

# Life Without Anger

## Student Manual

### **WELCOME TO A NEW LIFE!**

By beginning the “Life Without Anger” emotional training, you are starting your transformation to a joyful and peaceful life. You will learn to take control of your thinking and your feelings so that you will be able to experience the life that you desire.

As you move through the “Life Without Anger” training, you will gain the understanding and information necessary to align your belief system and the choices you make in your daily life so that your life experience will become a joyous and loving experience.

Giving up the experience of unpleasant emotions may seem a new concept to you. But scientists have learned that once we learn how our mind works, we are able to control its processes and produce the outcome we desire. If we want to be happy, for instance, we can become happy by learning how to make the choices that are necessary to make us happy.

**We humans have the ability to change our thinking.**

**We get to choose what we think.**

**We always choose according to our beliefs.**

As long as we believe unpleasant emotions are appropriate, we will choose them. In the event we do experience an unpleasant emotion that is disturbing us, we can learn to quickly shift out of it, and can even learn not to experience it when the same event happens again.

Because we find pleasant emotions more effective in our life, we can choose beliefs that are in harmony with that desire. By changing to a love-based belief system, we can learn to always experience only peace and joy in our life.

The "Life Without Anger" training will teach you how to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to make this transformation. You will learn how to install new beliefs and function effectively in a "life without anger."

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## Part 1

### Making Better Choices

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## LESSON 1

### LEARNING TO LIVE PEACEFULLY

# EXERCISE

## COST OF UNPLEASANT EMOTIONS

1. List relationships in your life that have been lost because of anger.
2. List relationships in your life that have been lost because of fear.
3. List things in your life you have wanted but never got and indicate why you think you never got them.
4. List problems that stress has caused in your life.
5. List problems that anxiety has caused in your life.

### The World Works the Way the World Works

Biologically and intellectually we all function in the same way. However, things appear different to each of us. Our rules come from our experiences. We make rules for ourselves based on the beliefs we have learned from our experience. We all have slightly different rules because we have different beliefs. It is difficult to question our belief system because it is self-validating. Information that doesn't match our existing belief system is judged inconsistent with the *truth* and rejected. Your version of the truth is not wrong; even if it is different from others.

A constant source of problems is the conflict between the real world as it actually is, and the way we see it in our own mind.

Regardless of what we picture the world as being and how we picture it should be, it still is what it is. The world works the way that it does regardless of our opinion of it. We may see it as working in a certain way, or desire that it works in a certain way, but that only changes our perception of it. Our perceptions and desires alone do nothing to change the world. We are able to make some change in the world through our thinking, our deeds and actions, or changing the thinking of others, but that is the only way we can actually affect how the world is.

As we grow we are taught certain ideas of how the world is – by our society, and by those around us – our parents, our teachers, and our friends. We take all of this in and form our own idea of how the world is. We then form expectations of how things should happen in order to fit with our own special idea of how the world is. When things don't happen that way; when reality doesn't match our idea of what the world is or what we think it should be; we get fearful or angry.

**We need to realize that our idea of how the "world is," is only our *ideal world*, as we see it, not the real world at all.**

If what is happening in the world doesn't match your idea of what should be happening, then take it as a clue that your ideal world does not actually match the real world. If you could accept the idea that what is happening in the real world is appropriate for the present state of the world, then you would have nothing to be angry about.

Life is not set up so that we can just make a wish, and have it granted; our wishes are blocked because, quite simply, "life happens." Life offers us trials and tribulations (lessons), and we learn from those lessons what we choose to learn. This learning is what we ultimately get out of life. But if what we learn is simply that life is awful because it constantly blocks our wishes; if we learn that because we're not getting what we want, that life is unfair; our response to life will be a very unhappy one.

The world is going to give us problems, because that is what the world does. We can remain positive only if we learn to be comfortable with and enjoy being a problem solver. When we look at solving problems as, "the journey of life," and decide to enjoy the journey, we can learn to develop a positive attitude about problem solving. When we learn to enjoy solving problems then we can learn to enjoy life.

It is not easy to change our basic beliefs. However, if we want to move beyond fear and anger, if we want to have a joyful and peaceful life, then we must work to initiate such changes. If we have a belief that results in fear or anger, we will be condemned to hold onto the fear or anger until we change that belief.

We come into this world and we experience what it has to offer us. However, we can influence our experience of this world in several ways:

**We get to decide:**

**How we perceive what the world offers**

We react to particular circumstances and events according to our particular sense of right and wrong.

**How we accept what the world offers**

Our perceptions about what happens in the world affect how we respond emotionally.

**How we respond to what the world offers**

How we respond affects everything that happens after that.

**By the choices we make**

The things that happen in our lives come into being as the consequences of our acts.

## **How we choose to contribute to the world**

The time, energy, wisdom and effort that we put into improving the world will change both the world and the way we feel about it.

## **All of our choices affect what the world has to offer us.**

If we choose to be a fearful or angry person, then the world will offer us the experience of being a fearful or angry place.

Personal Peace comes from the way we view and respond to the world around us. Our own personal world and the way we feel about it is determined by the way we chose to respond rather than by what actually happens to us.

Whatever happens is simply what happens. How we choose to view it is determined by our own personal belief system, the way we look at things, and how we feel about all of the stuff that has happened to us in the past. How we feel, and how we respond to something always comes from our own personal choice that we make at the moment the event or thought occurs to us. Most of us have learned to judge events as either good or bad and respond accordingly.

This is the way our parents and the world have taught us how to deal with things. We are taught that we are supposed to feel bad, or angry, when certain things happen. Too often we make a judgment that things are bad and then respond from our unpleasant emotions, instead of being able to calmly think about what happened before we choose how to respond. Emotional choices limit us to responses based on our past experiences and prevent us from using reasoning in choosing how we would like to respond.

Perhaps you have heard the story of Pollyanna. She was a little girl in a story who was always happy no matter what happened and even when those around her were making her life difficult. Most people laugh at the story and make fun of her for being unrealistic – but stop for a moment and think. Who was the unhappy one - Pollyanna – or the person who was making fun of her? We can choose to be happy - or we can choose to be unhappy. Which one works best for you?

We learn that when events happen, and we experience what our scientists call the arousal (pay attention) response, that instead of viewing it as good or bad, we can instead view it as something we must pay attention to. Instead of judging the event to decide how we want to respond, we can learn to just pay attention, with our concern being to find a solution. To choose fear or anger in any situation means that we do not trust the possibility of finding a positive answer to the problem. When we just pay attention without wasting time trying to determine whether we like what is going on or not, we can learn to no longer feel fear or anger when things happen that previously would have upset us.

We have learned this in the business and professional world. We are very successful at training people to deal with difficult and what would otherwise be anger producing problems. For

instance, professional pilots do not waste time being angry when an engine fails, or they have some other emergency. We teach people how to deal with angry customers without becoming upset themselves. But we don't spend any time teaching angry customers how to avoid being upset. That is what you will be learning in this training.

Regardless of the circumstances you come up against, the individuals you must deal with, or the aggravating situations you find yourself in – you can learn to choose a response other than anger.

When you no longer react with fear or anger, what will happen? You will be able to respond effectively in each situation that you face with the best possible response that your rational mind can create. You will feel peaceful because you will be living life in a way that makes you feel good about yourself. You will be free to enjoy your life. You will face each new day with an eager anticipation of what is to come. All of this will be possible when you move beyond fear and anger. Joy, happiness, contentment and peace with the world and those around you - those positive states of mind - are what await you once you learn to leave fear and anger behind.

Think of the positive changes that could be made in the world if enough members of our society learned to respond without fear or anger. We could raise our children in a more effective way so that they would grow to be healthy, happy, and successful adults. Our relationships with others, including our partners and children, would be much more fulfilling. Our careers and businesses would improve. We would not only feel much better about ourselves, we would learn to truly appreciate and get along with others, including those with whom we disagree. If we could learn to erase fear and anger from our hearts, war, litigation and crime would all become a thing of the past. We would be living in a Peaceful New World.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

**Q1:** When you say that peace is an inside job what do you mean?

**A1:** I mean that peace can only come from inside you. Until you feel peace there is no peace.

**Q2:** Then what do you mean by peace?



**A2:** I mean that state of mind where you are at ease, comfortable with yourself and the world around you. This frees you to express positive love-based emotions. It is not possible when you are experiencing negative fear-based emotions.

**Q3:** Isn't anger a part of the human condition, isn't it just the natural thing we do?

**A3:** The ability to be angry is a part of our nature, the decision to be angry is an exercise of our free will. Anger is a part of our social conditioning therefore it is common for most people to choose anger in many situations.

**Q4:** Isn't the fight or flight response a part of our nature?

**A4:** Scientists used to think that. Then they realized that positive and negative responses were physiologically the same. They then realized that fight or flight (negative) protective responses were created by our perception of the event, rather than the event itself.

**Q5:** If I am in a negative situation is anger helpful in protecting me?

**A5:** Anger can be helpful because it is a stronger emotion than fear and shifting from fear to anger is helpful. However, the positive emotions are much stronger and much more effective than anger in dealing with fearful situations. In anger our brain functions are impaired as compared to a problem-solving attitude.

**Q6:** Then why do we choose to be fearful or angry?

**A6:** Because that is the prevailing belief in our society and our parents and others taught it to us. Many people are now successfully trained to handle emergency situations without fear as part of their work life.

**Q7:** When you say anger is an ineffective response what do you mean?

**A7:** I mean that it decreases our ability to reason and even reduces our life expectancy. It generally decreases our ability to function effectively and to enjoy life. Frequent anger will cost you eleven years of your life on average.

**Q8:** Why do you say that we are solely responsible for our own anger?

**A8:** Because we always have a choice of how we respond. No matter what the situation you are never required to choose anger.

**Q9:** You say we always respond according to our beliefs. If that is so, how can I change my responses?

**A9:** By changing your beliefs.

**Q10:** So, if I change my beliefs why won't I just automatically change my responses to match my new belief?

**A10:** Because you still retain many beliefs and memories that are contrary to your new belief and they will affect your response until they are dealt with. It is like breaking a bad habit.

**Q11:** If I have anger shouldn't I express it because I have learned that stuffing anger is not good?

**A11:** If you have anger, not releasing it is not good. You can learn to release it in non-destructive ways. However, the most effective way to deal with such problems is to never experience the anger in the first place.

**Q12:** If I am never angry or fearful, wouldn't life be dull and uninteresting?

**A12:** Far from it. Learning not to experience our negative emotions allows us to more fully express and enjoy our positive emotions?

**Q13:** So, if I do all of this how will it change my life?

**A13:** You will feel good. You will enjoy life. Others will like you. You will like yourself. You will be able to accomplish your goals. You will be healthy. You will live longer.

## EXERCISE

### LIST YOUR UNPLEASANT EMOTIONS

1. What are some of your fears?
2. What are the things that make you angry?
3. What are the things that make you feel stressed?
4. What are the things that make you feel depressed?
5. What are the things that irritate you?
6. What are the little things others do that make you angry?
7. What do you worry about the most?

## HOMEWORK

### DISCOVER WHAT ANGERS YOU

(To be reviewed in the next class session)

1. For one week, list everything that makes you angry or irritates you.
2. Notice and record what you think, how you felt and what actions you did in response to your feelings.
3. Notice and record how long you felt that way.
4. Ask yourself how you could have better handled whatever triggered your anger or irritation. Record your thoughts and feelings.
5. Ask yourself what you could have thought or done to not feel angry or upset. Record your responses.

## EQ REFLECTIONS

Personal Peace comes from the way I view and respond to the world around me.

I can choose to change my judgment response rather than continuing to accept what I was taught.

Personal peace will follow when I learn to be accepting and understanding rather than judging events as either good or bad.

An arousal response doesn't need to be viewed as good or bad; I can instead view it as something I must pay attention to.

As inconceivable as it may sound, it is possible for me to never experience anger.

Once I learn to leave fear and anger behind: joy, happiness, contentment and peace with the world is what awaits me.

## LESSON 2

### HOW THE MIND WORKS

## EXERCISE

### BECOME A PROBLEM SOLVER

1. Write down situations at home or school where you avoid feeling angry because you have learned to respond as a problem solver.
2. Write down other situations in your life you can use that same “problem solver” skill.
3. Think about why you are able to respond without anger in the above situations and write down your thoughts.
4. Make a list of other situations in your life where you experience anger, and you would like to apply those same “problem solver” skills, instead.

### **LESSON: Everything is Determined by the Decisions we Make**

Everything that happens in our life is determined by the decisions we make. If we want to make effective decisions in our life; to think and act in ways that are the most beneficial to us, it is important that we understand how our mind works. When we are coming up with the wrong answers, we need to learn how to recognize this and make corrections. The more we

understand about how our mind works the more capable we are of making the best decisions for ourselves.

**EXAMPLE:** You are working in an office and a co-worker takes credit for your work and treats you unfairly. You need to work with him on a project that has been assigned to you, but you refuse to talk to him because of the way he has treated you! You need to work with him to successfully complete the project assigned to you. Because you refuse to talk to him, your work is done poorly, and you lose your job. How has your angry response worked for you?

For our purposes, we don't need to understand the technical aspects of how the mind works. We do however need to know how the mind functions if we are going to make changes in what we think, feel and do. I will explain to you how our mind works in a functional way so that you will be able to understand what happens inside your mind between perception and action.

