the question "Is this really helping the situation?" is NO.

How Anger Impacts Me

Anger is always a physical sensation.

Think about a time when you were angry. Allow yourself a few minutes to fully remember the situation and that moment.

Where do you feel the anger in or on your body?

What sensations do you feel in that area?

Where else do you feel the anger in or on your body?

What sensations do you feel in that area?

Identifying where you feel anger in your body can help you to quickly recognize your anger and take steps to keep it under control. Feeling how strong the sensations are will help you determine where you are on the “anger meter”.

My **warning signs** of anger are:

- Tense muscles
- Tight fists
- Clenched jaw
- Sweaty palms
- Racing heartbeat
- Fast breathing
- Trembling or feeling shaky
- Feeling warm or flushed
- Upset stomach
- Loud or mean voice
- _____
- _____
- _____

What are the personal side effects of anger?

Poorly handled anger can cause physical health and emotional problems.

What problems are you experiencing?

- Headaches
- Sleep problems
- Digestive problems
- High blood pressure
- Heart problems
- Poor decision-making
- Low self-esteem
- Depression
- Alcohol or other drug problems

Anger can affect how we treat the people around us and may have a negative impact on our relationships, both at home and at work.

What are your behaviors that may affect your relationships?

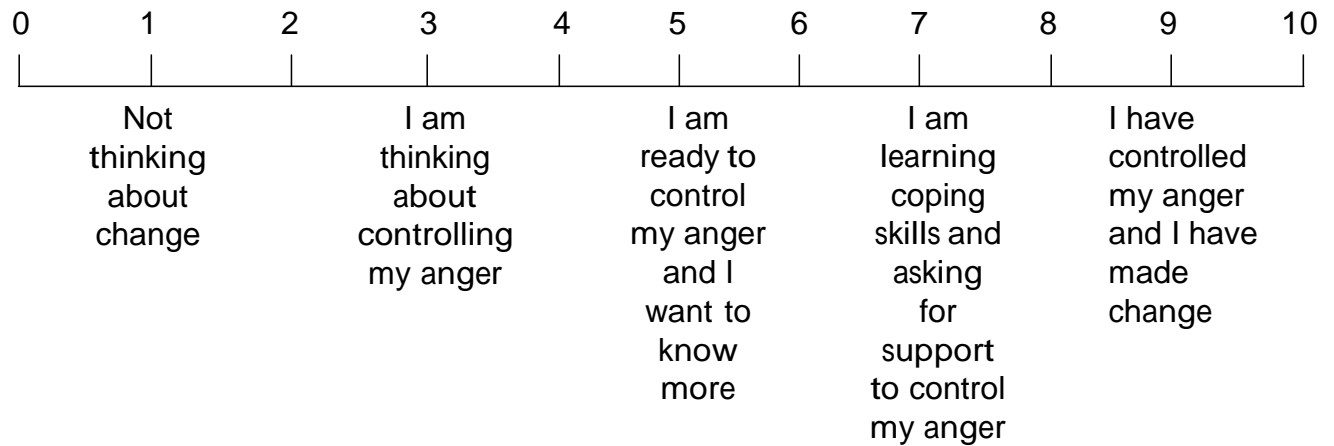
- Swear and cuss.
- Threaten (Do it or else).
- Hit, shove, pinch, poke, slap, etc.
- Ignore people when they try to talk to you.
- Sneer and/or get sarcastic.
- Criticize and/or put people down.
- Never praise and/or don't appreciate others.
- Act superior and/or talk down.
- Look for the worst in people and events.
- Get jealous or envious of others.
- Glare or stare at people.
- Break promises.
- Make disrespectful sounds/faces (like rolling your eyes).
- Act defiant ("You can't make me!").
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Recognizing anger before it gets out of control can improve your physical health and the important relationships in your life.

Last Name, First Name

Readiness Ruler

Please circle the number that indicates your readiness to control your anger.



What sets you off?

Different things trigger a person's anger. Some common triggers are listed below. Check the ones that trigger your anger. Use the blank spaces to fill in your own triggers.

I feel angry when I:

- Think I am treated unfairly.
- Am embarrassed.
- Feel ignored.
- Don't get credit for something I've done.
- Have to follow orders.
- Fail at something or don't do something well.
- Feel helpless or out of control.
- Get jealous.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

I feel angry when people:

- Insult me.
- Criticize my work or me.
- Don't listen to me.
- Disagree with me.
- Don't work hard as I do.
- Lie to me.
- Tell me what to do.
- Are rude or inconsiderate.
- Are late.
- Don't act or feel the way I think they should.
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

I feel angry when faced at these events or situations:

- Traffic jams and encounters with other drivers
- Conflict at work
- Family arguments
- Child misbehavior or temper tantrums
- Waiting in line at the bank, store, etc.
- Financial problems
- Yelling or loud noises
- Mistakes or errors
- Wasted time
- Losing a game or a contest
- Name-calling or people "pushing my buttons"
- Child abuse
- Prejudice toward anyone
- Mistreatment of animals
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Once you are aware of things that set you off, you can work to change.

