

The Anger & Aggression Workbook

**Self-Assessments, Exercises
& Educational Handouts**

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Using This Book *(for the professional)*

What is the best way to learn to control feelings of anger and aggression? Over the last century many different workbooks, workshops and self-help systems have been designed to help people develop anger management abilities. In the past twenty years, many research studies have focused on the value of self-reflection and journaling as a way of exploring personal characteristics, identifying ineffective behaviors and examining thoughts and feelings that lead to ineffective behaviors. This book is unique in that it combines two powerful psychological tools for anger management: self-assessment and journaling.

The Anger & Aggression Workbook contains five separate sections that will help the participants learn more about themselves as well as how anger and aggression are impacting their lives:

Anger History Scale helps individuals identify whether they were affected by the anger and aggression that took place in their families or with their friends as children.

Anger Intensity Scale helps individuals to identify how prone they are to anger and how strong their feelings of anger are.

Anger Triggers Scale helps individuals identify problematic, irrational thoughts that cause or misdirect their anger.

Anger Expression Scale helps individuals identify their particular ways of expressing their anger to other people.

Anger Consequences Scale helps individuals identify the significance the impact of their anger on themselves and the people that are important in their careers and lives.

These sections serve as an avenue for individual self-reflection, as well as group experiences revolving around identified topics of importance. Each assessment includes directions for easy administration, scoring and interpretation. In addition, each section includes exploratory activities, reflective journaling activities and educational handouts to help participants to discover their habitual, ineffective methods of managing anger, and to explore new ways for bringing about self-healing.

The art of self-reflection goes back many centuries and is rooted in many of the world's greatest spiritual and philosophical traditions. Socrates, the ancient Greek philosopher, was known to walk the streets engaging the people he met in philosophical reflection and dialogue. He felt that this type of activity was so important in life that he proclaimed, "The unexamined life is not worth living!" The unexamined life is one in which the same routine is continually repeated without ever thinking about its meaning to one's life and how this life really could be lived. However, a structured reflection and examination of beliefs, assumptions, characteristics and patterns can provide a better understanding which can lead to a more satisfying life and career. A greater level of self-understanding about important life skills is often necessary to make positive, self-directed changes in the negative patterns that keep repeating throughout life. The assessments and exercises in this book can help promote this self-understanding. Through involvement in the in-depth activities, the participant claims ownership in the development of positive patterns.

Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for enhancing self-discovery, learning, transcending traditional problems, breaking ineffective life and career habits, and helping to heal from psychological traumas of the past. From a physical point of view, writing reduces stress and lower muscle tension, blood pressure and heart rate levels. Psychologically, writing reduces feelings of sadness, depression and general anxiety, and leads to a greater level of life satisfaction and optimism. Behaviorally, writing leads to enhanced social skills, emotional intelligence and creativity.

By combining reflective assessment and journaling, your participants will engage in a revolutionary method for reducing and managing their anger and aggression.

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The Assessments, Journaling Activities, and Handouts

Materials in the Assessments, Journaling Activities, and Educational Handouts sections in this book are reproducible and can be photocopied for participants' use. The assessments contained in this book focus on self-reported data and thus are similar to ones used by psychologists, counselors, therapists and career consultants. The accuracy and usefulness of the information provided is dependent on the truthful information that each participant provides about himself or herself. By being honest, participants help themselves to learn about their unproductive and ineffective patterns in their lives, and to uncover information that might be keeping them from being as happy or as successful as they might be.

An assessment instrument can provide participants with valuable information about themselves; however, these assessments cannot measure or identify everything. The assessments' purpose is not to pigeon-hole certain characteristics, but rather to allow participants to explore all of their characteristics. This book contains self-assessments and not tests. Tests measure knowledge or whether something is right or wrong. For the assessments in this book, there are no right or wrong answers. These assessments ask for personal opinions or attitudes about a topic of importance in the participant's career and life.

