



Amitabh Mohan , Chief Editor

PREFACE

Dear Readers,

During my teenage years, once I was going through a magazine where I read a quote that said, "One who angers you, conquers you". This line stayed with me and I contemplated on it for days. Anger is a fundamental emotion that we all experience from time to time but this quote made me realize that 'Anger' also means being powerless and loosing to the person who makes us angry. That's when I had written my first MKF (Mohan Ka Funda) on Anger - "Use it, Don't loose it". Since then we have conducted umpteen number of workshops on Anger Management for students, teachers, working professionals etc.

So it was quite apt for us to take 'Anger Management' as our theme for the newsletter. Children learn to express anger by copying the angry behaviour they see around them. Anger is a normal emotion, but it can easily become destructive and lead to social problems. In this newsletter, we have addressed this concern in school environment to empower teachers with strategies to deal with children so that we can have healthy and happy classrooms.

Enjoy reading!

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Anchor The Anger

Anger is a common feeling throughout our life. Anger is neither good nor bad, and no judgment need to be attached to it. But if the same emotion goes out of control it becomes destructive for the individual and the society all together. Studies have shown that as anger increases, cognitive processing speed goes down, fine motor coordination and sensitivity to pain decrease, and muscle strength often increases. This give rise to large number of school violence, aggression, destructive acts of anger, sense of fear, abuse, anxiety and depression .

Spielberger (1988) introduced two facets of anger as **State** and **Trait** anger. State anger is a psychobiological subjective state of anger that varies in intensity over time. We come across students who experience intense anger during games, classroom discussions and sports. These students experience state anger in that specific situation. Intensity of experiencing anger can vary from student to student, and situation to situation. Trait anger is the "general inclination to experience and express anger without specific provocation". These students are angry not in one or two situations, but often they are found angry and reactive. It's more of cognitive and seen as a personality trait. They perceive a wide variety of situations as negative and connected, rather than perceiving them separately. High trait anger students involve in constant aggressive acts and bullying.

Some prefer to be silent and passive during provocative situations which is known as anger-In, wherein the frequency of angry feelings are held in or suppressed. Very often anger suppressions result in depression, anxiety, asthma, hypertension and high blood pressure. Anger suppressors usually are very submissive and don't react immediately, but their noiseless reaction harms them silently. They usually appear as good students and non-threatening to teachers and parents.

Factors Affecting Anger

According to behavior modification therapy, behavior can be altered if we change the antecedent (what comes before the behavior) or the consequence (what happens immediately after the behavior). Since anger is a result of primary emotions we need to address the antecedent or cause of that emotion.

Environmental Stress

Teacher and peer relationships, media influence (television, music, toys, and of course video games), social settings and school atmosphere can also encourage anger thoughts and behaviour in students. Negative peer relations and gang behaviours are very often the cause for bullying, aggression, and violence. Poor Academic performance may amplify feelings of negative response or non-acceptance and, influence the possibility of an angry thought and emotional state. Now a days posting various comments on social media can also lead to various aggressive reactions. Students who have aggressive parents, experienced threats and severe .punishment from teachers, may also learn and consider aggressive behaviour as a normal response.





Word Power

Angrophobia - Fear of anger or of becoming angry.

For people with Angrophobia becoming angry is frightening because they get out of control when they get angry and are not able to suppress their emotions and become violent, be it in the form of verbal or physical abuse. This has happened to them several times and has affected their interpersonal relationship with family, friends, and even peers. People who have angrophobia usually have suppressed anger and they do not realize that suppressing this anger can lead to worsening the aggression.

Features of Angrophobia

Fear of being judged or embarrassment

Fear of offending others

Fear of being noticed

Avoiding people

Extreme irritability and anxiety

Heart palpitations

Nausea or diarrhea

Excessive sweating

Feeling faint or dizzy

Headaches

Modelled Behaviour

An environment that models poor anger control is likely to create a child with poor anger management skills. If family members manage their anger through violence or other aggressive methods the child may imitate what they have learned. Teachers who are considered as role models for students can also sometimes trigger intense anger in students through abusive language, physical punishment and showing favoritism in classroom atmosphere. Negative peer interactions may increase the level of anger in students.