Homework Session 1 – Anger Management Module

Please complete the following homework after Session 1:

- **Anger Meter**
- **Is Your Anger a Problem**
- **Stages of Change**
- **Tracking my Progress**

Please fax homework at least 2 business days before your Session 2 appointment.

Use this sheet as your fax cover sheet. PRINT your name below. Fax your completed forms to:

FAX

4067 N. 92nd Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53222

Tel: (414) 760-5400
Fax: (414) 760-5418

www.aurorahealthcare.org/eap

To: Aurora EAP Coaching
414-760-5418

Your Name: _____

Your Fax Number: _____

Number of Pages: _____

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This facsimile may contain confidential and privileged information. Patient health information is confidential and released according to Wisconsin Statutes and Federal Regulations. Patient health information may not be redisclosed without further written authorization by the patient.

The information contained in this transmission is intended for the addressee only. If the receiver of this information is not the intended recipient or an agent responsible for delivering the information to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this document in error. Review, copying, modification or dissemination of this information is strictly prohibited.

IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS COMMUNICATION IN ERROR, PLEASE PHONE US IMMEDIATELY. THANK YOU!

Anger Meter

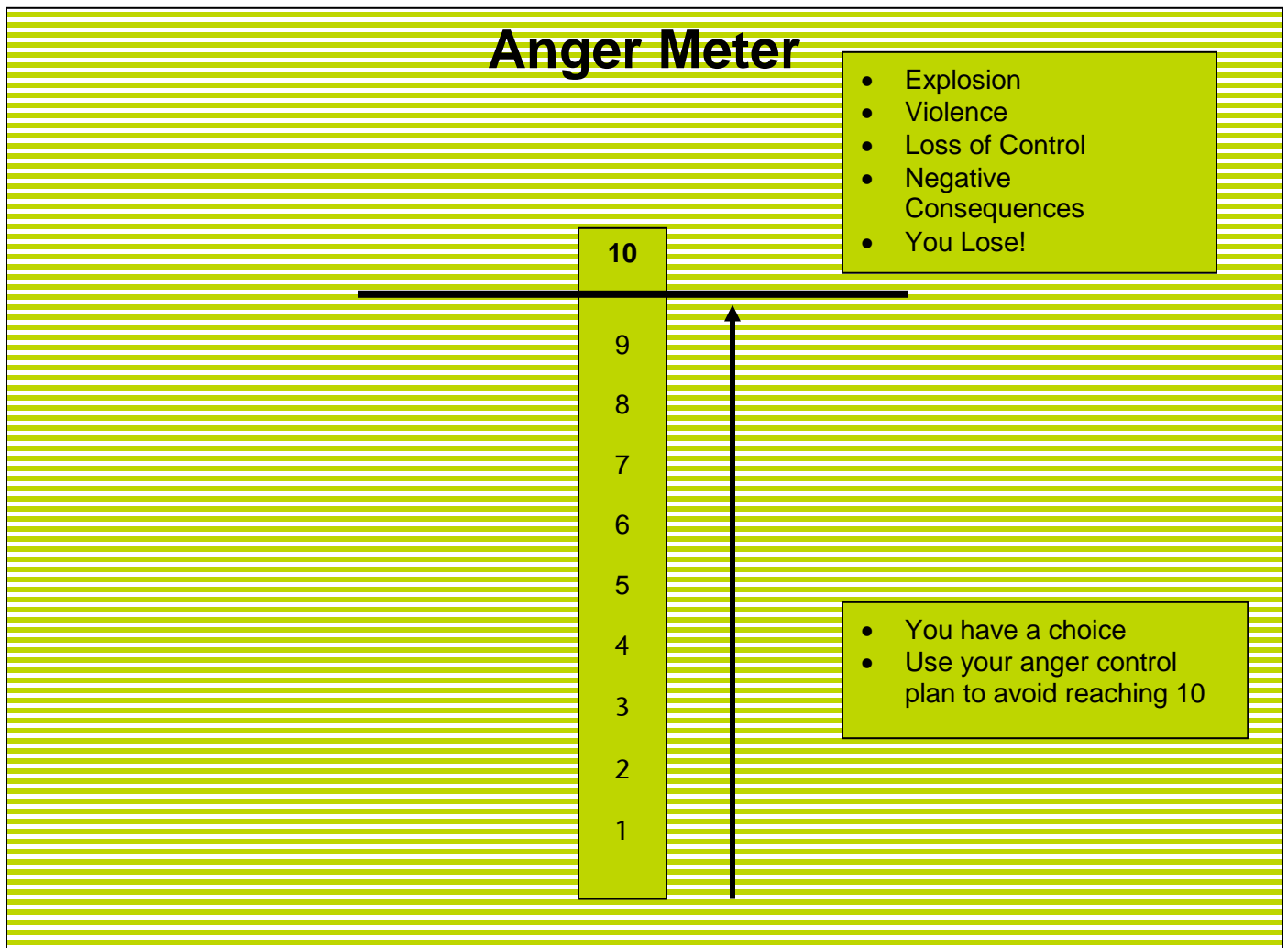
_____ Last Name, First Name

A simple way to monitor your anger is to use a 1 to 10 scale called the Anger Meter. A score of 1 on the Anger Meter represents a complete lack of anger or a total state of calm, whereas a 10 on the Anger Meter represents an angry and explosive loss of control that leads to negative consequences.

For each day of the upcoming week, monitor and record the highest number you reach on the Anger Meter.

Monday ___ Tuesday ___ Wednesday ___ Thursday ___ Friday ___ Saturday ___ Sunday ___

(Be prepared to report the highest level of anger you reached during the week in your next session.)



Keep things in perspective. On a scale of one to ten, how important is this particular issue?

Caution: It's easy to rank situations too high when you're angry or anxious. Be careful not to exaggerate.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10 – Life threatening | Someone's health or safety is immediately at risk, you must act now |
| 9 – Critical | The situation cannot be ignored without serious damage to someone or something. |
| 8 – Very serious | Something pretty bad could happen unless the issue gets handled immediately. |