When administering the assessments in this workbook, remember that the items are generically written so that they will be applicable to a wide variety of people but will not account for every possible variable for every person. None of the assessments are specifically tailored to one person, so use the assessments to help participants identify negative themes in their lives and find ways to break the hold that these patterns and their effects have in life and in a career.

Advise the participants taking the assessments that they should not spend too much time trying to analyze the content of the questions; they should think about the questions in general and then spontaneously report how they feel about each one. Whatever the results of the assessment, encourage participants to talk about their findings and their feelings pertaining to what have they discovered about themselves. Talking about anger and aggression issues can be very therapeutic and beneficial.

Layout of the Book

The Anger and Aggression Workbook is designed to be used either independently or as part of an integrated curriculum. You may administer one of the assessments and the journaling exercises to an individual or a group with whom you are working, or you may administer a number of the assessments over one or more days.

This book includes the following reproducibles in all five sections:

- **Assessment Instruments** — Self-assessment inventories with scoring directions and interpretation materials. Group facilitators can choose one or more of the activities relevant to their participants.
- **Activity Handouts** — Practical questions and activities that prompt self-reflection and promote self-understanding. These questions and activities foster introspection and promote pro-social behaviors.
- **Reflective Questions for Journaling** — Self-exploration activities and journaling exercises specific to each assessment to enhance self-discovery, learning, and healing.
- **Educational Handouts** — Handouts designed to enhance instruction can be used individually or in groups to promote a positive understanding of anger and to provide positive reinforcement for effective anger management. They can be distributed, converted into masters for overheads or transparencies, or written down on a board and discussed.

Who should use this program?

This book has been designed as a practical tool for helping professionals, such as therapists, counselors, psychologists, teachers, and group leaders. Depending on the role of the professional using and the specific group's needs, these sections can be used individually or combined for a more comprehensive approach.

Why use self-assessments?

Self-assessments are important in teaching various anger management skills because they help participants to engage in these ways:

- Become aware of the primary motivators that guide their behavior
- Explore and learn to “let go” of troublesome habits and behavioral patterns learned in childhood
- Explore the effects of unconscious childhood messages
- Gain insight and “a wake up call” for behavioral change
- Focus their thinking on behavioral goals for change
- Uncover resources they possess that can help them to cope better with problems and difficulties
- Explore their personal characteristics without judgment
- Be fully aware of their strengths and weaknesses

Because the assessments are presented in a straightforward and easy-to-use format, individuals can self-administer, score and interpret each assessment at their own pace.

Introduction for the Participant

You will get angry from time to time. It is a very normal, usually healthy, human emotion. Although anger can serve a vital function in protecting and defending you, it too frequently turns into rage or verbal and physical aggression. Often anger is suppressed. Anger can be a wonderful warning sign that something is wrong, but it can take an emotional and physical toll as well. Anger can interfere with your role as a parent, partner, worker, and friend. Therefore, it is very important to learn how to manage your anger.

If you are having problems with feelings of anger and physical aggression, you probably want to change. You may feel the need to control yourself and your emotions more effectively. However, you may not know how to control your anger. Anger management is much more than learning a few tools and techniques that you can use when you get upset. It is about getting to know yourself. It is learning what triggers your anger, ways you choose to express anger to others, consequences of your anger, incidents from your childhood that may lead to anger, and the level of intensity of your angry feelings.

Anger management experts believe that anger and aggression are primarily learned from people and events in your environment. Since you learned to feel angry, you can also learn other ways to react when you are angry. This book, *The Anger and Aggression Workbook*, is designed to help you learn about anger and aggression in your life and make constructive changes to better manage your own anger and aggression.

