



## ANATOMY OF ANGER

### PROCEDURE:

#### OBJECTIVES:

Students will learn:

- There are different ways to express anger
- Anger can be a secondary emotion that covers other strong feelings.

Copyright the Ohio Department of Education and the Ohio Commission on Dispute Resolution and Conflict Management © 2002. All rights reserved.

#### MATERIALS:

Paper or chalkboard to draw the “anger iceberg”

**Facilitator's Introduction:** We are going to take a closer look at the emotion of anger. Anger itself is not negative. It is how we express anger that can be either harmful or healthy. Anger is expressed in many forms.

**Q.** *How do you know when someone is angry? How have you seen anger expressed?*

- List the ways that anger is expressed on the board.  
The three general types of anger expression are aggressive, passive and assertive.

**Aggressive anger:** Anger expressed in this way is directed at the other person to hurt him/her emotionally, physically or psychologically. Yelling, put-downs, and hitting are examples of aggressive anger.

**Passive anger:** A person internalizes the expression of anger when he or she avoids dealing with the situation that contributed to feelings of anger. The anger can then be expressed by getting even, holding a grudge, or being mean at some time in the future. Spreading nasty rumors, not speaking to the person, and damaging property can also be examples of passive anger.

**Assertive anger:** This is usually the best way to communicate feelings of anger because anger is expressed directly and in a non-threatening way to the person involved. A statement such as "I feel angry when you..." is an example of assertive anger.

**Anger:** An emotion characterized by a strong feeling of displeasure and/or desire for revenge, usually triggered by a real or imagined wrong done to the sufferer.

**Q.** Which of the anger expressions that we listed on the board do you think are aggressive, passive, or assertive?

Anger is often called **second emotion** because we tend to resort to anger in order to protect ourselves from or cover up other vulnerable feelings. In this next scenario, notice what Mary is feeling before she takes it out on her dog.

- Draw the outline of the Anger Iceberg on a flip chart or blackboard.

Only about 10 per cent of an iceberg is visible above the surface of the water. Only when we begin to see anger as the tip of the iceberg of our emotions can we better understand the underlying feelings.

Mary is listening to her favorite CD with friends. When her older brother Peter comes home from school, he comes into the room and puts on his own CD without saying a word. Then he goes into the kitchen to raid the refrigerator. Mary turns red, but she doesn't say anything. Shortly afterwards, Spot, the family dog, ambles up to her and pokes his nose in her face. Mary shoves Spot away and yells, "Leave me alone! You're such a pest!"

**Q.** Mary is obviously angry, but what was she feeling when Peter came in and switched CD's without asking?

- Label the iceberg diagram with the feelings that the students call out. Place anger inside the tip of the iceberg, and the other emotions under water.

**Q.** Would anyone like to share a personal situation in which you were angry?

- Revisit the iceberg and brainstorm with the class to uncover the underlying emotions in this new situation.

**Closure:** It is difficult to recognize these underlying emotions while they are happening because anger tends to flare up so fast that it overshadows other feelings. But we have to learn how to be in touch with these underlying feelings if we are going to deal with anger constructively. People are often abusive because they become aggressively angry when they are upset about something.

---

**PROCEDURE:**

(Continued)

---

**NOTES:**

---

**PROCEDURE:**

(Continued)

---

*Dealing directly with the feelings that upset us is much more worthwhile than dumping on someone else. When we are able to recognize our own feelings, and unlock them, we can interrupt the chain reaction that leads to abuse before it gathers steam. This enables us to act in ways that don't harm others.*

---

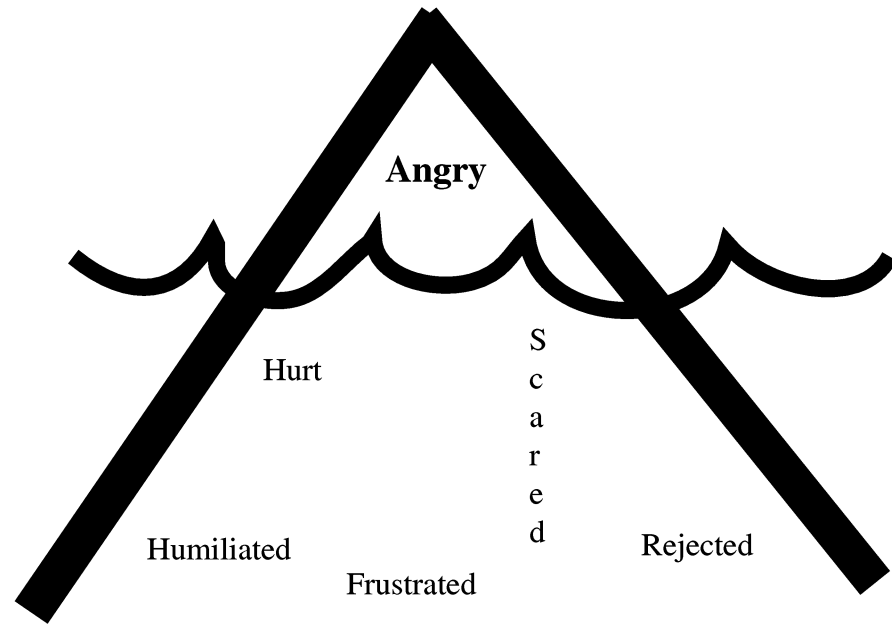
**EXTEND / ADAPT THIS LESSON:**

---

**EXTEND / ADAPT THIS LESSON**

**Homework:** Students draw their own iceberg model describing a recent personal experience in which they were angry.

**Anger Iceberg\***



\* Adapted by permission from Skills for Violence-Free Relationships by Barrie Levy, for the Southern California Coalition on Battered Women.

Reprinted from *Healthy Relationships: A Violence Prevention Curriculum* © April, 1994, with permission of Men For Change of Halifax Nova Scotia, Canada.



## SEQUENCING ANGER

### PROCEDURE:

#### Information to share:

Buying time allows us to gain control of and moderate our thoughts, which often reduces anger. This is because angry feelings are not actually caused by situations and events, but rather by the thoughts we have about those situations and events. Once the thoughts about an event (often extreme) are identified, those thoughts can be replaced with different thoughts (usually more moderate) as one way of controlling anger.

#### Directions:

1. Review the "Anger Management Recipe" with the students. Explain that you are going to demonstrate how buying time allows a person the opportunity to change his/her thoughts about a situation, which in turn can reduce anger.

2. Write four headings across the top of the board: Event, Thoughts, Feelings, and Substitute Thoughts. Under the Event column write, "Mom won't let me go to the dance with my friends." Skip the second column and ask the students what their feelings might be in this situation. The students will probably suggest words such as mad, furious, and miserable. Write several of these words in the Feelings Column. Then go back to the Thoughts column, and ask the students what their thoughts might be concerning the same situation. Elicit answers such as these: "She's being mean or unreasonable. She doesn't understand how important it is to me. She never wants me to have fun."

3. Explain to the students that it is not the event, but the

---

### OBJECTIVES:

The students will:

- Show how a conflict event produces thoughts related to the event, which in turn produce feelings (sometimes anger)
- State that a key to managing anger is buying time to think
- Practice substituting moderate thoughts for angry thoughts as one way of reducing anger.

---

### MATERIALS:

- Chalkboard and Chalk
  - Writing materials
  - Worksheet - "Sequencing Anger"
-