With our five physical senses and through intuition we receive signals from the outside. When that signal comes in, it goes to the recognition center where we try to make sense out of it – to understand it enough to decide how to process it. The first place the recognition center looks is in our memory files to see if there are any memories that tell us what this thing we perceive means to us. It also looks to see if there are any instructions in there telling us what to do with it. If the recognition center recognizes something that we already know how to do, it sends a message to the automatic response center, which then sends a signal to the action center, which then puts out the instructions that we act on (what we say or do). This response is so automatic that we are often not even aware that we are doing it (such as breathing). It does not involve our reasoning, our emotions or our belief system. That part has already been taken care of in the past. This takes up so little of our brain's processing capacity that we are able to do other complicated reasoning or emotional functions at the same time we are carrying out our automatic responses.

Automatic responses can be very simple, such as breathing or picking up a pen. They can be much more complex, such as driving a car or flying an airplane – even to the extent of responding to an emergency such as engine failure - if we have been trained well enough.

An automatic response is fine until we want to change a response because it is no longer appropriate. Then it can drive us crazy. When we try to break an ingrained habit, it can be very difficult. As an example, after fourteen years, my wife has moved the cereal bowls to the adjacent cupboard from where they have always been. It took me almost six weeks before I was opening the correct cupboard to get a bowl. When I decided to pay attention, it didn't take long to change my behavior. No wonder breaking habits like smoking can be so difficult for a long-time smoker. It is really helpful to understand the process if we are going to attempt to make changes.

Many of our memories have negative or positive charges attached to them. When this is the case, the message is then sent to our emotional center to add feeling content. This feeling content signals to us how important this message is and how much focus and energy we should put into our response.

Positive charges create love-based responses and negative charges produce fear-based responses. The heavier the charge, the more affect our emotional center has in determining our response.

If we know what to do, then the message is sent to the automatic response center and we act. If we have dealt with this message before, then we think we know how to act and we do it regardless of the consequences. This is because we think we know the answer and have bypassed our thinking center, because we feel we need an answer now. Our thinking center needs time to reason. We don't think we have time, so we don't do it; or do it poorly under stress.

**If we don't have an answer in our memory file or automatic response system, our emotional center sends the information to our reasoning center to figure out a response.**

The problem is that our emotional center may think the message is urgent and it agitates the reasoning center so much that it doesn't function well. It is so impatient for an answer, it doesn't feel it has time to solve the problem and find the best answer before action is taken. As soon as our emotional center thinks it has enough information, it sends directions to the action center to respond. When we learn how to slow down the emotional response and let our reasoning function more deliberately, we can develop more effective responses. This is why some people use techniques like counting to ten before they answer. Once we learn how to let our reasoning center work effectively, our reasoning can be as effective in emergency situations as it is in solving math problems.

When we recognize a message that comes in that we don't know the answer to, and it doesn't have an emotional charge attached to it, we send it to the reasoning center. We then develop a rational answer and send it on to the action center so that we can respond. How effective the action we choose depends both on how receptive we are to problem solving activity, and also on the belief system and the memory files it has to draw information from.

Our memory files contain all the information we have learned in life. We draw on these memory files for facts to solve our problems. We create the information that we store in a memory file by merging our interpretation of the event with what really happened. This is how we create our own unique truth.

The other source our reasoning draws on is our belief system. Our belief system is how we see the world. It is our truths as we see them. Our belief system is our judgment about what we think is true in the world. All of our reasoning in order to determine the answer is framed in what we think the truth is. Our belief system tells us not only what it thinks the truth is, but also how we should think and feel about it.

**Once we know how our mind works, we can take control of it.**

**When we take control of our mind we can produce more effective responses.**

Most of us have learned a typical response that we automatically apply when we receive input into our mind. The message comes in. We open the memory file associated with it and what is in the file dictates our response.

We can learn to modify how we respond. When we identify the response that we would like to change, we can develop a new and more effective response. It may not be as simple as it first appears because we may need to make several changes in order to make one correction. We sometimes need to keep searching for the cause of the problem.

Then we must do the work to overcome the old response pattern that we have in place (break the old habit).

**EXAMPLE:** Although we may be able to develop a reason-based response to a particular message, we may still become stressed by that message because the emotionally charged memory still exists and we have refused to act on it. This is referred to as stuffing our emotions and will require further corrective work to get our belief system and our old memory in harmony with each other.

We may, on the other hand, respond emotionally, but still be able to modify or control our response based on the input from our reasoning center. This is what we do in anger management.

In order to change our response in a way that works well for us, we need to be able to look at the information that we have in our memory file and align it with a new belief (truth) that we have installed in our belief system that tells us we should feel a certain way in a particular situation.

We will spend some time discussing how we can install new beliefs and align our belief system in such a way that we will no longer produce ineffective negative response patterns.

Once we understand how our mind functions, we can use that understanding to find the appropriate answer to any problem that is presented. We will be better equipped to recognize the old, ineffective beliefs and behavior patterns that we have adopted. We will have a better understanding of the process of change. We will also have an understanding that change is possible.

It is somewhat like having a problem with our car engine not running smoothly. If we understand how it works or have an instruction manual, we can better diagnose the problem and make the proper repairs in order to get it running smoothly again.



How to diagnose our mind's problems - how to get it running smoothly again - is what we are going to be talking about throughout this book.

### **Creating Our Reality and Our Truth**

We respond in a particular emotional way whenever we access a specific memory file.

The message we receive depends on the emotional charge existing in the accessed memory or memories. This is how we create our reality.

After a while, we are no longer able to separate the facts we received from the emotional assumptions we made.

Based on past perceptions, we merge our interpretation of the event with what really happened, and this becomes *our truth*.

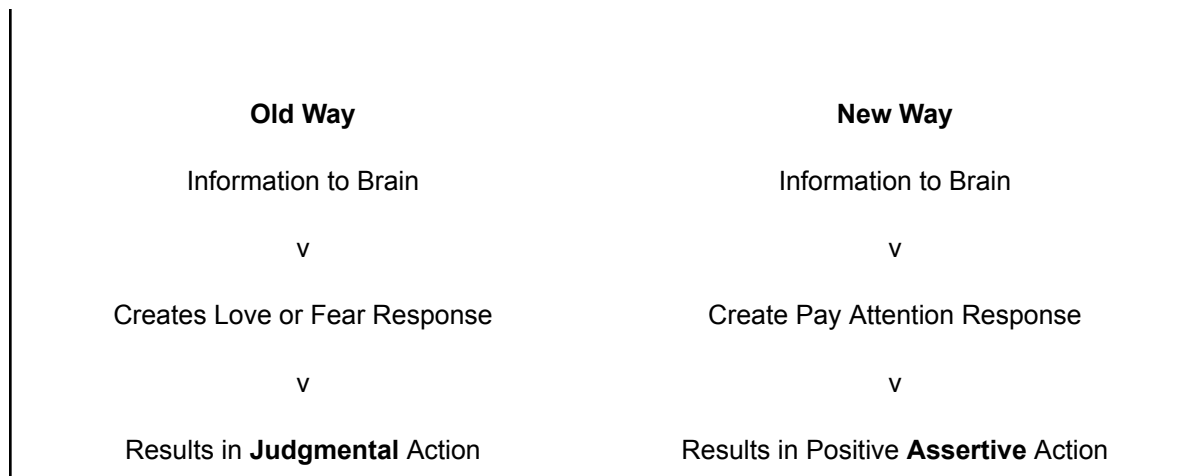
What we hold as our truth, then affects how we feel about the new messages we receive.

### **Changing the Way Our Mind Works**

We can change the way we process information in our mind. We can develop a process that will produce more effective results for us. By changing our belief system and modifying our old response patterns, we can learn to look for the most effective response in any situation.

The key is to learn to change our arousal (pay attention) response pattern from the old judgmental (love or fear) response that we have been taught, to a new pay attention, positive purposeful action pattern.

## **Changing Old Belief System to More Effective Responses**



I call the old pattern **judgmental** because it is based on first deciding good or bad before we go into our thinking/response. It is the way we have been doing things for a long, long time. It produces results based on our existing beliefs and memories. There are two major problems with this system:

1. It isn't very flexible. We always keep getting the same results whether they work very well or not.
2. When we are not satisfied with the results, it is very difficult to make changes.

I refer to the new pattern as **assertive** because it allows us to take control of our brain functions to the extent that when we find our behavior ineffective we are open to make changes that produce more effective results. Assertive behavior is love-based because we do what we want to do and we want to do what we do.

To develop this new assertive behavior system, we need to have a belief system that is open to change. Our belief system needs to change when:

1. It produces ineffective behavior.
2. It produces stress, because our belief system is not in harmony with itself.

The material in this book is designed to teach you how to make the shift to this new positive assertive way of thinking and acting.

# HOW OUR MIND FUNCTIONS

## Diagram #6

**Someone steps out in front of you *when we are driving down the highway*.** An activity that is potentially dangerous to us that we don't already know how to deal with.

**Judgmental System:** We search our reasoning to find out what we must do but our emotions are so strong that we are unable to think clearly in time to swerve around them.

**Neutral**

1. **Perception** is when we see the person step onto the highway.

**Negative**

2. **Recognition** or **Memory Files** sees this and recalls from an **Old Memory** that is a fearful situation.

3. **Recognition** or **Memory Files** signal our **Emotional Center** that we are in danger and must take some action to avoid harm.

4. The **Emotional Center** is too agitated to access the **Reasoning Center** and tells our **Automatic Response Center** to do something.

5. The **Emotional Center** is unable to send clear directions to our **Action Center**.

6. Our **Automatic Response** is unable to deal with this situation and finally, when it is too late, directs "turn the wheel sharply, something is in the way."

7. **Action:** Turning the wheel too late not only ends up hitting the person but wrecks the car.

## HOW OUR MIND FUNCTIONS

Diagram #7

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Driving Incident</b></p> <p><b>Assertive System:</b> The arousal (pay attention) message is processed by our reasoning, beliefs and habits calmly, quickly and efficiently enough that we are able to avoid hitting the person.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Neutral</b></p>
<p>1. <b>Perception</b> is when we see the person step out into the roadway.</p>
<p>2. <b>Recognition</b> or <b>Memory Files</b> signal that a problem has occurred and sends the message to the <b>Reasoning Center</b> for resolution.</p>
<p>3. The <b>Reasoning Center</b> assesses the situation and determines the most appropriate action to avoid an accident and forwards that information to the <b>Action Center</b>.</p>
<p>4. <b>The Action Center</b> directs the body which actions to take to prevent an accident.</p>

# **HOMEWORK**

## **DISCOVER WHAT UPSETS YOU**

1. For one week, write down each and every time you criticized or complained about something.
2. Write down every time you felt stressed.
3. Write every time you felt depressed.
4. Write down what you thought, how you felt and what you did in response to what triggered your complaint, stress or depression.
5. Was your response helpful?
6. How important was the issue that upset you?
7. Was there a better or more constructive way of dealing with the issue?

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**When I learn how my mind functions I will have control over it.**

**I can find positive solutions to my problems.**

**I do not need to be controlled by the actions of others.**

**I can trade my negative past for a positive future.**

**I can produce the life I want when I take control of my mind.**

**I am at peace when I make positive choices.**

## **LESSON 3**

### **ALL ABOUT FEAR & ANGER**

## **EXERCISE**

### **WHAT MAKES YOU ANGRY?**

In order to help you understand your anger better, make a list of all of the things you can think of that make you angry. Make another list of all the things that irritate you.

After each item on these lists, write down the beliefs and attitudes that might be contributing to your anger. Are you satisfied with your anger or do you want to change your response? You can use this list as a basis for creating a plan to eliminate anger from your life.

We learn to look at things in a certain way because that is the way we are taught to look at them. When elephants are young, they are chained to a large log. When they grow up and get accustomed to the heavy log, it is no longer necessary to use a log and a chain to hold them because they learn to believe they cannot get free. All it takes is a small cord and a stake driven in the ground to stop them. Because of our beliefs about what is possible, we frequently do the same things to ourselves. We learn to accept things the way they are – good or bad – even though other choices are possible. Like the elephant, we allow ourselves to be imprisoned by an idea.

## **The Chain of Events in Making a Choice**

**We perceive what the world offers.**

We react to particular circumstances and events according to our own particular beliefs.

**We accept what the world offers.**

Our beliefs about what happens and what should happen in the world affect how we respond emotionally.

**We choose to experience our life.**

What we choose to do in the world will change not only ourselves but also the world, and the way we feel about it.

**We respond to what the world offers.**

How we respond affects everything that happens after that.

**By the choices we make.**

The things that happen in our lives come into being as the consequences of our choices.

## **Anger-Inducing Beliefs**

We have many anger-inducing beliefs that hinder our progress in life. Such beliefs are the ones that create unpleasant feelings. They make us angry and depressed and don't help us to deal with life as it really is.

**These beliefs can include:**

- 1 Things should be the way I want them to be.
- 2 It is okay to get angry.
- 3 A parent should be harsh.
- 4 People are not trustworthy.
- 5 People should be punished for their mistakes.
- 6 Unless I express my anger and act aggressively, people do not notice me.
- 7 People are generally inconsiderate, selfish and self-centered.
- 8 People frequently disrespect me.

The problem is that if we see these beliefs as the appropriate way of dealing with things, then we think of our anger as appropriate or justified. Whether we like anger or not, we think that we must have it because we believe it helps us do what we are supposed to do.

Our fear or anger results from our appraisal of a particular situation, which in turn depends on the beliefs we hold, the thought processes we use, the attitudes we practice, and the way we look at things.