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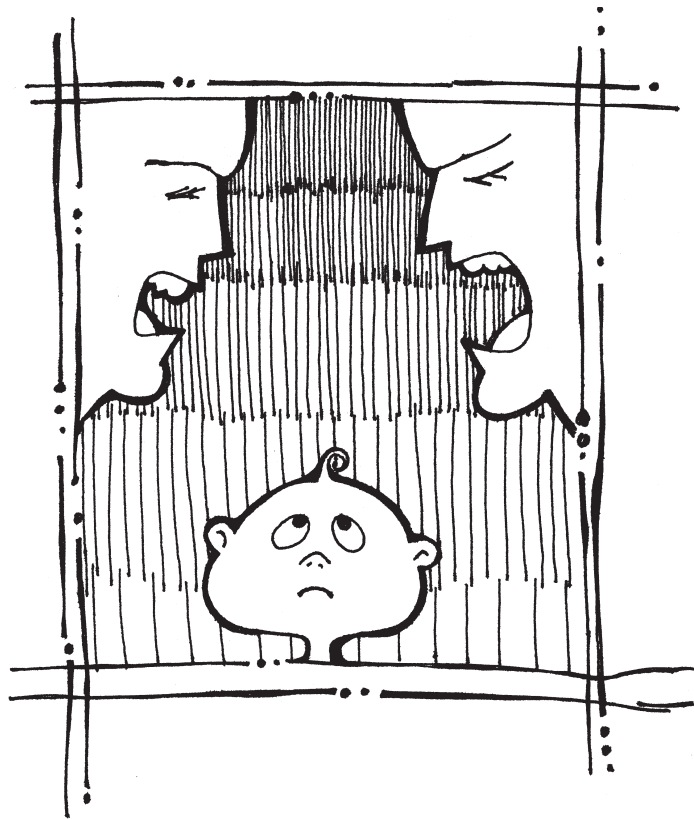
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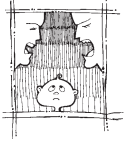
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SECTION I:
Anger History



Name _____

Date _____



Anger History Scale Directions

Are anger and aggression inherited or learned characteristics? Social learning theory suggests that as children we learn and exhibit behaviors modeled for us by significant people in our lives. Therefore, it is critical that you explore the anger and aggressive behaviors that you were exposed to as a child. The Anger History Scale can help you identify whether you were affected by the anger and aggression that took place in your relationships with family and friends during your early years, throughout your childhood, and into your adult years.

This assessment contains forty statements. Read each of the statements and decide if the statement is true or false. If it is true, circle the word **True** next to the statement. If the statement is false, circle the word **False** next to the statement. Ignore the letters after the True and False choices. They are for scoring purposes and will be used later. Do all forty items before going back to score this scale.

In the following example, the circled **False** indicates that the item is false for the participant completing the Anger History Scale:

While I was growing up, my mother / female caregiver showed her anger in these ways:

1. Destroyed things

True (1) False (0) Score _____

This is not a test and there are no right or wrong answers. Do not spend too much time thinking about your answers. Your initial response will be the most true for you. Be sure to respond to every statement.

(Turn to the next page and begin)

ANGER HISTORY SCALE

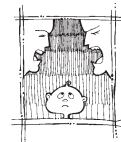
While I was growing up, my mother / female caregiver showed her anger in these ways:

- | | | | |
|--|----------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Destroying things | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 2. Locking me and / or my siblings in a closet | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 3. Throwing things at me and / or other members of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 4. Sulking, pouting, and not speaking to members of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 5. Slamming doors in the house | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 6. Shouting a lot | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 7. Intimidating me and / or other members of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 8. Fighting often with my father / male caregiver | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 9. Cursing and insulting me and / or the rest of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 10. Spanking or beating me and / or my siblings | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| | | | TOTAL _____ |

While I was growing up, my father / male caregiver showed his anger in these ways:

- | | | | |
|--|----------|-----------|-------------|
| 11. Destroying things | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 12. Locking me and / or my siblings in a closet | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 13. Throwing things at me and / or other members of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 14. Sulking, pouting and not speaking to members of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 15. Slamming doors in the house | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 16. Shouting a lot | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 17. Intimidating me and / or other members of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 18. Fighting often with my mother / female caregiver | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 19. Cursing and insulting me and / or the rest of the family | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| 20. Spanking or beating me and / or my siblings | True (1) | False (0) | Score _____ |
| | | | TOTAL _____ |