| 7 – Distressing | Something seriously violates your values and beliefs but isn't immediately dangerous. |
| 6 – Disturbing | You have a bad feeling about something because it might violate your values and beliefs. |
| 5 – Troublesome | You are bothered by actions or words because you fear it may lead to disturbing behavior. |
| 4 – Displeasing | You don't like actions or words because they aren't what you would do or want from others. |
| 3 – Irritating | The other's behavior or ideas are unpleasant to you but don't affect your life at all. |
| 2 – Annoying | It bothers you that the other person sees or does things differently than you. |
| 1 – Trivial | The other's choices really have no effect upon you and they aren't anything serious either. |

Last Name, First Name

Is Your Anger A Problem? - A Self-Test

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 1. I tend to store up anger until I'm about to explode. | True | False |
| 2. I try to ignore my anger in the hope it will go away. | True | False |
| 3. When angry, I say or do things that I later regret. | True | False |
| 4. My anger: | | |
| Frightens me | True | False |
| Frightens others | True | False |
| 5. When I get angry, I: | | |
| Yell or scream | True | False |
| Cry uncontrollably | True | False |
| Break things | True | False |
| Hurt myself | True | False |
| Hurt others (physically or verbally) | True | False |
| 6. My anger has resulted in: | | |
| Problems at work | True | False |
| Problems at home | True | False |
| Trouble with the law | True | False |
| 7. I have tried to control my anger and failed. | True | False |
| 8. I use alcohol or other drugs to try to cover up my angry feelings. | True | False |
| 9. I sometimes feel out of control when I'm angry. | True | False |
| 10. I want help managing my anger. | True | False |

If you answered true to any question above,

You may have difficulty handling your anger. You can learn ways to keep your cool and stay in control when you get angry.

Stages of Change - How Do I Make a Change?

Think about any behavior that you have changed or tried to change – it could be old habits like chewing your nails or new habits like eating healthier foods or getting more exercise. It could even be important health changes like quit smoking or drinking. Did your behavior change overnight? For most people, change takes time and the solution happens after several times of “trys and fails”.

How do People Change?

Many people ignore the problems (or the possible future problems) of their habits for a long time. At some point however, they have a thought “Maybe I *want* to change” or “I *should* change”.