Physical or Sexual Abuse

Physical abuse of a child is certain to create excessive anger. Children who are abused learn to solve their problems through violence and force. They feel powerless during the time of their abuse and often suppress the feelings of anger at their parents, but later, when they are teens, it may resurface in violent and out of control behavior.

Emotional Abuse

A family environment where anger is suppressed is also likely to create a child who has poor anger management skills. Anger related thoughts and memories include anger events, people, or situations. Students who have experienced hurt, rejection, pain and frustration may form negative belief and attributions regarding others, situations and the world around them. Thus, this belief can trigger and increase the intensity of anger in day to day life. Students with low self-esteem personalities, less resiliency, low intrinsic motivation and high dependent personalities are more prone to experience intense anger. have vivid memories of anger and revenge. They have the tendency to generalize their anger to past events, situations and memories.

Inconsistent Parenting

Children who experience inconsistent parenting, when a parent or multiple caregivers have different or unpredictable expectations, rules or consequences, can develop anger management problems. A child who is unsure of the rules may consistently feel frustrated by a sense of confusion and lack of control. Students learn most of their anger behavioural pattern from family as it is the cradle of behaviour formation for every student. Students who had to face family conflict, abuse and divorce are more predisposed to use aggressive behaviour during provocative situations. Dysfunctional family environments, stress and tension of parents, lack of love and care, parental psychopathology are also contributors of anger and aggression in students. Students from these families experience lot of pain and rejection which make them react to everyone around them with uncontrollable anger.

Biological Composition

This include the biological composition, anger experiences, anger related memories and images, and personality traits. Students who have excessive excitatory nerve cells will show high intensity of anger as compared to students who have lower rates of excitatory cell function. They may have some deficits that impair their ability to manage frustration and impulses, delay gratification, problem solve, or feel a sense of self control. Feelings of powerlessness and inadequacy can also be a cause of anger. A child who is ADHD may struggle with many of these issues and this is why so many of these children also have problems with depression and anger. The expectations may be unrealistic in the classroom or other places and they become frustrated by their constant inability to meet anyone's expectations. In addition, their problems with impulses and self control exacerbate their anger management problems.

Idea – An idea that can change your teaching

Manage Students' Aggression

An important life skill for students to learn is how to control their anger in an appropriate and acceptable manner. Unfortunately, most classrooms have at least one student who has a great deal of trouble handling his or her anger. They can have a devastating impact on the classroom environment, interfere with learning by other students, and create extreme teacher frustration and job dissatisfaction. A teacher's reaction to a student's anger can either de-escalate the situation or intensify the student's outburst. Here are some anger management strategies for educator for handling these kind of students aggression

1. Understanding the Problem: The first step in dealing with anger is to ensure that it is truly anger that we are dealing with. Sometimes aggression is interpreted as an anger response, when in fact it is attention seeking or serves some other purpose. It is important to be certain that the observed responses are truly the student's response to the feeling of anger.



2. Environmental Management: Implementation of Anger Management Approaches. Such as:

A. Removing Clear Provocation for Anger: Teachers need to know what the people or events are that typically provoke anger in the student and attempt to remove these provocations proactively from the student's daily routines.

B Using Calm Times Wisely: When the student is in an emotionally calm state, teacher should find opportunities to talk about difficulty the students have in controlling anger and about the limits that this might impose on what the student can do. These conversations should be balanced with talk of things that are going well, with plans for success, and with opportunities for the student to engage in positive roles that do not involve anger or aggression. Teachers can also highlight the positive behavior of others and talk about how they have learned to control their anger and therefore become more successful.

C. Facilitating a Self-Concept Associated with Effective Anger Management: Some students develop a sense of self that includes aggression as a positive component. The student may come to think of himself or herself as a "tough guy" or "tough girl", and resist efforts at anger management. In these cases, it is important to address the self-concept issue while also addressing anger management. These student may be helped by counseling to develop a sense of self that is compelling, but that also includes control of anger and other emotions as a positive feature. Anger management must be seen as strength, not weakness.