## **Attitudes That Lead to Anger**

Demanding, Blaming, Controlling, Being intolerant

## **Forms of Anger**

Rage, Irritation, Impatience, Intolerance, Complaining, Criticism, Sarcasm

## **Triggering Thoughts**

"I demand change." "I am frustrated." "They are doing the wrong thing."

"They are trying to hurt me." "That's not fair."

## **Thought Processes that Lead to Anger**

1. Selective perception – We only perceive what we want to (expect to) perceive.
2. Making unverified assumptions – We believe what we think the person meant, without verifying whether that is what they actually meant.
3. Dramatizing – We dramatize events in our own mind, and we look for the worst possible interpretation.



4. Defiance – We take an aggressively noncompliant position.
5. Over-generalizing – We read more into things than what was meant.

## 15 Things That Make Us Angry

1. Someone or something prevents us from reaching a goal.
2. We say yes when we mean no.
3. Someone attacks us, either verbally or physically.
4. We're unable to relieve our stress so it gets expressed as anger.
5. We feel that we have been treated unfairly.
6. We expect ourselves to be perfect—and we're not..
7. We expect things to go a certain way—and they don't.
8. We expect others to be perfect—and they're not.
9. We want to be right—and someone challenges or disagrees with us.
10. We expect things of others that they're unable to fulfill.
11. We take things personally.
12. We make promises that are difficult to keep.
13. Something doesn't work right, and we feel helpless to correct or fix it.
14. We don't like the way other people do things
15. People don't do what we expect them to do.

### **We get Angry when other people:**

Don't listen to us, don't respect us, don't trust us, don't appreciate us, tell us what to do,  
intrude on our privacy, manipulate us, hurt us

**We get Angry when we think:**

We are getting poor grades. We are losing control. We are being laughed at. We are being called incompetent. We are being called a loser. We are being ignored.

# **EXERCISE**

## **EVALUATE YOUR BELIEFS**

1. What beliefs do you hold that are upsetting you?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

2. What new belief could you put in place of the old one so that you would no longer be upset?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

3. Can you accept each new belief?

- 1.

2.

3.

4.

4. Are you ready to let go of each old belief?

1.

2.

3.

4.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **WHAT MAKES OTHERS ANGRY?**

1. Notice three people who get angry during the week at something that does not make you angry. Ask them why they are angry and try to determine why they are upset when others are not.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**I can always find positive solutions to problems.**

**When I become fearful or angry, I do not enjoy life.**

**I am capable of choosing whatever response I want.**

**I am upset or afraid because I choose to be.**

**I can learn how to not become fearful or angry.**

**As long as I think I should get angry, I will get angry.**

**Some things that make other people angry, do not make me angry.**

## **LESSON 4**

### **ELIMINATING ANGER**

## **EXERCISE**

### **LIST BENEFITS OF NOT GETTING ANGRY**

List the benefits for not getting angry.

### **The Case for Eliminating Fear and Anger**

A young boy was assigned a task by his father. He completed the task successfully. The father mistakenly believed that the boy had not completed the task. The father would not listen to the boy's explanation and punished him. The boy never forgave the father for his anger, and for his unjust punishment. He left home as soon as he finished school and only returned to see his father when he was dying. They were able to talk and at last each learned what had happened

and forgave each other. A lifetime of love between a father and son was lost because of their anger and the inability to forgive.

Once you decide to abandon fear and anger, you will begin to enjoy a richer life and a host of other benefits. Our ability to love, to be creative, to be at peace, to achieve our goals, and to enjoy our day-to-day living are greatly enhanced once we are no longer ruled by our fear and anger.

**Fear and anger are incompatible with love.** The way to experience love is to let go of fear and anger. Most of us spend a lot of time in our unpleasant emotions. The decision to be fearful or angry has powerful consequences. Once you make the decision to not get fearful or angry, you will notice how the absence of these unpleasant emotions will bring more love into your life.

They rob us of our enjoyment of life. Our unpleasant emotions rarely have a positive effect on other people. As a result of our fear and anger, we have fewer positive relationships. Our anger tends to prevent us from getting close to other people, because no one enjoys being around us when we are fearful or angry – unless they are feeling the same way about the same thing we are. Misery loves company – but who loves misery?

Learning unconditional acceptance of other people is a key to letting go of our unpleasant emotions, and when we do so, it can greatly enrich our lives. We are each unique individuals. We can be at peace with ourselves and with others when we accept that. Unconditional acceptance allows us to experience a more enjoyable, interesting, and rewarding life. When we give up feeling angry that others are not like us, we feel at peace, and we're able to experience a more satisfying and peaceful life. When we embrace the world, it embraces us back. Recognize and respect the differences in everyone.

Fear and anger interfere with efficient problem solving, creativity, accomplishments, and success seeking. They prevent us from using our best thinking and energy to accomplish all we want in life.

Without fear and anger we are able to put all of our effort into finding solutions. We are not inhibited by our sense of what should be. We are able to find original solutions. We free ourselves from the limitations that inhibit our creativity.

Another benefit of a life without our unpleasant emotions is the ability to appreciate the positive aspects of our life, rather than spending our time and energy being upset about the unpleasant ones. Not only does this enrich our life because we feel positive nearly all of the time, it actually allows us to live a longer and healthier life. Another special benefit: When enough of us feel this way we will stop killing each other as a way of solving our problems.

By eliminating fear and anger we enter a deeper state of calm and peace. In our innermost being we really do want to achieve Personal Peace, and **Personal Peace comes from letting go of our unpleasant emotions.** Personal Peace is a healthy choice. The principles in this

class will enable you to see the value in and give you enough information that you will be able to make this transition in your life.

Expressing fear or anger serves to make it stronger. Not only does it make it stronger, it establishes a habit of dealing with things in a fearful or angry way. When we do not respond to momentary irritations but instead distract ourselves with more pleasant thoughts, we will feel better and may well avoid unnecessary arguments with others.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **TALK TO OTHERS**

Discuss with your friends, family and/or teachers the benefits of not getting angry.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**I do not need to be fearful or angry to keep myself safe.**

**I will be a stronger person when I give up unpleasant emotions.**

**I do not need fear or anger to control other people.**

**When I give up fear and anger my pleasant emotions become stronger.**

**When I do not get angry I create fewer problems for myself.**

**When I am not upset I am more loving.**

**I get more enjoyment out of life when I feel loving.**

**When I get fearful or angry I am unable to be loving.**

**When I am not upset I am more effective at solving problems.**

**When I am not angry I am able to remain true to my own beliefs.**

**I am confident in my ability to learn new skills.**

Life Without Anger

Student Manual

## Part 2

# Creating New Patterns and Beliefs

**Lesson 5:** Creating a Positive Belief System

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**Lesson 6:** The Things that Make us Angry

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**Lesson 8:** Changing Your Emotional History

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## **LESSON 5**

### **CREATING A POSITIVE BELIEF SYSTEM**

## **EXERCISE**

### **MAKE GOOD CHOICES**



List some situations and relationships in your life that you are not happy with, or which you would like to be different in some way:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Think about each one of these situations, and choose to change them, leave them, or accept them.

Make a plan for how to make the desired changes.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

## **Observing and Understanding Yourself**

The son and the father we talked about in the last lesson wasted a lifetime of possibility and love just because they were unable to understand the effect that their belief in the wrongness of the other would have on their life. They were being true to their beliefs as they knew them to be. But because they were true to their beliefs they created unhappiness in their lives. What if they had taken just a moment to figure out what had really happened, and the impact their decisions would have on their life?

How do you go about changing yourself so that you will no longer experience anger? The first thing you need to do is to observe and understand what and how you think, and how you behave.

In order to know more about ourselves, we must develop the habit of observing how we react to all the messages sent to our brain. We can become observers of our own thoughts and actions

so that we realize how certain thoughts trigger certain actions, and how those actions make us feel. This will allow us to know immediately when something has gone wrong—that is, when we are responding with anger instead of love. Observing our thoughts and actions will also give us some clues about how to fix them when they are upsetting.

You can actually put a program in place in your mind that will function every time you open a mental file. This program will analyze the functioning of your brain by taking you through the following steps:

- **Identify** the message that came in.
- **Determine** which of your files you accessed with the incoming information.
- **Notice** how you processed the information once your memory files receive it. Notice what part of your brain processed the information.
- **Notice** how the information you already have stored in your file affected how you felt about the information you received.
- **Notice** what action you took and whether or not the outcome was as you would like it to be.

## Identify the Message

It is important to identify the sort of things that make you angry. Ask yourself what messages make you angry and acknowledge that these are your anger “triggers.” For example, an incoming message that triggers your anger might be: “I really get upset when someone doesn’t wash their dirty dishes.” or “I really get upset when my teacher gives me extra homework.”

## Determine the Belief File You Accessed

Determine what it is in your belief and response system that produces the anger response. For example, your belief system may have included the following: “Everything must be orderly and neat” or “I do not want to be late for dinner.”

## Determine How You Processed the Message After Your Memory File Received It

What part of your brain processed the information? Your emotional center? Your thinking center? How did the information you already have stored in that file affect how you felt about the information you just received? For example, maybe you react with anger when things aren’t as neat as you think they should be; or maybe you respond from both your emotional center and your thinking center when you find you will not be home for dinner as planned, because you know it will upset your family’s plans as well as your own.

## What Action Did You Take?

What action did your angry response motivate you to take? For example, did you shout at your family for leaving the dirty dishes on the table? Did you tell the teacher that you don't have enough time to do more homework?

## **Did You Find That Action Helpful or Not?**

Notice whether or not the outcome of your action was as you would have liked it to be. For example, in the above situation, you might have felt that the action you took made you feel both upset and angry with everyone involved and really did nothing to solve the problem, because the dirty dishes continued to be left on the table and your teacher made you do the homework anyway.

## **Compare Your Response to How You Responded to a Similar Problem in the Past.**

Was your response appropriate for the present situation—or did you simply go into “automatic pilot” and use a response you'd used in the past because it was readily available in your “file” of responses? For instance, in the above examples, wouldn't it have been better to just leave the dirty dishes on the table; or put them in the sink yourself?

Wouldn't it have gone better with your teacher if you had said to him that you really would like to do the homework, but could he give you more time because your family had a special project that you had to help with?

Perception is not a fact. It is a mirror of our thoughts. No two people see the world the same. What you are doing in this process of observing yourself is finding out how you see the world. Try to see how your problems overlap each other and are inter-related. Try to see how your way of looking at things always agrees with your entrenched beliefs. Try to see how this way of thinking causes problems for you.

Especially pay attention to how you are feeling. “Emotional awareness” is being aware of what feelings are actually occurring in your body. Try to be more aware of your emotions and note how they make you feel. See if your responses are in line with the way you think and act during the times when you are able to respond without feeling the emotion. Notice how you feel about the things that happen; especially the events, statements, or behaviors that bother you. Just the act of observing your emotions can take away some of the emotional charge. Watch what you avoid doing because the accompanying emotions seem unpleasant to you. Especially, notice when you are doing things that don't agree with your own thinking. When this happens, you are acting out of your emotional center. You need to make yourself aware of this so that you can determine why it happened, and what you can do to change your response the next time.

## **Making the Most Accurate Call As a Self-Observer.**

Although our objective is to be as rational and objective as we possibly can in observing ourselves, this is not an easy thing to do. Try to be objective, no labels and no judgments. Don't be tricked by your own prejudices and biases. Take the time to become aware of your own prejudices and biases so you will recognize them when they arise. It may help to ask yourself what the other possible answers are, or even, how would someone who has a different viewpoint see this event.

## **CREATING A POSITIVE BELIEF SYSTEM**

### **Examples of beliefs that do not produce anger:**

1. In the great scheme of life, this event is not all that important.
2. Life is just as it is. I am not the boss of life.
3. I accept ambiguity and uncertainty.
4. I am open-minded; I am tolerant of others' ways and ideas.
5. The goals that I am trying to achieve are just means, not ends.
6. I am always open to creativity and originality.
7. I take responsibility for my own direction in life.
8. I accept any answer as possible, and possibly okay for others.
9. I accept experimenting and risk-taking in myself and in others.
10. I look to what is in my overall best interests for my life, not just what's best for today.

Trust the universe. Move from a closed to an open system when viewing the nature of life and society. Learn to take the world-view that all is one. See value in the points of view of others. Consider moderation, balance, and open-mindedness. A balanced view increases your choices. See values and events in life as gray instead of black and white. There is no one way of looking at things and no one right answer. Always be aware of that.

### **Guidelines to help you create a belief system that's free of anger:**

- Choose to be caring of others.
- Do not see your interests as separate from others.
- Realize that being helpful and caring of others is in your own best interest—because you'll feel better and they will respond with love.

**Know that when you give love, love is returned.**

## **Characteristics of a person who is one with himself/herself, and one with the world:**

1. They trust in themselves and in the universe.
2. What they say, think, and do is in alignment.
3. They are not judgmental.
4. They are happy and are always expressing joy.
5. They are not defensive.
6. They give generously of themselves. Their attitude is: "How can I help?"

Work on changing your feelings and behaviors, as well as your thoughts. Making changes in your feelings and behaviors involves numerous thinking processes. You may need to make some deep philosophical changes in order to be the person you want to be.