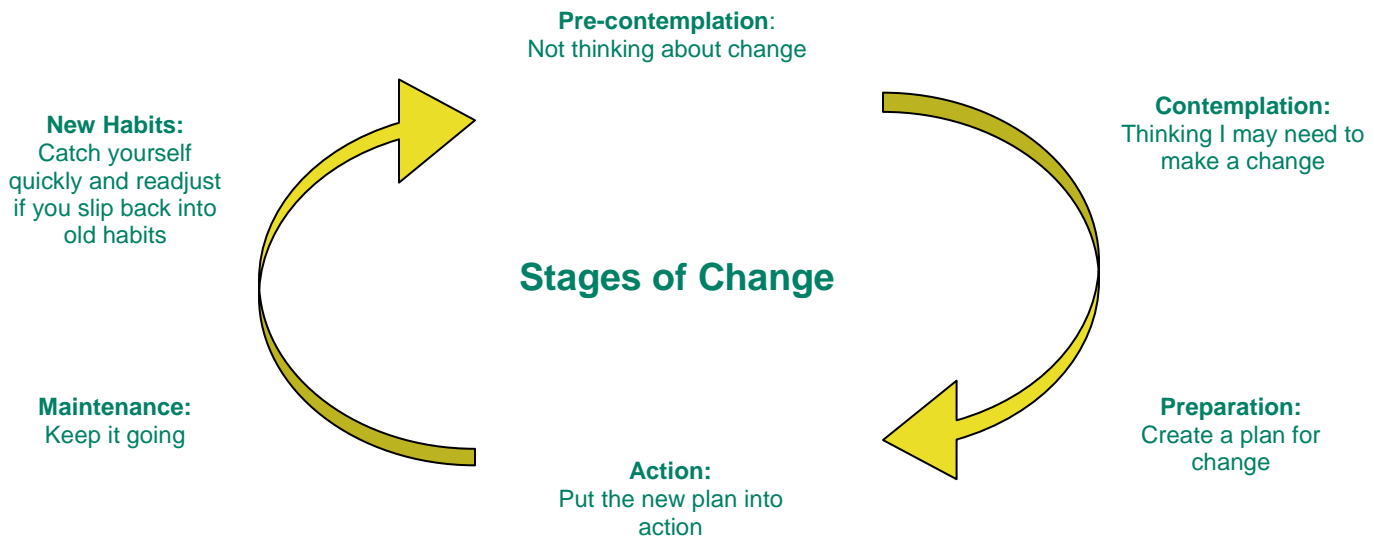
At this point, most people start to think, “How could I do this?” and begin thinking about a plan. They start to consider their options along with the mental, physical and social resources they need to make it work.

Once they have a plan, and when they feel ready, they start ‘Just doing it’. They see how their plan works. They notice how they feel and they take action steps to continue their new behaviors. They refine their plan to make it work even better.

Some people give up for a time during this process, even after taking some action and changing their behavior. At some point, they may want to try again to get back on track. They think about what stopped them from maintaining their changes and they start planning how to start changing again – but in a slightly different way.

The 6 Stages of Change

Change does not happen automatically. There are six well-defined stages in making a change. Some people complete a stage a bit faster than others do, but the most successful people take some time to plan their change and, *most importantly, learn from what works and what doesn't work*. By understanding the Stages of Change, you can work toward the new habits you want in your life.



Adapted from *Changing For Good* by James O. Prochaska, *Norcross, PhD, Carlo C. Diclemente, PhD*

Stages of Change Self-Test

Find out your Stage of Change

It is important for you to understand where you are in the 6 stages of change. It will help you to decide what your next steps may be and what you may need to move ahead. This self-test along with your EAP Coaching sessions are designed to help you make changes and, once you have, to keep those changes going for good!

What issue or behavior do you want to change? _____

A Self-Test

To find out what stage you are in, answer "yes" or "no" to four statements below.

	Yes	No
1. I am intending to take action on this issue or behavior <i>in the next six months</i> .		
2. I am intending to take action on this issue or behavior <i>in the next month</i> .		
3. I have taken action on this issue or behavior <i>within the last six months</i> .		
4. I solved this issue or behavior <i>six months ago</i> .		

Self-test Results - If you answered:

- "No" to *all* statements #1-4 = you are in the *pre-contemplation stage*.
- "Yes" to statement #1 only = you are in the *contemplation stage*.
- "Yes" to statement #1 and #2 = you are in the *preparation stage*.
- "Yes" to statement #3 and "no" to statement #4 = you are in the *action stage*.
- "Yes" to statement #4 = you are in the *maintenance stage*.

What is your stage of change? _____

**Please send this completed self-test, along with your Registration paperwork to the Aurora EAP to
Fax: 414-760-5418 or Email: eap.livewellbewell@aurora.org.**

Last Name, First Name

Tracking My Progress – Session 1

1. How successful have you been in moving toward your goal(s)?

<i>A Little</i>										<i>A Lot</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

2. How committed are you to continue the changes you have made?

<i>A Little</i>										<i>A Lot</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

3. What important learning point(s) will you remember from the readings this week?

4. What is one new thought, behavior, or action you tried that surprised you?

5. What changes are you most proud of so far? (nothing is too small if you feel good about it)

6. What additional step(s) are you considering to take in the future?

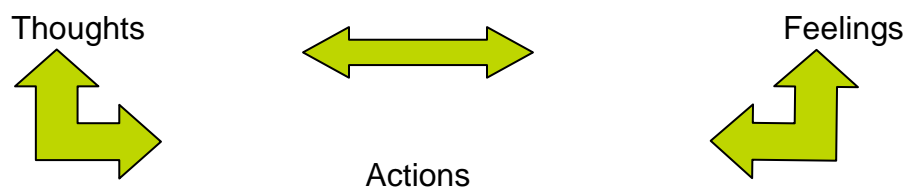
Fax this homework page to Aurora EAP 414-760-5418 before your next appointment!