(Continued on the next page)



While I was growing up, my (circle one) brother, sister, grandfather, grandmother, uncle, aunt, teacher, other, showed her / his anger in these ways:

21. Destroying things True (1) False (0) Score _____
22. Locking me and / or my siblings in a closet True (1) False (0) Score _____
23. Throwing things at me and / or other members of the family
True (1) False (0) Score _____
24. Beating me and / or other members of the family True (1) False (0) Score _____
25. Slamming doors in the house True (1) False (0) Score _____
26. Shouting a lot True (1) False (0) Score _____
27. Intimidating me and / or other members of the family True (1) False (0) Score _____
28. Fighting with my mother / female caregiver True (1) False (0) Score _____
29. Fighting with my father / male caregiver True (1) False (0) Score _____
30. Cursing and insulting me and / or the other members of the family
True (1) False (0) Score _____

TOTAL _____

While I was growing up, my friends showed their anger in these ways:

31. Destroying things True (1) False (0) Score _____
32. Hurting other children, physically and / or emotionally True (1) False (0) Score _____
33. Throwing things at members of their family True (1) False (0) Score _____
34. Beating other members of their family True (1) False (0) Score _____
35. Slamming doors in their houses True (1) False (0) Score _____
36. Shouting a lot True (1) False (0) Score _____
37. Intimidating members of their family True (1) False (0) Score _____
38. Fighting with their mother / female caregiver True (1) False (0) Score _____
39. Fighting with their father / male caregiver True (1) False (0) Score _____
40. Cursing and insulting their family True (1) False (0) Score _____

TOTAL _____

(Go to the Scoring Directions on the next page)

SECTION I: ANGER HISTORY SCALE

Anger History Scale Scoring Directions

The Anger History Scale is designed to help you to identify how the anger and aggression that you were exposed to as a child may be affecting your current feelings of anger and aggression. To score this scale, you need to determine your scores on each of the individual scales and for the overall Anger History total.

To score the Anger History Scale:

Look at the forty items you just completed. Now you need to focus on numbers after each choice rather than the **True** or **False**. Total your score for each section.

Use the spaces below to transfer your scores to each of the scales below. Then total the scores and put that number in the **Total** column.

Mother / Female Caregiver Scale: Total Score from #1 through #10 = _____

Father / Male Caregiver Scale: Total Score from #11 through #20 = _____

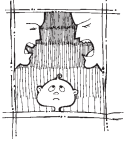
Significant People Scale: Total Score from #21 through #30 = _____

Friends Scale: Total Score from #31 through #40 = _____

Add together all of the "Totals" from the individual scales to receive your Anger History Total and write that number in the blank below:

Anger History Total _____

(The Profile Interpretation section on the next page can help you interpret your scores)



Anger History Scale Profile Interpretation

INDIVIDUAL SCALE SCORE	TOTAL SCORES FOR ALL FOUR	RESULT	INDICATIONS
0 to 3	0 to 12	low	You have not been exposed to a great deal of anger and aggression when you were growing up. You probably did not experience a lot of fighting, shouting and physical violence among your family members and your friends.
4 to 6	13 to 27	moderate	You have been exposed to some anger and aggressive behaviors when you were growing up.
7 to 10	28 to 40	high	You have been exposed to a great deal of anger and aggression when you were growing up. You possibly experienced a lot of fighting, shouting, withdrawing and physical violence among your family members and your friends.

The higher your score on the Anger History Scale, the more exposure you have had to anger and aggression, and thus are more prone to exhibit those feelings and behaviors yourself. In the areas in which you score in the Moderate or High range you should make efforts to explore your childhood and develop anger management skills. No matter if you scored Low, Moderate or High, the exercises and activities that follow are designed to help you to explore any anger and aggression you experienced while growing up.