## **I WANT A NEW BELIEF SYSTEM**

- I want to believe that the world is fair.
- I want to believe that everyone is honest and good.
- I want to believe that anything is possible.
- I want to be oblivious to the complexities of life and be overly excited by the little things.
- I want to live simply.
- I want to believe in the power of smiles, hugs, a kind word, truth, and peace.
- I want to believe in dreams, imagination, humankind, and having fun.
- I want to embrace, accept, and enjoy the world.
- I want to love and be loved.
- I want to be remembered with a smile.

If some of these beliefs seem uncomfortable to you, try to determine why you feel that way. Look at the positive side of that belief and see how it could benefit your life.

Pay attention to the beliefs you do accept. Work to align your other existing beliefs to be compatible with the ones you find acceptable. If your existing beliefs are in conflict, eliminate or

modify the ones that contribute to anger. You create internal stress when your own beliefs are in conflict with each other.

## EQ TOOLS

**Note:** EQ Tools are for the purpose of giving you something you can use continuously in your process of making changes in the way you respond to anger. If these tools are helpful, use them; if they are not, or you need more, develop new ones of your own that work for you. Most of you will find many of these tools helpful in making desired changes in the way you respond to anger. They are designed to be helpful in developing new habits.

## EQ TOOL

### CHANGING YOUR BELIEFS

- Write down a belief that you currently hold but that you want to get rid of.
  - Next, write down the new belief that you want to replace the old one with.
  - Make sure that you state that you reject the old belief and accept the new one.
  - Recite what you wrote until you feel, and fully accept, the change in your beliefs.

## EQ TOOL

### LEARNING ABOUT ANGER

- Locate someone who is a role model for behavior that reflects love, openness and creativity rather than anger.
- Find out what kind of thinking and beliefs are the foundation of their behavior.
- Ask them what benefits they derive from being free of anger.
- Ask them for suggestions regarding how to change your thinking.
- The next time you face an anger-triggering event, ask yourself how the role model would react in this situation—and model that behavior.

# **HOMEWORK**

## **ACT OUT NEW BELIEFS**

1. Write on 3 X 5 cards the old belief that you have along with the new belief that you want to put in its place.
2. Act out each new belief, being aware of the old belief it is replacing each time that you do so. Keep rehearsing the new belief until it becomes your normal spontaneous response. Every time that you revert to the old response refer to this card and practice again.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**The world is just exactly what I think it is.**

**I always act according to my own beliefs.**

**I can change any existing belief any time I want to.**

**Any time I become upset it is because I believe I should.**

**If I do not wish to be upset I must change the belief that caused me to be upset.**

**If I wish to be peaceful and happy I must change any belief that upsets me.**

**I am capable of locating and transforming my unpleasant memories.**

**I have accumulated many unpleasant memories that I must release to feel positive about my life.**

**If I pay attention and keep working I can replace my unpleasant past with a pleasant one.**

## **LESSON 6**

### **THE WAY WE LOOK AT THINGS**

## **EXERCISE**

### **RELEASE OLD ATTACHMENTS**

Think about some things in your past that you were once attached to but now no longer are. Think about how you are all right now that they are no longer in your life. Think about how you released the old attachment. Decide if you are happy with how you did it. If you are not, think about how you could speed up and/or ease the process.

Arun grew up in a rich and indulgent home and had everything in life that she ever wanted. Her family gave her a new car when she was in college and found the most educated and prestigious husband for her. They provided the money, so she could obtain everything she wanted. But she was not happy with life and contemplated suicide. Then she met Bal who had grown up in a poor but happy home. She loved him very much, but her folks said he was not



suitable for her. They found another suitable husband for her against her wishes and she ended an unhappy life at an early age because of her addiction to heroin. What if Arun had been open to embracing new beliefs other than those given to her by her family?

## **Perceptions**

Perception and recognition is the way we have of evaluating the information that comes to us through our five senses and includes the specific way that we interpret that information. Each of us sees life from our own frame of reference. Our differing perceptions are often the source of conflict and anger. If we understand and choose to accept our differences however, our dissimilar perceptions can become a source of wisdom, joy, and humor in our lives.

We tend to perceive information that supports the beliefs we have. First, we take note of the information presented to us that validates our belief systems, and we often fail to notice things that do not. Next, we interpret the information that we receive in a way that is consistent with our existing belief system.

## **Do you want to be Right or do you want to be Happy?**

We know our opinions stem from our thoughts, not from external truth. So, perhaps we shouldn't go to battle over our truths as we so often do. Although deeply held, your truths are not necessarily those of others. When you come to terms with this reality and place feeling good above the need to be right, you'll be taking a giant step toward eradicating the angry conflicts in your life.

Being for something and working to achieve it is a positive experience. Being against something and fighting to bring it down is a negative, anger-based experience. You can work just as hard, and more effectively, from the positive point of view as you can from the negative point of view. Even if you don't achieve any better results by being positive, you have prevented yourself from feeling the anger that comes from being against something.

Creating a more positive perception of a particularly difficult circumstance or event is always a choice that we have. We can even choose how we perceive the severe adversities of life. Whenever you feel depressed, check to see how important the circumstance really is that's making you feel badly. Looking at the bigger picture helps us to realize that things may not be as bad as they feel at the moment. And even if they are, feeling bad about them is just going to get in the way of solving the problem and recovering from the disappointment.

Our perceptions are not facts. They are mirrors of our thoughts in that we choose what to focus on. Our belief system determines how we interpret the information. The important thing to remember is that how we perceive a conversation with a loved one, the behavior of a friend, or our own personal performance depends on our unique frame of reference. If your perception results in a pleasant emotion, great! But if you are experiencing an unpleasant feeling, it is time to stop and review your perceptions and then try to determine why you are upset.

If you want your perceptions to deliver different results, you must make some changes. Learn to accept an unpleasant feeling as a signal that you may need a perception adjustment.

## **Judgments**

Judgment is the decision that we make about the information that we perceive. It is the thought that says to us, "This is what I believe based upon the information that I have received." Mostly we think of a judgment as agreement or disagreement with the information that we have perceived. But what is also included in a judgment are our existing beliefs and our own unique way of looking at things. In other words, judgments represent our assessment of the information that's been given to us, along with our beliefs, opinions, and perceptions.

Judgment comes from taking the things we perceive, processing them through our mind and coming up with an answer. The judgment we make may be based on our emotions, our thinking, or both. We think of a judgment in terms of deciding what the answer is. Many of us have a real need to choose an answer, just because we feel uncomfortable without one. When we judge we take sides, and we are always on the side that represents what we think is "the right answer." But what if we could give up the need to choose sides and were able to look at an issue from all points of view? How might that affect our inclination to become angry?

One way to reduce our susceptibility to anger is to be open to the possibility of other right answers for ourselves and for others. Just accepting the possibility that the answer may change if we have more information keeps us open to the idea that the judgment that we have made is only tentative and always subject to change. When we view a judgment in this manner, we don't have a strong emotional investment in it. And we find it easier to make changes when we receive new information that is not in agreement with our present thinking. It also makes it much easier to recognize when new information is not in agreement with our judgment.

Not only do others have a right to a different opinion, they most certainly will often have a different opinion. Anticipate and respect the opinions of others. Review them for any ideas that you may not have yet considered.

Unfortunately, we often relate to each other as if we are to be constantly judged. We think it is important to decide who is wrong and who is right. We think we need to be right. And if we are wrong, then we think we should suffer and be punished somehow. If there is guilt, then we think there must be blame. We try to control someone else's behavior by placing blame upon them. Most of the time, we don't even realize that we are doing this. But if we are practicing guilt and blame, we see the other person as threatening us, so we attack them. Because of their insecurities many people can be controlled by the power you create by placing blame. You may gain control, but do not expect a positive relationship to result unless you can actually find someone who enjoys other people having the power.

## **Acceptance**

Acceptance is making a personal emotional choice. It is taking what is said or what happens as being okay.

When we receive the circumstances and events that the world presents to us and realize that we can choose to just accept them as being so – we can eliminate a major source of our unpleasant emotions.

If we think we must have a certain result, then we are addicted to the outcome. If we desire a certain result, we have a preference. If we have no preference as to what the results will be then it is easy to be accepting. If we are accepting, then we have no unpleasant emotions attached to the event or to the outcome. We can also learn that we do not have to be emotionally attached to the outcome, even when we have a preference. We can accept the idea that we are willing to try things the other person's way.

For everything that happens in our life, there are three possibilities: (1) We can change it, (2) We can leave it, or (3) We can accept it. With each event in our life we need to make this choice.

Accept your own choices and be happy with them. When you have made a decision, learn to accept it until you make a new decision to put in its place.

You may feel a need to change because you find the choice you made was not right for you. However, you can learn to develop an attitude that you are doing the best you know how for right now, and you will change whenever you find a better way.

Be appreciative of what the world offers you. Be appreciative of what you receive from the world. Be appreciative that the world has so much abundance and so many opportunities for you to experience.

You will not find happiness and joy without appreciation. You will not find the new opportunities unless you recognize they are always there.

## **Attachments**

It is good to be attached to our positive goals. This attachment is part of the power that helps us attain those goals. Such attachment, however, should be limited to a continued focus on seeking your goal in a positive way. If a goal, or your pursuit of it, is no longer positive, then attempt to shift back to being positive. If you can't, then release the goal as something you no longer want in your life. Seeking a goal that is no longer positive; or seeking it in a manner that is no longer positive; produces negativity in our lives.

As soon as you realize you feel stressed by something, take that as a cue that you need to locate and modify or eliminate a contradictory belief. When we make choices that are totally aligned with our belief system we are comfortable with them and we feel no stress.

One of the greatest problems we humans experience is that we hang onto old attachments that no longer serve us, just because we have grown accustomed to them.

## **Expectations**

Everyone has expectations. They are at the very heart of being human. They reflect our ability to contemplate the future, to dream, to desire. Humans also have the ability to bring these expectations into reality. Why should fear or anger be the response to the failure to realize expectations? We could just as well choose to be amused when things don't meet our expectations. It is not the unfulfilled expectation that produces our fear or anger; it is our interpretation of why the expectation was unfulfilled. We can look at it either as a personal affront or in some other way, such as the funny side of life. For most of the small indignities of life, we would be much better off just laughing at them.

Too often we end up manipulating others to do things our way, without even realizing it. This creates unpleasant feelings because it is not what they want to do and they will therefore resist us. And this resistance will cause us both to be upset. This takes energy that could better be used in more constructive ways. Learn not to impose your own expectations on others. Learn not to expect from others.

Furthermore, the expectations of others are going to be different than yours, and when you assume they are going to be, or think they should be, the same as yours you cause yourself problems. We create conflict for ourselves all the time by assuming that others expect what we expect.

People tend to respond to you in the same way that you act. You will receive more trust if you offer trust. If you offer distrust, then that is what you usually get back. If you want to be free of unpleasant emotions, you will need to choose trust. It is well worth the risk of a few disappointments because the only way you are going to find many rewarding relationships is to give them a chance.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **REVIEWING YOUR JUDGMENTS**

Take any judgment that causes you anger and review it. Ask yourself, "Why do I feel this way?" "How would I need to think in order not to be angry?" "Can I accept this new way of thinking as being valid?" "If not, then why not?" "Do I want to change my thinking, or do I want to hold onto my anger?"

**If your choice is to change a belief,  
then start that process of change.**

## **EQ TOOL**

### **DISCONNECT YOUR ANGER BUTTONS**

Imagine that you are wearing a metal breastplate and on that breastplate, there is a button for each of the things that make you angry. If you start to feel angry when something happens, or someone says or does something, reach up with your finger and in your mind push and deactivate that button. You then feel that your “anger button” is deactivated and when others try to “push your button” it won’t work.

Remember that they may try to push another one when the first one doesn’t work so be ready to deactivate a second one if need be. You can even learn to deactivate your anger buttons ahead of time so that you are ready when someone tries to push them.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **PRACTICE YOUR RESPONSES**

You can decide ahead of time what behavior you want to respond with. Think it through. Decide how you want to respond. Rehearse your response and then apply it when the situation arises.

You can first practice this way of responding in situations that only make you slightly disturbed. Broaden to those that are more difficult as you master the technique.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **PRACTICE SELF-TALK**

Talk to yourself about what is going on and what you are feeling. Accept your failure. Give yourself strokes for your successes. Then move on to changing your behavior. Work with the things that bother you until you develop a new, anger-free behavior.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **DELAY RESPONSES**

Give yourself time to think before you respond. Decide never to make an immediate response when you feel an unpleasant emotion. If it must be dealt with immediately, count to ten before you respond. If you can leave it until later, make a date to deal with it later.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **REPLACE INEFFECTIVE RESPONSES**

1. Any time you feel angry, upset, stressed, or depressed; or you feel that you chose the wrong response, review the event and decide how you would have preferred to respond.
2. Practice this new behavior in your mind.
3. Rehearse it and be ready to use it the next time the same or a similar situation arises.
4. If the new response you have chosen doesn't seem to be the one you want, select another one and try again.
5. Write one example of where you have used this process and bring it with you to the next session.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **AVOID JUDGMENTS**

1. For one day, notice every time you make a judgment.
2. When you find yourself making a judgment, write it down.
3. Ask yourself: Did I need to make this judgment? Was there a better way of looking at the issue?
4. List what other response(s) you could have chosen

# EQ REFLECTIONS

When I judge things as good or bad I feel good or bad.

The more I am able to accept what is happening the better I feel.

When I do not require others to meet my expectations I am able to enjoy them as they are.

I cannot be in harmony with the world unless I accept what is happening in the world.