Session 2 – Anger Management Module

Creating Positive Self Talk

Self -Talk

What you say to yourself (your thoughts) creates feelings. Thoughts and feelings work together to create your attitude about something. Your attitude affects your actions.



Negative self-talk can create negative feelings that may make it more difficult to take positive actions.

If you say negative things to yourself such as “I can’t do anything right”, “I don’t have time”, “I’ll never be able to ...” you may start to feel ‘down’, angry, sad or stressed.

Positive self-talk can create feelings that lead to positive actions.

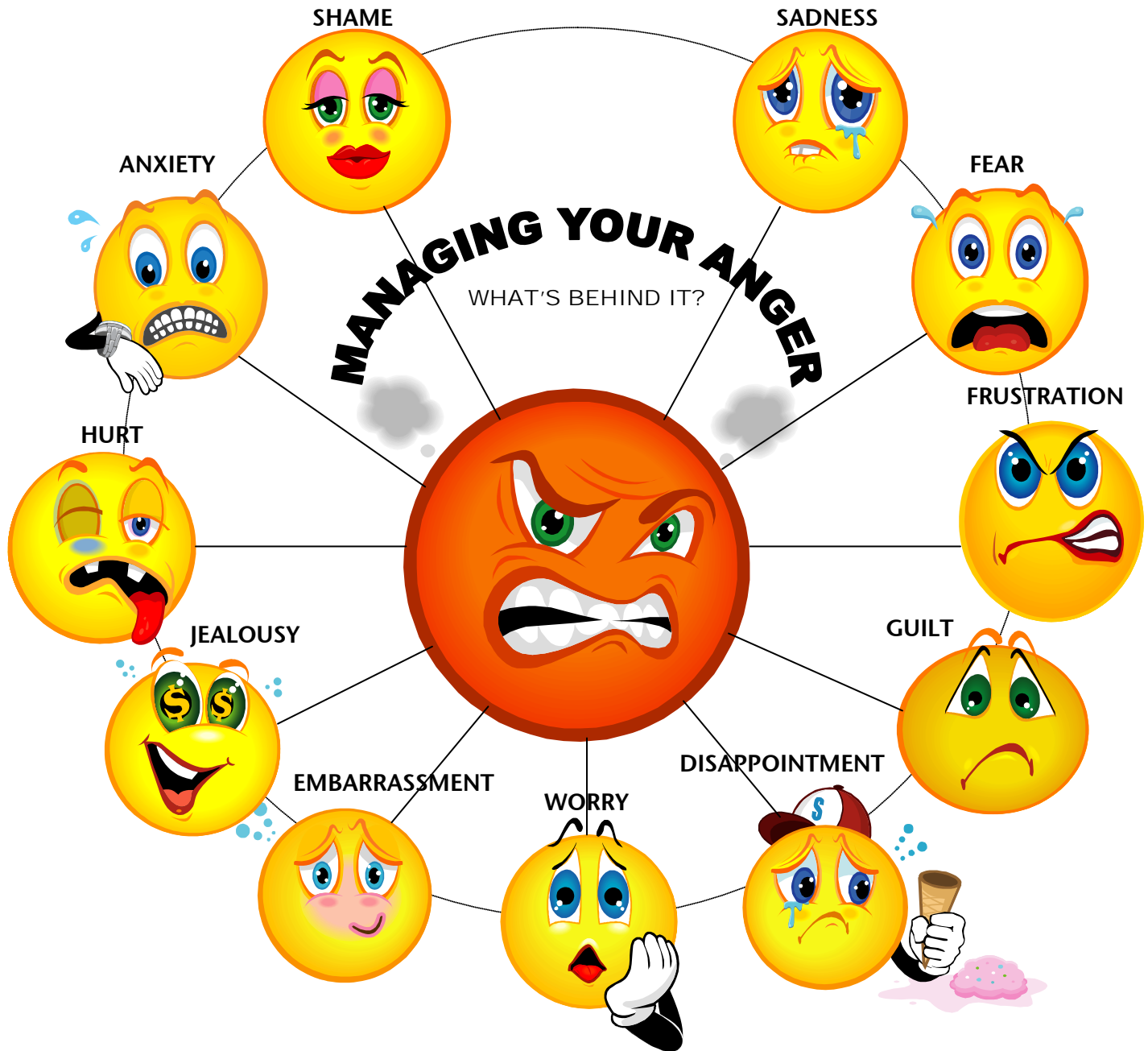
If you can create positive self-talk such as “I can create 1 minute to practice my breathing”, “I am doing better”, “The good things I did for myself today is.....” you may start to feel more positive or happy or less stressed.

