

Anger, Anger, Where Are You?

Summary

Anger is one of the emotions that inflicts a lot of tension on an individual. Cultivating emotional responses is a skill that can be learned through practical experience in a more constructive and interpersonal way. The activity itself actually stimulates the recognition of various types of emotions and the ability to articulate them.

Module	Group size	Group age	Duration
• Prevention • Intervention	• small	• 12 - 15 • 16 - 19 • 20 - 24	• 15 min • 30 min

Purpose

- To become aware about the reasons for anger
- To distinguish between positive and negative effects of anger
- Be able to identify feelings related to anger

Description

1. Ask everyone to write down (in one sentence) a situation where they felt really angry. The facilitator may give the following example: "I felt angry when my contribution in a meeting was ignored."
2. Find out what might underlie anger. Write some possible sources of anger that the participants come up with on the board. [Jealousy, being hurt etc.] Explain that a layer of hurt very often underlies anger. Ask everyone to write a sentence about the hurt behind their anger in the instance they have thought of. Possible example: "I felt hurt because it seemed that nobody valued my opinion."
3. Elicit what might underlie that hurt. Write a few examples. Point out that the reason for the hurt is often an unmet need. Ask everyone to again consider the same instance and now write a sentence covering what unmet need might be underlying the hurt. For example: "I need to be accepted and valued by my friends."
4. Elicit what underlies the unmet needs. [Alongside the needs are often fears.] Ask participants to think about what fears might have been behind their anger and write a sentence about them. For example: "I have a fear that I won't be able to win my friends' respect."
5. Participants turn to a partner and share their sentences with them. If anyone has had difficulty with the exercise, their partner can help them unravel their feelings.

Feedback

What is the value of understanding the substructure of anger? In what ways could it help you?

Anger and hurt are often two sides of the same coin. It is an important step in facing the anger of others to know what lies beneath our own anger. This exercise is a way of discovering some of the hurt, needs and fears underlying a personal experience of extreme anger. If we can identify the fears that lie at the roots of anger (either our own or others'), we can begin addressing those fears rather than remaining caught up in the outward emotion. Anger is not totally negative! It is a feeling that shows something is wrong or should be listened to, and should not always be repressed. We should understand the causes of our own anger. Anger can be channeled in appropriate ways.

Homework: Have the participants write up a conflict that occurred when they felt very angry. In at least one paragraph write about the hurt beneath that anger, in another paragraph write about the unmet need underlying that hurt, and finally write about the fear underlying the hurt.

Materials needed

Writing materials (pens, paper...)

Methodology

Experiential learning

Advice for Trainer

Anger and its underlying causes are something we don't always have enough understanding of. If you feel comfortable enough, you could give an example from your own life of a time when you were angry. Explain what hurt, unmet need, and fear underlay this.

Source / Literature

Women without borders. (2006). Young Women Fit for Politics. Retrieved from www.women.without.borders.org



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