Others are not responsible for meeting my needs.

I can always improve my life.

## LESSON 7

### FORGIVENESS

## EXERCISE



# MAKE A FORGIVENESS LIST

**Make a list of grievances you have with:**

- Parents, family members and relatives.
- Your teachers at school.
- Other Authority figures.
- The accidents and misdeeds of strangers.

Once you have made this list, take the time to think carefully about each grievance until you can fully forgive each and every person on the list. Add new people and events to the list as you become aware of them.

## Forgiveness is for you

Back again to the story of the son who left home because he was unjustly treated by his father. Had the son been willing to forgive they could have shared a lifetime of love. Instead he chose to be poisoned by his own beliefs. Until too late he did not realize the great cost to his enjoyment of life that he had created just because he didn't believe he should forgive his father. Because he couldn't forgive his father he was also estranged from his mother, his brothers, and his sisters!

The lesson is that forgiveness is for your own benefit and has nothing to do with what the other person did and whether you are letting them off the hook or not.

Forgiving does not mean condoning the behavior. Even though you may have been cheated or hurt in some way, it is still appropriate to forgive. Forgiveness has nothing to do with right or wrong. Forgiveness is letting go of hurt from the past. Unfortunately, we learn from society and from our families, that not only is it okay to hold grudges, but that it is appropriate to do so. But hanging on to old anger prevents us from enjoying our life and can even make us physically ill. We live longer and better when we are able to forgive.

Holding onto anger and grudges wears us down, both physically and mentally. Tests show huge increases in heart rate, blood pressure, and muscle tension when people are thinking about old

angers they have not forgiven. Forgiving, on the other hand, improves your overall health and length of life.

Forgiveness allows us to stop re-running anger and blame. As long as we hold onto those, we keep replaying them. If we hold onto what causes pain, then we cannot practice any of the methods that can heal. Forgiveness is one of those methods, one of the spiritual acts that bring an end to our inner conflicts.

## **Forgiveness is:**

- Accepting the fact that a mistake was made and moving on.
- Correcting your perception that the other person's behavior is the cause of your anger.
- Not requiring that the other person to pay for your feelings.
- Not wanting to hurt the other person because they hurt you.
- Giving love where hatred is expected.
- Not allowing anything to hinder a relationship.
- Practicing unconditional love.

## **Forgiveness is not:**

- Simply forgetting what happened.
- Pretending that everything is alright.
- Feeling that things will work out, or that things will get better if we leave them alone.
- Comforting yourself with the fact that God will get retribution.
- Just not bringing up the past.

## **Victim Thinking**

In this world, many unpleasant, distasteful, and even tragic things are going to happen, and some of them are going to happen to you. Whether or not you are a victim does not depend on what happens to you. It is determined by what you think – by how you respond. Whenever you give someone the power over you in some way, you are choosing the victim role.

We also tend to make ourselves the victim of our own thinking. We grow up expecting certain things out of life, and when those things don't happen, we feel cheated. When something bad happens we tend to say, "What did I ever do to deserve this?" We find it difficult just to accept what happens because we get tied up in our own expectations and attachments.

## **Make the Decision to Find No Value In:**

1. Self-pity
2. Being a faultfinder
3. Punishing yourself
4. Punishing others
5. Being unhappy

**If you think you may be a victim of your own beliefs, ask yourself these questions. (Know if you feel you are a victim then it is your own belief that is causing it.)**

- Where is the evidence that this belief is true?
- Do I hold this belief based on my own independent thinking?
- Will this belief help me in my life?
- What has this belief done for me so far?
- How will this belief likely affect me in the future?
- How does it fit in with my other beliefs?
- Is there a better belief to replace it?

Enjoy the happiness and peace that come with forgiving. Once you feel how good forgiving has made you feel, it becomes easier to do.

Forgiving is a continuous process. Old hurts that we have not fully forgiven will continue to come up. We will face new challenges frequently. Once we have made the decision to forgive, we have work ahead of us. Be ever watchful. When you find something or someone you have not forgiven, focus on it until your forgiveness is complete. Once you have made the decision to forgive, you will find forgiveness becoming easier and easier.

# EXERCISE

## EXAMINE YOUR VICTIM BELIEFS

- List the things in life that you think are unfair.
- List the things at school that you think are unfair.
- List the things at home that you think are unfair.
- List the ways you think others are not fair with you.

Now take each of these items and try to analyze why it is unfair.

Ask yourself what you can do to change it.

If you choose to do nothing to change it, consider accepting it.

## HUMOR

Humor can be an effective way to prevent our unpleasant emotions from occurring. It is not possible to experience true humor and unpleasant emotions at the same time.

If you find something funny you are not looking at it in a negative way. When we look for the humor in every situation and respond with humor whenever possible, we tend to blunt the tendency to feel negative about something. Instead we transform it into a pleasant emotion. When we do this, we change the unpleasant situation or the event, whatever it may be, into a pleasant event from our point of view.

Humor can also be thought of as a way of re-appraising a situation. Because you have thought of something in a humorous way, you have changed it into an emotionally positive event. You have intentionally placed yourself in your pleasant emotions when you chose humor as a response. Also, this allows you to send the information to the thinking center of your brain in order to develop an effective reply. Thinking about something instead of just reacting, tends to remove or reduce the emotional impact.

It is also more difficult for others to be angry with you. By having a friendly and funny response that is not disrespectful of the position of the other person, you will be encouraging them to be friendly and positive as well. By laughing at yourself with others, you are refusing to play the victim role. Besides they will see no fun in picking on you if you are not going to be upset by it. You will make their attempt to use sarcasm to gain power ineffective simply by refusing to acknowledge it.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **LAUGH OUT LOUD!**

When you are feeling in a low mood or are disturbed by some situation or event, take the time to laugh. Laugh at yourself for feeling that way. Laugh out loud until you no longer feel upset. Find a “laughing partner” or join a “laughing club.” You can try laughing at yourself in the mirror. Although you may find it awkward at first, laughing out loud is a powerful anger-buster!

## **EQ TOOL**

### **FIND YOUR PEACE OF MIND**

To enhance your peace of mind, go out into nature, find a place to sit and reflect on the future. Think about how good life could be and what you have to forgive to get there.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **FOCUS ON FORGIVENESS**

1. Choose someone you would like to forgive and focus on forgiving that person during the week.
2. Write down your thoughts and feelings.
3. Report them back to class on how successful you were at forgiving the other person.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**As long as I do not forgive others I will have no peace.**

**I have no need to make others pay for their mistakes.**

**I am ready to forgive the past so that I can enjoy today and tomorrow.**

**The mistakes of others are my teachers.**

**In forgiving I find my freedom.**

**I have no interest in judging, only in creating happiness.**

## **LESSON 8**

# CHANGING YOUR EMOTIONAL HISTORY

## EXERCISE

### IDENTIFY NEGATIVELY-CHARGED FILES

Take the time to identify past experiences that have unpleasant feelings attached to them. Review each of these areas of your life:

1. School
2. Home
3. Health
4. Community
5. Relationships
6. Family of origin
7. Friends
8. Activities
9. Anything else that you can think of that disturbs you in any way

Write a list of the negative charged files in each of these areas. Come up with as many as possible. Do this on several different occasions to see if you can think of new items to add to the list.

### Your Memories

Charles worked for a company that milled grain. One day, he left the safety guard open on the milling machine. His friend Bob was working on the machine and he caught his sleeve in the equipment and in an instant, he lost his arm up to the elbow. Charles was haunted by this memory so much that could not even speak to Bob, or any of his relatives. Every time he thought about this he hated himself for what he had done. He became so angry and treated his children so poorly that they all left home as soon as they could, and they would never return to

visit. Charles had to give up his work in the grain milling factory because he could not even go near it without being upset by the old memory.

## **Reprogramming Your Memories**

Once we are aware of how to change the way we process incoming information, change our beliefs, change our biases (ways of looking at things), we are still left with one major problem. That is our memories. Our memories are all of the things that happened to us in our life. Every memory comes with a judgment attached to it.

The problem we have is that the judgment attached to a memory affects how we look at new events when they occur. For example, we may have a relative or friend who was killed in an avalanche. We may then transfer that to a fear of snow, or a distrust of weather forecasters. Also, we may have been cheated by someone and still feel angry whenever we even hear that person's name.

We can actually revisit those old memories that are upsetting to us and change the way we feel and think about them today. We can pay attention to old memories and change the ones that still have unpleasant feelings attached, so that they no longer do.

In dealing with existing positive and negative charges on our memories our goal is to remove or diminish unpleasant emotional charges and develop and intensify as many pleasant charges as possible.

**You are capable of feeling good about anything you want to.**

**If you see no advantage in feeling bad, why do it?**

We can apply our new belief system and way of looking at things directly to each old negative memory that we still hold. We use the new beliefs we have accepted and reprogram what happened in the past either as no longer negative or as totally forgiven. We will then have a new feeling about the old memory when we next revisit it.

You can use the concept that we previously discussed of learning to be a problem solver to help you eliminate or change old unpleasant, negative memories. Open up an old memory with this idea in mind. Think about how you could have handled it differently to achieve a positive result. Then realize that you now have a positive answer to that situation when and if it arises again. Feel good about yourself. Decide that you no longer need to hold on to the old unpleasant feeling it generated. You can now handle this without feeling negative, you can just release the unpleasant thought and let it go and feel good about yourself for the lesson you have learned.

If you reach the point where you have been able to open all your unpleasant memories and reprogram them so that they no longer elicit unpleasant feelings, you will no longer feel fear or



anger. You will have changed your thinking, and your life, because you no longer think and act the same.

You may find memories with which it is extremely difficult for you to change the attached feelings. You may have to keep working on removing the negative charge over and over again. Each time you still feel the unpleasant emotion when an issue relating to that memory comes up, do the work again. As you go along you will find additional memories that have been hidden away for a long time. You will then need to work on them to remove the negative charge. For example, perhaps you will unearth a hidden file containing the memory of an old acquaintance from childhood that you are still angry with because he or she shamed you in some way. Perhaps the shame is still affecting how you feel about people in general and is therefore also affecting the unpleasant feelings relating to other memories and how you respond in general. As new things keep coming up, you will also find that you must go back into areas you have already made changes in and make additional changes.

You will also find that in some cases you will have to repeat the process several times before you can access a memory and no longer feel a negative charge. In some cases, you may think the negative charge is gone, and then you find it coming back later. This is normal. Do not be too concerned. Just keep making changes wherever and whenever you find unpleasant emotions persist.

What is already in your mind (memory) when prompted by the negative *trigger* is what is at the root of your feeling. By reprogramming our memories so that they are no longer negative, we are using our new belief system and our new way of perceiving events to review our past and to change how we feel about it. As we engage in this process, we find that the *trigger* no longer has the same effect. Without the negative charge on our memories, we no longer employ the beliefs and perceptions that created our unpleasant feelings in the first place.

Now that you know how to evaluate and process incoming information, you can open your existing files and change the charge attached to them from negative to positive, to match your new belief system. As you engage in this practice, you will find that removing negative charges from old memories and new events can be the key to an existence that is free of the unpleasant emotions that make life so difficult for others.

## **Examining a Negatively-Charged File**

Open the file in your mind that contains: "How I feel when someone breaks a promise to me." What kind of charge do you have on this file? Typically, it will be a negative charge. Figure out why you feel negatively and come up with some ways to change your thinking so that you no longer attach a negative charge to this particular file. For example, if waiting for a friend who is always late is one of the instances which you must learn to deal with, then when "someone breaks a promise and doesn't show up on time," come up with options to deal with this event. You can decide to either go without your friend or wait for him. If you choose to wait for him, prepare yourself for his being late by bringing along a book or deciding to people-watch, or any other event you will enjoy, that will occupy your time. Remind yourself that you have made this

choice, fully aware that your friend will likely be late. If you get angry, you need to realize that you are responsible for your anger because you made the choice to wait for a friend whom you know is always late.

## **EXERCISE**

### **CHANGE FILE CHARGES**

1. For each item that you have identified on your anger, stress or other unpleasant emotion list, open the file in your mind and examine it.
2. Determine what belief(s) you have that makes this file a cold prickly.
3. Consider what beliefs can be changed to remove the negative charge from this file.
4. What way of looking at things (filters) will help to remove the negative charge, i.e. humor, expectations, judgment, or acceptance.
5. If you are unable to remove the negative charge with a simple review then apply the forgiving old anger process.
6. If that doesn't work then review and evaluate.