What is Behind Your Anger?

Often times there are underlying emotions at the root of our anger. It's important to recognize and deal with these emotions so that anger stays manageable.

Think of a situation when you were angry. What underlying emotions were present?

The Faces of Anger



Controlling Your Anger

Take steps to get back in control – Recognize > Retreat > Relax > Return

Recognize - Stop what you're doing.

- When you feel your anger warning signs developing and you start thinking angry thoughts, tell yourself “stop”. This word may help you calm down and think more clearly.
- During an angry exchange, blood pressure rises and heart rate increases. You can feel “flooded” by your angry feelings and you are physically unable to listen or respond calmly. Taking a time out can help you regain control.

Retreat – by taking a “Time-out”

A time out allows everyone time to stop, calm down and regain control.

- Start by saying, “Time-out. I need to take a break. I need to calm down and I’ll be back in (state when, preferably a specific time).”
- Go to a place where you can feel safe and do something that can distract you or that feels soothing.
- If necessary, ask someone to watch a child, elderly, or ill person for you.
- Avoid driving until you are in control.

Relax – See Learning To Relax Handout

For example:

- Take several slow, deep breaths.
- Count to 10 or to 100.
- Take a walk or get physical exercise.
- Get a drink of water.

Return

Come back to the discussion when you're calm. Always return when you promised or, if necessary, make a new agreement for more time-out.

Stay in control – do not “medicate” yourself

Using alcohol or other drugs to dull anger doesn't work. These substances may mask angry feelings, but only for a short time. They often bring the opposite result and alcohol and other drugs play a major role in many cases of violence:

- **Alcohol:** Gives you an excuse (“Oh, I was drunk. I didn't really mean what I said”). Alcohol acts as a disinhibitor (“I get wild when I drink”). It impairs judgment. Alcohol use often triggers totally useless arguments as well as excessive violence.
- **Amphetamines:** (“Speed”) and Other Stimulants: Increases agitation and you may become more easily offended. Even caffeine can be a problem.
- **Cocaine:** Increases irritability, agitation, and impulsive aggression.
- **Anabolic Steroids:** *Have you ever heard of “Roid rage”?* This is a term given to people who act in very aggressive or hostile manner after taking large doses, usually on a regular basis, of anabolic steroids.
- **Marijuana:** The myth is that it makes people calmer, but for some people it actually increases anger and especially paranoia.
- **Prescriptive Medications, especially painkillers:** Can decrease the ability to think ahead or to accurately judge what is happening. You might also have strong or unusual reactions to certain medications.
- **Heroin and other opiates:** May Increase violent behavior in order to obtain drugs.
- **Inhalants:** May cause brain damage that lowers your ability to control emotions.

Keep things in perspective. On a scale of one to ten, how important is this particular issue?

Caution: It's easy to rank situations too high when you're angry. Be careful not to exaggerate.

10 – Life Threatening	Someone's health or safety is immediately at risk.
9 – Critical	The situation cannot be ignored without serious damage to someone or something.
8 – Very Serious	Something pretty bad could happen unless the issue gets handled immediately.
7 – Distressing	Something seriously violates your values and beliefs but isn't immediately dangerous.
6 – Disturbing	You have a bad feeling about something because it might violate your values and beliefs.
5 – Troublesome	You are bothered by actions or words because you fear it may lead to disturbing behavior.
4 – Displeasing	You don't like actions or words because they aren't what you would do or want from others.
3 – Irritating	The other's behavior or ideas are unpleasant to you but don't affect your life at all.
2 – Annoying	It bothers you that the other person sees or does things differently than you.
1 – Trivial	The other's choices really have no effect upon you and they aren't anything serious either.

A few more ways to get a handle on anger

- Take care of yourself by getting plenty of rest, eating regularly, and taking care of your needs.
- Know that your thoughts can fuel your anger and escalate the problem. When you find yourself obsessively thinking angry thoughts, say, “Stop”.
- Get involved in physical activity that you enjoy to “blow off steam”.
- Talk with friends or family about the problem.
- Get involved in activities and find relationships that are satisfying.
- Write about your feelings.