3. Anger Management Procedures Acquired By Students In Collaboration With Others: Focused attention by school staff and professional counselors may be necessary to teach students adequate coping skills to deal with anger. Steps include the following:

A. Learning to be Assertive Versus Aggressive: Dangerous responses to angry feelings lie on both ends of a continuum of responses. At one end, the student responds with aggression, lashing out at perceived threats or annoyance. This has obvious negative implications for the student and those around him. At the other end, the student suppresses angry feelings. This likely results in the anger being expressed covertly as passive aggression, cynicism, sarcasm, critical thinking about others – or internalized as either physical complaints or depression. Between these two extremes lie two positive responses to angry feelings, that is assertive expression of these feelings. The student who is appropriately assertive recognizes his anger and can state why he is upset. These assertions serve the additional purpose of having the student verify that the perceived reason for anger is valid. The assertive student then tries to deal with the anger in a problem solving manner, without losing control.

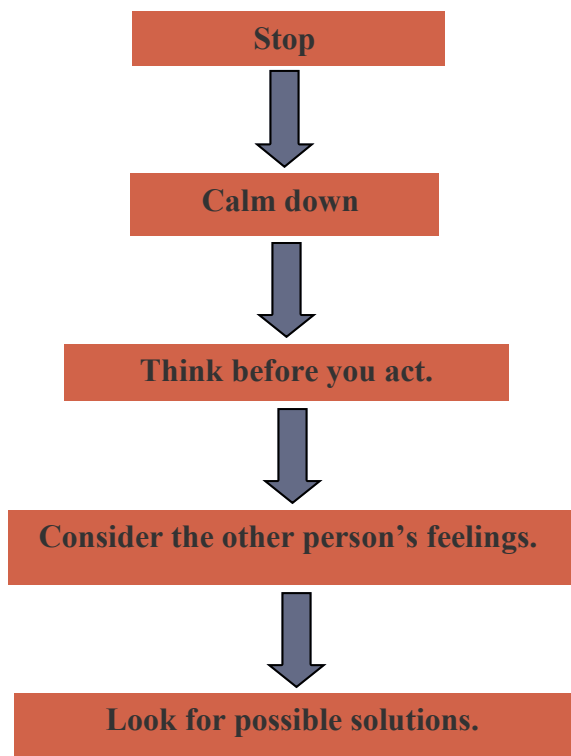
B. Self-Monitoring: Young children, experience the physiological correlates of anger without knowing what the emotion is, without being able to attach a word to it – it is simply a nameless feeling that leads to negative behavior. Many students "catastrophize" small issues into major issues without realizing that they are doing this. With counseling, students can become more aware of this distortion in their thinking, the negative effects of their habit, and that "catastrophizing" makes a difficult situation much more difficult. Practice describing the realities of their situation in objective and accurate terms may be useful for these students.

C. Self-Calming: Particularly students who tend to over-react to even mild irritations, should developing a self-script in which they evaluate the seriousness of the situation. For example, students can be taught to ask themselves, “Is this really a big deal or a little deal?” and “Am I sure that what I am doing will help me?” These scripts of self-regulation can be internalized if they are used by others in the environment in a routine manner.

D. Learning that One Can Only Control Oneself:

For many people, their primary source of anger is what other people do or don't do. They find the behavior of others to be disrespectful, unfair, unkind, or otherwise irritating, and they react angrily. The most important insight that these students can internalize is that they have no control over the behavior of others, only themselves. Furthermore, if the other person was in fact trying to hurt them in some way, then the anger response makes that other person the winner. Normally it is the student who reacts angrily who gets in trouble with authorities, or becomes very upset, or in some other way suffers a loss from the encounter. To be a winner is to refrain from reacting and therefore frustrating the other person – the source of the irritation.

Five Steps to Anger Management



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Amitabh Mohan



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