Set up a program to put a positive charge on all of your files that still have negative charges attached to them. Do this with all of your files that still have negative charges attached to them. You will need to prioritize because you will be unable to change more than a few files at the same time. Just keep working. You will be able to find plenty to do.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **CHANGE NEGATIVE MEMORIES**

1. During the next week, use this exercise to find, explore and change one or more negative memories.
2. Write down your thoughts and feelings to bring back to class.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**As long as I do not forgive others I will have no peace.**

**I have no need to make others pay for their mistakes.**

**I am ready to forgive the past so that I can enjoy today and tomorrow.**

**The mistakes of others are my teachers.**

**In forgiving I find my freedom.**

**I have no interest in judging, only in creating happiness.**

## **Part 3**

# **Shifting from Anger to Joy**

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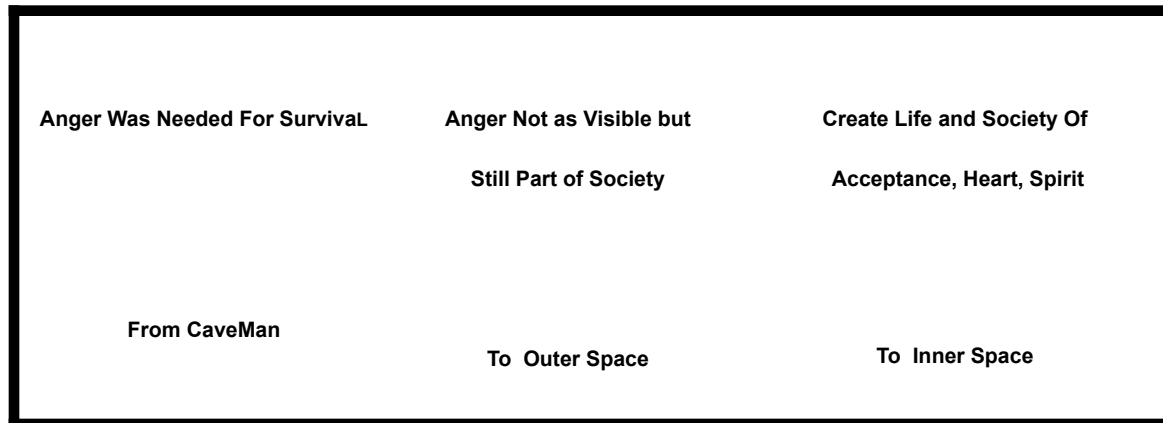
## **LESSON 9**

### **THE PROCESS FOR CHANGE**

# EXERCISE

## THE COST/BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF ANGER

- List the benefits / good things anger does for you.
- Are there other ways to receive these same benefits?
- List the costs of your anger; the problems anger causes you (and others).
- Think about them.
- Decide whether you would like to keep your anger or get rid of it.



Stephen was now forty-one years old and unhappy with the life he was leading. His bad moods had cost him his friends. He wasn't advancing in his work. His family no longer enjoyed his company. His life was miserable, and he didn't know what to do about it. Then he met an old friend from school who he thought would never amount to much. The old friend spoke of how he had learned to look at life differently because he had found this book which showed him how to give up his anger and develop a new and more positive way of looking at life. Stephen thought to himself, "If only I had learned that in school I would not have experienced all of those years of unhappiness."

## The Value of Change

Not having anger is such a freeing feeling. You never have to go to bed at night trying to figure out how to get even. You no longer have to judge how other people are acting. You just accept the world as it is presented to you. You spend your time thinking about the best way to make it work for you. You are able to focus on making decisions that allow you to fully enjoy life. And you do fully enjoy life.

**If you value happiness, if you value joy, then make the choice to not allow anger into your life. Just knowing that a life free of anger is available to you once you make the choice to enjoy it, will make you feel better immediately.**

**Choose to take control of your own life. Don't leave it in the hands of anyone who happens to annoy you.**

A grudge is a heavy load for anyone to carry, and life is so much lighter without it. Although cold pricklies will be offered to you at every turn, you always have the option of refusing to accept them. And when you realize that it is your own thinking that has to change, not other people's behavior, you are making the choice to take control of your anger and your life.

**The management of our emotions is subject to the laws of learning, as in everything else we do.**

Once we learn a more desirable way to deal with our emotions—so that anger is deflected by supplanting it with a positive thought or idea—we are motivated to make the change. Once we learn how to make the change, it is just a matter of doing the work.

We can learn to embrace fully our pleasant emotions and, at the same time, reduce and even eliminate our unpleasant ones by changing our belief system and by changing the way we process the messages that come into our mind.

Many elderly people come to the realization that anger is not worth the toll it takes. They have had enough time to eventually learn the lessons, on their own, from the school of life. With these lessons in mind, they become successful at letting go of their anger. But we don't have to wait until we're older to enjoy a life that's free of anger. We can learn to do it now, before we waste one more day holding onto grudges, judgments, and bad feelings.

To let go of anger, we have to rearrange our thinking so that we choose the belief system of love over the belief system of personal ego. Creating loving relationships is in our own interest as well as the interests of those with whom we come into contact. They will respond positively to our loving nature because that is what they seek in their own lives.

**If we can learn to forgive, then we open our hearts and our lives.** Remember you are the one who receives the primary benefit of your forgiving. The benefit to the other person is a nice side effect that may pay great dividends to you as well.

**We create our own anger, and therefore we can eliminate it.** We can learn how to change our thoughts, feelings, and actions and thereby reduce our emotional distress. The time to be joyful and happy is always now. Don't put it off until later. Examine the things that you believe make you unhappy. Be willing to change your belief system by affirming, "I want a new belief system—I want to believe in the power of smiles, hugs, a kind word, truth, and peace. I want to believe in dreams, imagination, mankind, and having fun."

**We can choose a peaceful mind as our only goal in all relationships.** We can train our minds to choose peaceful thoughts. Peace is inevitable for those who offer peace. Once we have experienced how pleasant it is to live in a positive state of mind, hanging onto negative thoughts becomes less and less attractive. As we learn to stop upsetting ourselves with our own thoughts, the rewards we will receive will make the work it takes to change seem insignificant.

We have the free will to choose the thoughts we put into our mind. Just as we are not bound by our society's rules to think as others do, we are not bound to think as we used to think. Unchain yourself from the past. Choose to have no anger. Choose happiness.

## **THE TOP TEN BENEFITS OF NOT HAVING ANGER:**

1. We feel good.
2. We like ourselves.
3. We like other people.
4. Other people like us.
5. We experience much less conflict.
6. We have more capacity to love.
7. We function more effectively.
8. We are healthier and tend to live longer.
9. We get more out of life.
10. We are happier.

## **Making the Plan**

Now you have reached the point where you have decided to get rid of all of the unpleasant emotions in your life – or at least some specific emotion that is particularly upsetting to you. Once you have made the commitment, you must develop a plan so that you can successfully make this change.

# **MAKING A PLAN TO RID YOURSELF OF FEAR AND ANGER: 6 ESSENTIAL STEPS**

1. Decide that you want to respond to everything in your life – or at least some specific thing, or things – with only pleasant emotions.
2. Develop a clear statement of your decision so that it is clear exactly what it means to you.
3. Consider what changes must be made in your belief system, in order for you to follow through with your commitment. Determine which old beliefs you must give up and which new beliefs you need to acquire.
4. Determine what new response patterns you will need to develop as alternatives to your old behavior.
5. Determine what you need to do to acquire these new response patterns.
6. Dedicate yourself to implementing the plan.

## **Some Important Points to Consider While You Develop Your Plan**

- Analyze important problems that cause your upset.
- Avoid working on too many problems at once.
- Set realistic goals and avoid “deadlines.”
- Assume that you can find an effective alternative to your old negative response.
- Evaluate the pros and cons of a fear-based versus love-based response.
- Try several possible love-based responses to see which works best.
- Find out how others have made the desired change/s successfully.

Remember that you don't have to come up with the perfect plan or the ideal alternative to an undesired negative response. You just need to find one that will work for you. Unless you choose a new behavior that is desirable to you, you will never be able to make it work for you. It will never feel right because it won't fit into your belief system.

The relevant questions are, “How much work do I have yet to do?” and “What work do I need to do to get there?” Consider your behavior as “good” when it helps you achieve your goals and as “unacceptable” when it does not. Accept your negative responses as an opportunity to learn what not to do next time. They are another step toward your goal rather than a sign of failure.



Remain committed to your goal of eradicating unpleasant emotions and stick with your plan – or alter it if it isn't working for you. Devise a way to check yourself regularly to see if you are still focused on your goal. Initially, you will benefit from a daily "progress check."

## **Change requires:**

1. Understanding where you are.
2. Knowing where you want to go.
3. Learning what you have to do to get there.
4. Setting out on the journey.
5. Continuing regardless of any setbacks, until you have arrived.

## **THE REASONS PEOPLE FAIL WHEN THEY TRY TO CHANGE:**

1. They don't commit themselves fully.
2. They don't learn what they need to do.
3. They don't clearly define their goals.
4. They don't allow enough time.
5. They don't persevere.
6. They don't learn to deal with complexity.
7. They don't maintain effort until change is total.
8. They don't recognize and reward themselves for small changes.
9. They don't recognize their progress.

## **ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE TO REMOVE ANGER FROM YOUR LIFE:**

1. Make the choice.
2. Commit to doing the work.
3. Make the commitment to carry it through.
4. Learn what to do.
5. Act on your choice.
6. Keep acting on it.
7. Accept each error with grace.
8. Re-evaluate at each error.
9. Re-dedicate at each error.

10. Keep working toward your goal.

## **Some important points to consider while you are developing your plan:**

1. Analyze important problems that trigger your anger.
2. Avoid tackling too many anger-triggering problems at once.
3. Set realistic goals and avoid “deadlines.”
4. Assume that you can find an effective alternative to anger.
5. Evaluate the pros and cons of an anger-based versus love-based response.
6. Try several possible love-based responses, to see which works best.
7. Find out how others have made the desired change/s successfully.

Remember that you don't always have to come up with the perfect plan or the ideal alternative to an anger-based response. You just need to find one that will work for you. Unless you choose a new behavior that is desirable to you, you will never be able to undertake it and use it to replace your old, angry behavior. So, choose a behavior that fits your personality, rather than one which you think might make someone else like you better.

Deciding to actually enjoy this journey will make it much more pleasant. Learn to think of life as a process instead of in terms of goals that you are trying to achieve. If you focus only on goals, you are not going to be happy until you have achieved them. If you focus on the process, you will enjoy working to achieve the goals. Since we spend so much of our lives working to achieve goals, it makes sense to enjoy ourselves in the process.

Initially, learning to not experience unpleasant emotions may seem like a lot of work. As you keep working to bring about the change, however, it will become much easier and you will find that the fear or anger flares up much less frequently. One day you will say to yourself, “Gee, I can't remember the last time I felt upset!”

Remember to frequently evaluate your progress in reaching the goal of “no fear or anger.” Focus more intensely on your successes than on your failures. Encourage yourself. Acknowledge and appreciate the results.

Dedication to and maintaining the commitment requires thought, feeling, and behavior change – none of which are particularly easy. So give yourself credit and keep telling yourself how much harder your life will be if you don't change.

**The benefits are worth all the work; many times over. Be willing to do the work, knowing that peace and joy lie ahead.**

## **Creating the Plan**

First decide that you no longer want to experience anger under any circumstances. Then decide that **any time you feel anger, it is a response that you refuse to accept as appropriate.** No ifs, ands, or buts – it would be your mistake to have an angry response to anything, and it is your mission to correct it. Never waste time trying to place the blame for your anger on someone or something else.

## **Once you have made this decision, the rest of the commitment is as follows:**

**Any time that you experience anger, it is your job:**

1. To get over it.
2. To examine what happened to make you angry.
3. To determine what you need to do in order to not respond with anger the next time.
4. Do what you need to do to make the change from angry response to non-angry response.
5. Keep practicing until the change is complete.
6. Appreciate yourself every time you make the change to a non-angry response.

Every single time you experience anger, you should put yourself through this process. Remember that I am not just talking about stuffing the anger. I am talking about actually learning to be free of the feeling. There is a critical difference.

## **ESSENTIAL EXERCISE!**

### **YOUR PLAN TO REMOVE ANGER**

### **(YOUR KEY TO SUCCESS!)**

1. What anger(s) do I want to remove from my life?
2. What I plan to do with my anger.
3. What changes do I need to make in my belief system?
  - (A) What old beliefs must I give up?
  - (B) What new beliefs must I install?
4. What new response patterns do I need to develop?
5. What do I need to do or learn to make this change?
6. I, \_\_\_\_\_ recognize the value of being a positive person and hereby dedicate myself to making the changes in my beliefs and actions necessary to live a “Life Without Anger.” Dated \_\_\_\_\_

## **HOMEWORK**

### **WORK YOUR PLAN**

1. Take your Plan home and USE IT.
2. Anytime you experience an unpleasant emotion before the next class, remember your plan and put it into action.
3. Ask yourself, “Why did I become negative, and how can I change so it won’t happen again?”
4. Be prepared to share your experiences.

# **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**I see no greater goal in life than being peaceful and joyful.**

**I am willing to give up the possibility of failing to achieve my goal.**

**I am willing to learn the lessons I need to learn.**

**I am willing to maintain focus on my goal.**

**I am willing to continue until I replace my old negative habits with new positive habits.**

**I accept myself as a person who is always peaceful and joyful.**

## **LESSON 10**

### **USING THE PROCESS**

## **EXERCISE**

### **CHANGE YOUR RESPONSES**

Think about something that makes you respond with anger. For example, maybe your big brother hits you.

Find a solution to this situation that you are comfortable with and that doesn't leave you with an unpleasant feeling. The next time this situation occurs, use the new solution. If it doesn't work the first time, don't give up. Modify your response or find a better way to present it. If that still doesn't work, then keep trying until you find one that does.

Stephen talked about his secret to success. It was simple; he had just learned a new way of thinking. He had learned that our life is determined not by what happens to us, but instead it is determined by what we think and do about what happens to us. Once he learned this lesson, whenever he found something in his life that troubled him, he went about changing himself and his life until he was no longer troubled.

## Implementing the Plan

Implementing your plan to remove unpleasant emotions from your life involves practicing new responses, breaking old habits, and creating new ones.