Tips For Dealing Positively With Anger

1. Relaxation

Simple relaxation tools, such as deep breathing and relaxing imagery, can help calm down angry feelings. Some simple steps you can try:

- Breathe deeply, from your diaphragm: breathing from your chest won't relax you. Picture your breath coming up from your "gut".
- Slowly repeat a calm word or phrase such as "relax," "take it easy." Repeat it to yourself while breathing deeply.
- Use imagery; visualize a relaxing experience, from either your memory or your imagination. Non-strenuous, slow yoga-like exercises can relax your muscles and make you feel much calmer.

Practice these techniques daily. Learn to use them automatically when you're in a tense situation.

2. Cognitive Restructuring "Changing The Way You Think"

When you're angry, your thinking can get very exaggerated and overly dramatic. Try replacing these thoughts with more rational ones. For instance, instead of telling yourself, "oh, it's awful, it's terrible, everything's ruined," tell yourself, "it's frustrating, and it's understandable that I'm upset about it, but it's not the end of the world and getting angry is not going to fix it anyhow".

Be careful of words like "never" or "always" when talking about yourself or someone else. "This !&%@ machine never works," or "you're always forgetting things" are not just inaccurate, they also serve to make you feel that your anger is justified and that there's no way to solve the problem.

Logic defeats anger, so use cold hard logic on yourself. Remind yourself that the world is "not out to get you," you're just experiencing some of the rough spots of daily life.

3. Problem Solving

Sometimes, our anger and frustration are caused by very real and inescapable problems in our lives. Not all anger is misplaced, and often it's a healthy, natural response to these difficulties. There is also a cultural belief that every problem has a solution, and it adds to our frustration to find out that this isn't always the case. The best attitude to bring to such a situation, then, is not to focus on finding the solution, but rather on how you handle and face the problem.

4. Better Communication

The first thing to do if you're in a heated discussion is slow down and think through your response. Don't say the first thing that comes into your head, but slow down and think carefully about what you want to say. At the same time, listen carefully to what the other person is saying and take your time before answering

5. Using Humor

“Silly humor” can help defuse rage in a number of ways. For one thing, it can help you get a more balanced perspective. There are two cautions in using humor. First, don’t try to just “laugh off” your problems; rather, use humor to help yourself face them more constructively. Second, don’t give in to harsh, sarcastic humor; that’s just another form of unhealthy anger expression.

6. Changing Your Environment

Give yourself a break. Make sure you have some “personal time” scheduled for times of the day that you know are particularly stressful.

7. Some Other Tips For Easing Up On Yourself

Timing: If you and your spouse tend to fight when you discuss things at night - perhaps you’re tired, or distracted or maybe it’s just habit - try changing the times when you talk about important matters so these talks don’t turn into arguments.

Avoidance: If your child’s chaotic room makes you furious every time you walk by it, shut the door. Don’t make yourself look at what infuriates you.

Finding alternative: If your daily commutes through traffic leave you in a state of rage and frustration, give yourself a project - learn or map out a different route, one that’s less congested or more scenic.

8. Staying Safe With Yourself - And With Others Who Are Angry

Keep your cool (no threats or name-calling). Don’t take it personally.

Pause to listen before you react (make eye contact, do not interrupt). Think of solutions together.

Don’t take chances (don’t try to confront or restrain).

Learning to Relax

How to reduce stress, remain calm and stay in control.

Meditation

This can help calm you and clear your mind of anger. Follow these steps:

1. Find a quiet place. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Sit or lie down.
2. Close your eyes. Take slow, deep breaths.
3. Concentrate on a single word, object or calming thought.
4. Don't worry if other thoughts or images enter your mind while you are doing this. Just relax and return to what you were focusing on.
5. Continue until you feel relaxed and refreshed.

Deep breathing exercises

These can help keep anger from getting out of control. Follow these steps:

1. Sit comfortably or lie on your back.
2. Breathe in slowly and deeply for a count of 5.
3. Hold your breath for a count of 5.
4. Breathe out slowly for a count of 5, pushing out the air through your mouth.
5. Repeat several times until you feel calm and relaxed.

Progressive muscle relaxation

You tense and relax each muscle group, starting at your head and working your way down to your toes. Here's how:

1. Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Sit in a comfortable chair or lie down.
2. Tense the muscles in your face for 5-10 seconds. Then relax them for about 20 seconds.
3. Tense the muscles in the back of your neck for 5-10 seconds. Then relax them for about 20 seconds. Notice the difference in how your muscles feel when relaxed.
4. Move down to your shoulders. Tense and relax the muscles the same way you did in step 3.
5. Repeat the same steps with the other muscle groups in your body – in your hands, arms, chest, stomach, lower back, buttocks, thighs, calves and feet – one at a time.

Visualization

This technique uses your imagination to help you relax and reduce your anger.

1. Sit in a comfortable chair or lie down.
2. Imagine a pleasant, peaceful scene, such as a lush forest or a sandy beach. Picture yourself in this setting.
3. Focus on the scene. Continue until you feel refreshed and relaxed.

Homework Session 2 – Anger Management Module

Please complete the following homework after Session 2:

- ***Tracking my Progress***
- ***Individual Plan: Develop Anger Control Plan***

Please fax homework at least 2 business days before your Session 3 appointment.

Use this sheet as your fax cover sheet. PRINT your name below. Fax your completed forms to:

FAX

4067 N. 92nd Street
Wauwatosa, WI 53222

Tel: (414) 760-5400
Fax: (414) 760-5418

www.aurorahealthcare.org/eap

To: Aurora EAP Coaching
414-760-5418

Your Name: _____

Your Fax Number: _____

Number of Pages: _____

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE: This facsimile may contain confidential and privileged information. Patient health information is confidential and released according to Wisconsin Statutes and Federal Regulations. Patient health information may not be redisclosed without further written authorization by the patient.

The information contained in this transmission is intended for the addressee only. If the receiver of this information is not the intended recipient or an agent responsible for delivering the information to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that you have received this document in error. Review, copying, modification or dissemination of this information is strictly prohibited.

IF YOU HAVE RECEIVED THIS COMMUNICATION IN ERROR, PLEASE PHONE US IMMEDIATELY. THANK YOU!

Last Name, First Name

Tracking My Progress – Session 2

1. How successful have you been in moving toward your goal(s)?

<i>A Little</i>										<i>A Lot</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

2. How committed are you to continue the changes you have made?

<i>A Little</i>										<i>A Lot</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

3. What important learning point(s) will you remember from the readings this week?

4. What is one new thought, behavior, or action you tried that surprised you?

5. What changes are you most proud of so far? (nothing is too small if you feel good about it)

6. What additional step(s) are you considering to take in the future?

Fax this homework page to Aurora EAP 414-760-5418 before your next appointment!

Develop Anger Control Plan

Last Name, First Name: _____

	What positive changes have I made?	How do these changes benefit me?	What will get me off track?	What will I do to get back on track?
Family and/or Social Relationships				
Job				
Physical/Health				
Emotional Aspects				

My Support System is: 1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

Session 3 – Anger Management Module

Strategies For Handling Anger and Conflict

Take responsibility for your anger

- You are in charge of your emotions and behavior. People and situations around you can and will be bothersome at times. Think of how you can cope with their behavior (just as they will need to decide how to cope with your behavior). Realize that you can say no to your anger.

Make a personal commitment to calmness

- Calmness is a choice. It doesn't just happen to people by accident. It is a personal decision and can help you remain in control, regardless of what is happening around you.

Anticipate and intercept your anger and frustration

- Think ahead and prepare yourself for events that may be stressful. Explore different ways to cope and provide yourself with alternative ways to handle the problem. It may help you reduce your frustration.

Keep your mind open.

- Get all the facts. Stay calm, ask questions and don't jump to conclusions.
- Avoid defensiveness. Defensiveness can escalate the problem and prevent you from clearly understanding the other person's point of view.
- Relax your thinking. Beware of negative thoughts that kick in automatically. Avoid using words like "always" and "never" when thinking about a problem.
- Put yourself in the other person's shoes. To better understand the other person's reactions and behavior, consider how they may be feeling and what pressures they may be under.
- Accept differences. Don't confuse "you do that differently than me" with "you do it wrong".

Look for the good in others

- Moral rigidity or, the tendency to see one side as all good and the other as all bad, is a common problem during conflict. There are three ways you can keep a more balanced view.
- Separate people from problems. Learn how to attack the problem and not the person.
- Identify positive traits in the other person. Identify times when the behavior was not a problem.
- Learn to let go of old resentments.
- Praise instead of punish. One way to feel less anger and reduce the possibility for conflict is to look for things to appreciate and praise in others.

Pick your conflicts carefully

How do I decide whether it's worth engaging in a conflict? Ask yourself the following questions:

- Does the issue directly and significantly affect my areas of responsibility? Is it something that can actually be changed?
- Is it worth my time and energy?
- Is there a reasonable chance that I can get the desired result and am I willing to compromise? Is this conflict necessary to preserve or protect something (or someone) important to me? What are the personal risks involved?
- Am I prepared for the worst possible results (i.e., up to and including getting fired)?

Keep your actions reasonable

- Loss of control usually consists of two kinds of behavior: excessive and impulsive. Learn how to keep the problem in perspective and take a “time-out” before you quickly respond or act.
- Address situations before they get too big. Loss of control doesn’t just happen by accident. Almost always there is a buildup period, a time when your anger gradually escalates. Even though the immediate incident may appear to be spontaneous, normally there is a long history of unresolved conflicts, hurt feelings, and grievances.