Whenever we receive information through our senses into our mind we instantly process that information; choose a response, and then act. We have little control over the information that comes in. We can, however, have complete control over the action we choose to take! In order to choose a different response than the one we've habitually chosen in the past, we must change the process in such a way that we will make a different choice the next time we receive the same type of information. The options we choose in order to shift from a fear-based to a love-based response involve changing the way incoming information is processed. This means that in order to change, we do not focus on the problem itself, or on our response. Instead we must focus on how we internally process the problem.

It might be helpful at this point to go back and review **Lesson 2: How the Mind Works** so that you will be able to better understand the process for making changes. Once you are familiar with how our mind functions it will be easier for you to change from judgmental thinking to assertive thinking and develop new beliefs and response patterns.

Once we habituate behavior, we find it is difficult to change. Once we create or accept responses based on our unpleasant emotions, we often hold onto them and have difficulty giving them up.

Once behavior becomes habitual, avoiding it becomes a challenge – even when we know it’s the right thing to do. Acting in the way we always have will obviously feel “natural” to us. But when we commit to and make a plan for changing that behavior, so that a new positive way of responding can take its place, that new behavior will soon become “natural.”

## **GUIDELINES FOR STICKING TO YOUR PLAN**

1. Create your plan.
2. Resolve to stay focused on your plan.
3. Determine to act on your decisions.
4. Acquire knowledge about how to follow through with your plan.
5. Start acting on that knowledge.
6. Be steady and persistent.
7. Accept your failures graciously.
8. If you fall back on your plan, re-dedicate yourself.

## **Rehearsing Positive Behavior**

Rehearsing a desired behavior is almost as good as doing the real thing. By repeating an action again and again, you create a new path in your brain and use it until the new response becomes habitual. The more times you practice (or rehearse) the poem, the math lesson, or the positive response, the closer you get to that behavior becoming automatic.

You might find it valuable to act out your positive response with another person, who takes on the role of your “coach.” We know the value of having a coach in sports; likewise, having someone who tells you when you’re on track with your new positive behavior, and when you’re not, is tremendously helpful. For example, you could practice with a friend what your next response will be with a teacher who always makes you angry, a parent who tends to push your buttons, or a neighbor who refuses to be a good neighbor. Have your “coach” take the part of the “anger-causing” person and rehearse with them how you plan to respond the next time.

## **Assessing Your Progress**

How do you maintain your improvement? An important part of implementing your plan is figuring out what to do when you lapse back into your old way of responding. When you fall back:

1. Try to pinpoint what you changed to bring about your original improvement.
2. Keep thinking and rethinking.
3. Keep discovering and disputing related anger issues.
4. Assess your progress.
5. Decide how to continue.
6. Observe how you are doing.
7. Plan new possible moves.
8. Reflect on how you are doing.
9. If you need to, revise your plan and continue.

If this still doesn't work, then the problem may be more complicated. Go back and change the feelings you have associated with the related memories. Look for beliefs that you may need to change. You may end up finding old anger that needs to be released. Continue to be your own "anger detective" until you figure out what part of the process you need to work on to enable the change.

Always review events that make you feel fearful or angry, or that elicit complaints or criticisms from you. Write down what happened and how you felt. Reviewing what took place and expressing it in writing will help you form a judgment about how you should best view the event. Always look for any way you can change your thinking so that you will no longer experience unpleasant feelings in that situation. In reviewing your behavior, replay the situation the way you would like it to be. Regard undesirable results as water under the bridge. Accept your failure. Figure out why it happened. Determine how you can behave differently the next time. Re-dedicate yourself to doing whatever it takes to rid yourself of your unpleasant emotions.

Don't forget to review events when your response was positive and not based in fear or anger. Acknowledge your progress and give yourself credit! If you are happy with your response, this will reinforce it. Think about applying this response and the lesson you learned to other situations as well, in order to build on your success. Congratulate yourself for responses you are satisfied with – even when you might be tempted to consider them "no big deal." Even small triumphs help to create bigger ones. So always take a moment to appreciate your successes.

As with unpleasant responses, it is also helpful to write down those instances when you successfully made the desired change. Keeping track in this way helps you appreciate your progress. Consider keeping a diary on each of the problems that you are dealing with so that you can better understand and track your progress.



# **HOMEWORK**

## **IMPROVE YOUR PLAN**

1. Keep working with your personal plan.
2. Assess your progress.
3. Adjust your plan.
4. Write down your successes and challenges to share in class.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**I am ready and enthusiastic about becoming a peaceful person.**

**I am ready to do the work to break my old habits.**

**I will set my plan in motion and keep it moving.**

**I will keep practicing the correct response until it becomes natural.**

**I will keep track of my progress.**

**I will appreciate and celebrate each of my successes along the way.**

# LESSON 11

## CREATING POSITIVE COMMUNICATIONS

### EXERCISE

#### USE PARAPHRASING

A powerful way to diffuse someone's anger is to objectively summarize back to him or her, in a calm way, what you think they said to you. Don't add your own interpretations or feelings. Simply summarize their ideas and feelings. Use your thinking center to stay centered. This is not easy at first and requires a lot of practice and developing good listening skills. You can say something like. "I understand that you are telling me \_\_\_\_\_ and that you feel \_\_\_\_\_ about it. Is that right?" If not, ask. "What am I missing?"

Michael was a very outgoing person, but he found getting along with other people to be difficult. They never understood him. And he never understood them. People were always asking him to do things he didn't want to do. And they never seemed to do what he wanted them to do. Then one day someone said to him, "if you take the time to understand what other people want and figure out how to give it to them they will start caring about you, and then you will get what you want." This didn't make much sense to Michael because he believed other people would just take advantage of him. However, he thought, "What can I lose?" and decided to give it a try. Today Michael is the president of a large manufacturing company and his employees are all his friends.

## Meaningful Communications

Most often the anger directed toward us is due to the other person having different expectations than our own. They are operating under the assumption that we will act toward them in a certain way; and when we don't, they get angry. They may have very different beliefs and be totally unaware of our point of view or motivation; or they simply may be very different from us in many ways.

In dealing with another person's emotions, it is important to be aware of the fact that the other person wants something to come out of their relationship with you. The key is to understand their expectations, and to help them understand yours.

Such mutual understanding is brought about by meaningful communication. Rather than expecting the other person to feel the same way as you do about the situation that has made them upset, make a real effort to find out how they are thinking and feeling about something. In order to get a good understanding of what's driving their upset, so that you can ultimately diffuse it, you need to practice your listening and communication skills.

## **How Listening and Communicating can Defuse Anger**

Train yourself to be a good listener by learning how to "listen deeply." To do this, you must put your own thoughts and beliefs on hold, and really focus on what the other person is saying.

Unfortunately, most conversations can be characterized as "my stuff/your stuff." They can be likened to a strange game of tennis – played with separate balls. You serve your ball to me. I let it pass and serve my ball to you. You let it pass and serve your ball back to me. The game continues in this way – with neither player returning the other person's ball. In such an instance, it obviously isn't a game at all. And in a conversation with the same characteristics, it's not really a conversation at all. You want to tell your story and I want to tell mine. We never hear the other person's story because we are too busy telling our own. How many conversations have you had lately that went that way?

We can defuse another person's anger simply by putting an end to the "my stuff/your stuff" game and truly listening to that person. Very often when you give an upset person the courtesy of politely listening to what they have to say, without interrupting them or retaliating in anger, their anger is reduced. And they will be better able to listen to your story after you have fully listened to them.

As you are listening; focus on the feelings being expressed by the other person, rather than the strict meaning of their words. The feelings are the most important part of any message. When a friend tells us, "Billy hit me," we tend to focus on the act instead of how the friend feels. If you can respond in a way that lets the friend know you understand how he feels, this will tend to

calm him down. For example, “It sounds like you feel hurt and angry.” Learn to deal with an angry person’s feelings in this way. Their feelings are usually far more important to them than the event itself.

Most people find it very difficult to directly express their feelings. When someone makes an angry remark to you, learn to put yourself in his or her shoes. Becoming aware of what the other person is experiencing emotionally requires that you set your own feelings aside. Look to see if you have caused their anger in any way. Look to see how you might be causing the disturbed feelings.

## EQ TOOL

### COMMUNICATING TO DEFUSE ANGER

**Try this:** Summarize what you think the upset person has said, without injecting anger or disbelief into your statement. Repeat both the ideas and feelings that you believe they have expressed. Hearing their own sentiments expressed back to them in a calm way tends to pacify an angry person. Getting their passion acknowledged and their needs met defuses their anger and helps them to move from their emotional center into their thinking center. You may need to repeat your “calmed down version” of what you think they were trying to express, but if you can learn to be patient with an angry person and employ this method, you will validate them and eliminate or reduce their anger.

Be friendly to the person who is upset with you. Establish a bridge. Communicate kindness and this will likely change the way they relate to you. It will be difficult for them to maintain their anger at someone who is being pleasant and kind.

When you communicate with someone who may be feeling a lot of anger, the best way to deal with him or her is to show a genuine interest in them as a person and in the way that they view life. You’ll likely find that when you communicate in this way, their defenses will drop and their hearts will open. Your authentic concern is a powerful diffuser of anger. You can learn how to show concern without validating their fear or anger.

**Another very important aspect of communication that we often neglect is to understand the meaning that the other person has for the words they choose.**

You make use of a word one way and the listener may apply their own meaning to the word which is different from what you intended. This means that you haven’t really communicated very well at all. When the response you get is not what you expect, make sure that you and the other person really understand the same meaning for all of the words. Always be vigilant that

you both are using the same meaning for words. Realize that you often are not. Try to define or choose your words more precisely when ambiguity is possible. Always be receptive of the other person's definition of a word as appropriate; because it is for them.

## **Feeling Compassion for Other People**

Most people naturally love and want love returned. It is part of our nature to love others. Ask yourself this question: How can I react toward others to prevent pushing their anger buttons? Once you have identified these “hot” buttons” you can adjust your behavior so that it will not incite or intensify the anger of others.

You can choose to see everyone as either loving or fearful. We offer compassion and help to the fearful, not anger.

If you have compassion, then another person's anger will no longer cause you to become angry. Compassion is possible only when you have an understanding of what that person might be going through. Once you learn to be more aware and caring about the other person's feelings, it will be much easier for you to develop responses that are not anger producing.

Be aware that the other person's anger is usually not incited by something you said to them. It usually originates from some underlying problem or belief that he has in his life that has nothing to do with you.

Learn to see that the angry person is the cause of his own anger, and the fault does not lie with you. He has the problem, the most you can do is supply him with a reason. If you feel compassionate you will try to avoid providing him a reason.

**Celebrate your successes—**

**large and small**

**Anger is a message that can be read as a cry for help**

“Pay attention to me.” “I don’t like what you are doing.” “Restore my pride.” “Give me justice.” “You are in my way.” “I am afraid.” Think of a person who is angry as a person who is in need of help.

To most of us, anger seems personal. If someone gets angry with us, we feel they deserve retaliation. That kind of thinking only serves to escalate the anger and perpetuates all sorts of problems. This is one of the reasons that nations go to war with each other. When you learn to become compassionate and to fully convince yourself that you can withstand the angry jibes other people send your way, then you create choices for yourself. You can then choose to either turn away from the angry person or to stay with them and enjoy their positive attributes. You may even enjoy showing them how they can be less angry just by your example. With compassion as your guide, you will be less likely to receive other people’s anger because you will be creating a more loving environment in which they will respond much more positively.

**When and if you get angry, acknowledge your anger and decide what to do with it.**

Recognize and embrace anger when it surfaces, instead of suppressing it. The first step to overcoming your anger is to acknowledge that it is present and that you are committed to dealing with it. **Once you own your anger you can control its expression.**

**Trade the need to be right for a loving relationship.**

It is a trade you – and everyone around you – will benefit from. Respond with love and compassion, rather than punishment and retaliation, and an angry person will be disarmed.

## **Principles to Keep in Mind When Dealing With the Anger of Others:**

- Other people’s anger is usually not about you.
- Only your own thoughts and attitudes can upset you, not the anger of others.
- Other people are worrying about their problems, not yours.
- Forgiving and apologizing eliminate anger.

## **Guidelines for Dealing with the Anger of Others:**

Listen to what the angry person is saying and perceive the feeling underneath the words.

Summarize the angry person's feelings back to them, so that they know you understand what they are going through.

Understand the angry person's reality and show them compassion.

Choose to perceive other people as loving or fearful, not as attacking.

Acknowledge that forgiving and apologizing eliminate anger.

Always model anger-free behavior.

**Be how you want others to be. They will respond in kind. The rewards you receive will be many times worth the effort.**

## **Who has the problem?**

When confronted by someone who is directing his or her anger at you, ask yourself, "Who has the problem?" The answer is always, "The person with the anger." Remind yourself that once you realize this, you don't have to be upset. This realization will help to calm you down and allow you to stay in your reasoning mind. Try thinking, "What can I do for this person?"

## **EQ TOOL**

### **TAKE TIME TO FEEL**

Take some time on a regular basis to sit down with a friend and talk about feelings. Tell them all of the good things they do that make you feel good. Then have them do the same. Next, talk about the things that are happening that are upsetting for you, and for them. Try to understand why you feel differently. Find ways to remove the upset. Work on them together.

# **EXERCISE**

## **LISTENING TO ANGRY PEOPLE**

Think of a time when you were the target of someone else's anger. Imagine what would have happened if you were quiet and listened to what the angry person was saying. Try to decipher what the feelings were beneath their anger and what they were trying to express. Think how their response might have changed, if you had had compassion for their feelings. How do you think your response would have made them feel? How would your compassion make you feel?

## **HOMEWORK**

### **WORK OUT DIFFERENCES**

1. Sit down with any person with whom you are having a relationship problem.
2. Discuss what you would each like to see happen.
3. Work out a plan by which you resolve your differences in a way that makes you both happiest.
4. Understand that it may take some serious compromises on each of your parts.
5. Be creative and willing to look for non-traditional solutions.



6. Acknowledge how this plan is far superior to simply expecting something from each other.

7. Be prepared to share your experiences.

### **Remember the Golden Rule**

Be how you want others to be. They will respond in kind.  
The rewards you receive will be many. times worth the effort.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**It is helpful to understand the other person's needs as well as my own.**

**If I listen carefully to the other person I will be able to understand what they are saying.**

**If I listen carefully to the other person I will be able to understand what they are feeling.**

**The other person wants to be heard, they will appreciate it if I listen carefully.**

**When I respond with love I will receive love in return.**

# LESSON 12

## ENJOYING THE REWARDS

### EXERCISE

#### PRACTICE YOUR RESPONSES

- Choose a situation that you have been having difficulty with.
- Think it through and decide how you would prefer to respond in that situation.
- Choose a new behavior that would be an effective solution for you.
- Rehearse your new response and then apply the new desired response the next time the situation arises.
- Consider using this method first in situations that only make you slightly disturbed. You can broaden to those that are more difficult as you master the technique.

Ralph had a problem; it seemed he lived in a cruel world where everyone was out to get him. He protected himself because he didn't trust anyone. And he was right. People were always trying to take advantage of him. He was careful, and he never gave people the opportunity to take advantage of him. But he never made friends. His business didn't advance. He was unhappy with life. Then one day someone convinced him to "give people a chance, trust them and love them and see what happens." He decided to trust; and most of the time he was trusted in return. His business grew, his family grew, and he has many friends.

# YOU ARE CAPABLE OF CREATING A PEACEFUL NEW WORLD FOR YOURSELF

To the extent that we are being subconsciously influenced by the past, we are not fully present in any relationship. To the extent that we have resolved past issues, we are capable of thinking, acting, and feeling completely within the present moment. This is when we are most effective and most likely to act in ways consistent with our thoughts and feelings. To act in ways that will achieve our goals in life.

Most of the time we think one thing, and then we do something else. We are most likely to make mistakes when we operate in this way. It is to our advantage to take conscious control of our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

We largely bring on our own emotional disturbances by choosing, both consciously and unconsciously, to think irrationally, to create unhealthy unpleasant feelings, and to act in self-defeating ways. Fortunately, if we know how, we can choose to change our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

Once you realize that a new and wonderful way of life is available to you, it is your decision whether you choose this way of life for yourself. This life is so precious. It is a great personal loss not to make the changes that will make life wonderful for you.

## Rehearse Anger-Free Behavior

Rehearsing a desired behavior is almost as good as exhibiting the real thing. By repeating an action again and again, you create a new path in your brain until the new response becomes habitual. In this sense, the brain doesn't know the difference between "real" and "rehearsed" behavior. The process is similar to that of memorizing a poem or improving your math skills. The more times you practice (or rehearse) the poem, the math, or the anger-free response, the closer you get to that behavior becoming automatic.

## Assessing Your Progress

How do you maintain your improvement? An important part of implementing your plan is figuring out what to do when you lapse back into your old habit of responding with anger. When you fall back, try to pinpoint what you changed to bring about your original improvement. Keep thinking and rethinking. Keep discovering and disputing related anger issues. Assess your progress. Decide how to continue. Observe how you are doing. Plan possible new responses. Push yourself. Reflect on how you are doing. If you need to, revise your plan and continue.

# **GUIDELINES FOR MAKING CHANGES IN YOUR LIFE**

- Be determined to act on your commitment to change.
- Acquire the necessary knowledge to implement your plan for change.
- If one plan doesn't work effectively, devise a new one and move on with your efforts to change.
- Rehearse the desired change until it becomes habitual.
- When you have a relapse into undesired behavior: accept yourself fully, recommit to change, acquire more knowledge, assess what went wrong, take action to bring change, keep persisting in your efforts.
- Do not consider relapse as failure.
- Give yourself encouragement.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **FIND ROLE MODELS**

A role model can be particularly helpful as you create your plan for eradicating anger. Talk with someone who displays the kind of non-anger behavior you would like to have as part of your plan. Discuss their exemplary behavior with them. Ask them how they came to behave and feel as they do, and how it is helpful for them to be this way. What rewards come to them as the result of being this way? Talk to them also about why you might find it difficult to behave in this way and ask them what their advice might be.

## **EQ TOOL**

### **KEEP A DIARY OF YOUR ANGER-FREE PLAN**

A written record of your “anger/non-anger response” successes and relapses will help you identify what you’re doing right and what you still need to work on. As soon as possible after an anger-inducing or potential anger-inducing event occurs:

- Record what happened when you responded to a potential anger-inducing situation in an un-angry way.
- Record what happened when you “relapsed” by responding with anger to a particular situation.
- Use these guidelines to help you record what happened:

- ü What upset you?

- ü Describe what an impartial observer would have seen or heard. (Don’t Include your own thoughts or actions)

- ü What thought went through your mind just before you responded to the event?

- ü What did you do or say in response to the event?

- ü If you responded without anger, what technique did you use?

- ü If you responded with anger, what anger-free response might you use next time a similar situation arises?

- ü What is holding you back from applying the anger-free response?

- ü What do you need to change so that you will be able to apply the anger-free response?

## **EQ TOOL**

### **REHEARSING ANGER-FREE BEHAVIORS**

Explain to a friend the new behavior you want to practice. Have the friend attempt to make you angry by acting out the behavior that upsets you. Respond with the new non-angry response that you desire. Rehearse this new behavior until you no longer have any unpleasant feelings about this issue.

## **Take the time to examine how you really feel.**

Be honest with yourself. Put in the effort to understand your anger. Practice looking deeply within yourself to see the nature of your anger. Take care of your anger the same way that you

take care of your physical body. Learn to identify your anger. How does it feel? Be aware of the physical signs of anger. Notice the changes in your body. Notice your breath, hands, body warmth, and body tension. **Be sensitive to your internal signs of anger.** Once you recognize them, they can help you identify when you're about to get angry.

## **When you get angry, acknowledge your anger and decide what to do with it.**

Recognize and embrace anger when it surfaces, instead of suppressing it. The first step to overcoming your anger is to acknowledge that it is present and that you are committed to dealing with it. **Once you own your anger, you can control its expression.**

## **Use Loving Thoughts...and Give Up On Controlling People**

**Realize that what you are thinking may be hurting you.** Choose to replace your negative thoughts with loving positive thoughts. People want to be loved. If you hold back your anger and give them love instead they will respond in a positive way. When others are positive, it is easier for you to be positive. Ask yourself, **"If I was feeling love, what would I do now?"** Realize that the other person is not intentionally trying to hurt you. They are just doing the best they can. Do not blame other people for not playing by the rules. They are living life by their rules, not yours.

If you keep quiet about momentary irritations and distract yourself in pleasant activity until you settle down, chances are you will feel better faster than if you let yourself get into a shouting match. Letting your anger out usually makes it worse. Force yourself to act differently than you may feel like doing. People who haven't developed inhibitions cause social problems. Normally anger doesn't continue to build up inside. Instead it dissipates. Sometimes it doesn't, and we hold on to old angers, a problem we will deal with later. But if yours is not an "old anger," use the methods and suggestions in this chapter.

## **Five ways to reduce persistent anger**

1. Slow down your adrenaline flow.

(Learn to relax. Be mentally flexible. Let go of your musts. Accept the world.)

2. Reduce the amount of stress in your life.

(If you are upset by rush-hour traffic, find a way to avoid it.  
If something needs fixing, and it bothers you, fix it.)

3. Change the beliefs that are causing your anger.  
(Identify the beliefs that are creating your anger. Question those beliefs, challenge them and change them.)
4. Process your unpleasant emotions through your thinking center.  
(Develop the habit of always sending unpleasant emotions to your thinking center before you choose a response.)
5. Remove or reduce the negative charges from your memory files.  
(Whenever you find a cold prickly, search your beliefs to find the cause and change to a new belief that does not result in a cold prickly.)

## Five essential points to remember in getting over persistent anger

1. Pounding a pillow or punching something won't help you get over a nagging anger. You'll only be acting out your anger. The other person is spared, but you are not.
2. There is no set time frame for getting over your anger.
3. It is appropriate to modify your angry behavior, but don't suppress your feelings. If you do, they'll show up in the future as a new problem.
4. Expressing your feelings does not mean acting out your anger. You can learn to express your anger without acting it out.
5. Remember that you feel the way you think. So if you are angry, it means you are going to have to go back and change the way you think. As soon as you are able to move past feeling your anger, the next step is to go back and examine your thinking.

## Once you're ready to let old anger go, how do you go about it?

**Sometimes letting go of old anger is as easy as:** Recognizing what the anger is and what it does to you and then just release it and move on. You may be able to see in a moment that it doesn't fit your present belief system; and that recognition may be enough.

**At other times, the anger is in there so deep and you are holding on so tight that you will have great difficulty letting go of it.** The anger may agree with your present belief system. If

so, you will have to change your beliefs in order to remove the negative charge that you have attached to the memories.

When you consider an old anger, go back and check the content and nature of your perceptions. Practice looking deeply into your perceptions. Resolve to first make peace with yourself and then to make peace with others.

## Deal with the Feeling Underneath the Anger

Notice the feeling. Identify the feeling. Claim the feeling. Express the feeling. Just talking out how angry you are or pinpointing the cause of your anger won't rid you of it. In fact, reciting past angers causes you to become angrily aroused again. You buy into your own story of what caused you to have such powerful anger.

## To let go of old Anger, We must Forgive

**Our unforgiving thoughts are the cause of our suffering.** We can be free of suffering by letting go of the past. Go back and review the chapter on forgiveness if you still have forgiveness issues that are holding you back. Remember there is not one thing in this world that should not and could not be forgiven. That is not just some ideal that we can't possibly live up to. It is what is taught by all of the religions of the world. Why do we have so much difficulty accepting the concept? Because we haven't forgiven. Remember that **there are no old angers or resentments that we can justify holding onto.**

**Realize that your old habits die hard, and that anger is a complex problem.** But the longer you work to overcome it, the more successful you will become. You may find that it is helpful to re-read this workbook. Learn and use the EQ Tools. Work with the exercises to achieve a meaningful change. You can totally change your life to one of peace and joy. The choice is yours. The key to change is to make the first commitment. Then learn the steps to achieving change and practice until you reach your goal.

## EQ TOOL

### MENTOR YOURSELF



When you are experiencing anger, talk to yourself about it. Ask yourself, “Why am I angry?” Tell yourself why your feelings aren’t right. Remind yourself how you want to think about the situation that’s making you upset. Laugh at yourself for feeling the way you do. **Just keep working at it until the feeling has dissipated.**

## EQ TOOL

### REVERSE ROLE-PLAY

Have a friend play the part of the angry you. Then you take the other side of the issue and try to convince “yourself/your friend” not to have anger. This will help you to reframe the issue in a non-anger inducing way that you can accept.

For example, your friend might take your position by saying, “I am upset with Bal because he always goes out to play when he is needed at home.” You would then try to convince “yourself/your friend” that they shouldn’t be upset with Bal.

## EQ TOOL

### REPLACE YOUR ANGER

Any time you feel anger, or you have chosen the wrong response, review the event and decide how you would have preferred to respond. Practice this new behavior in your mind. Rehearse it and be ready to use it the next time the same or a similar situation arises. If your new behavior doesn’t work for you, forgive yourself and try again.

## HOMework

### CONTINUE TO GROW

1. Keep a diary or journal of your growth and experiences.
2. Find and associate with positive, like-minded people.
3. Work your plan!
4. If and when you experience difficulties, rededicate.
5. Create a conscious moment of celebration each day.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**I am ready to always experience a loving and joyful life.**

**I choose to live so that my beliefs are always in harmony with the world around me.**

**I always notice and appreciate the beauty in the world.**

**I recognize any emotional disturbance is of my own making and I remove it immediately.**

**I am experiencing only peace and joy in my life.**

## **SYMPTOMS OF INNER PEACE**

- **A tendency to think and act spontaneously rather than in response to fears based on past experiences.**

- An unmistakable ability to enjoy each moment.
- A loss of interest in judging other people.
- A loss of interest in interpreting the actions of others.
- A loss of interest in conflict.
- A loss of the ability to worry.
- Frequent, overwhelming episodes of appreciation.
- Feelings of contentment with others and nature.
- Frequent attacks of smiling.
- An increasing tendency to let things happen rather than trying to make them happen.
- An increased susceptibility to the love extended by others, as well as the uncontrollable urge to extend it.

**Commitment and dedication is required, success is guaranteed!**

## **Congratulations!**

You have learned how your belief system works and how to experience a peaceful and joyful life.

## **EQ REFLECTIONS**

**I am ready to set down and make a plan for change.**

**I will follow each necessary step to assure success.**

**I will remain aware of the things that could cause me to fail.**

**If I have difficulty with my plan I will make adjustments and continue.**

**I will always recognize and appreciate my progress.**

**I will never lose focus until my plan for change is complete.**

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