


# Feeling Angry


Feeling angry is not always comfortable and you feel like hitting out!



ACTIVITY SHEET 1: Feeling Angry



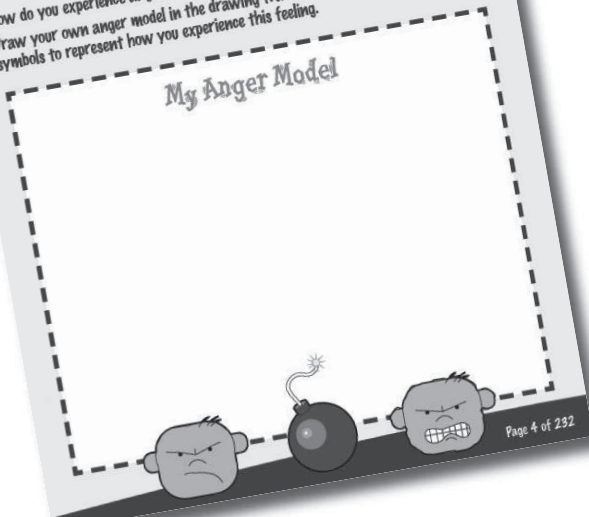
## Feeling Angry



All human beings experience angry feelings at the same point. It is a normal, healthy emotion. Some people will feel anger like an erupting volcano, whilst others may feel it like a firework exploding.


How do you experience anger?  
Draw your own anger model in the drawing frame below. Use colour and symbols to represent how you experience this feeling.

My Anger Model



SELF-REFLECTION ACTIVITY 1: Feeling Angry

## The Traffic Lights



**Stop! - and calm down**

What is the problem?  
.....

What is the feeling?  
.....

List some solutions

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

**Go - and make a plan**

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### Resources to print from the CD ROM

- Poster ..... Feeling Angry
- Story ..... Angry
- Activity Sheet. .... Feeling Angry
- Self-Reflection Activity ..... Feeling Angry
- Take Home Task ..... Feeling Angry

# Lesson 1: Feeling Angry

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## Introduction

In this first session it will be helpful to briefly outline the main aims and objectives of the programme to the pupils. The series of lessons aim to provide the pupils with structured opportunities to develop their emotional literacy and emotional wellbeing. The teacher can provide an outline of the course and highlight some of the skills that the pupils will be working on. It is particularly important that this is done in a straightforward manner so as to reassure the pupils that this is not, in any sense, going to be a threatening experience. These lessons will be fun and the pupils will have the opportunity to develop their own skills within the context of a supportive and empathic group. The teacher can highlight the following:

- ▶ The pupils will be learning about feelings – both their own and others’ and ways to cope more effectively with feelings that are uncomfortable, such as anger and stress.
- ▶ The pupils will have opportunities to practice their skills and learn how to problem-solve both on their own and with others.
- ▶ The pupils will have opportunities to share their learning with parents and carers.
- ▶ The learning that they undertake in this programme will also help them to concentrate better in class; manage stress, anger and uncomfortable feelings more effectively; understand and respect others’ views and feelings and work better with others in groups.
- ▶ They will also have opportunities to develop social and emotional skills in different ways – working individually, with partners and in group and whole class contexts. Most importantly, they will engage in a range of fun activities and games which will also ensure that the programme will be an enjoyable experience.

## Group Rules

In order to ensure that this positive, supportive and empathic climate can be set and maintained, it is vital for the teacher to agree group rules with the pupils. It is highly likely that they will have had some exposure to Circle Time methodology. This can now be reinforced and group rules formulated. These may include the following:

- ▶ We will wait our turn to talk.
- ▶ We will listen to each other’s views.
- ▶ We will build upon each other’s ideas.
- ▶ We will set realistic targets and help each other to meet these.
- ▶ We will respect each other’s feelings.
- ▶ We will try to find solutions, etc.

## Warm up Activity

### The Anger story

For this activity the facilitator will need several balloons and a balloon pump. Within the circle the pupils are required to tell a story about a boy called Alex who was unable to cope with his anger. The teacher can start the story, asking each pupil to contribute a sentence as the pump is passed around the circle. Each pupil is asked to describe one thing that would make Alex feel angrier and, simultaneously, put more air into the balloon. The pump can either be passed around the circle or, alternatively, one volunteer could be nominated to pump air into the balloon each time a pupil contributes to the story.

The idea here is to create a visual image of anger being stored, increased and finally exploding. The story can be started as follows:

There was once a boy called Alex. He spent most of his time feeling angry. It seemed that everything in the world made him angry; even things that other people thought were funny or nice. One morning he got out of bed and tripped over his duvet cover. He hit his head on the bedpost and it hurt and made him angry.

At this point, air can be pumped into the balloon. Pupils may continue the story with sentences such as then:

- ▶ he went to the bathroom and found that the water was cold
- ▶ he ran out of toothpaste
- ▶ the bus was late
- ▶ his best friend sat next to someone else on the bus
- ▶ he was late for school and his teacher was angry
- ▶ his first lesson was science, which is a subject he hated.

The pupils continue this story until the balloon bursts. The idea here is to reinforce the fact that anger is accumulative. It is sometimes just a small incident that can trigger the explosion. Sometimes it can be something more important. But pupils can, in turn, decide whether or not the event that ultimately made the balloon burst for Alex was significant or a smaller thing.

## Circle talk

### The Assault Cycle

This poster can be found in the Appendix and can be used by the teacher to initially introduce the process of becoming angry, being angry and recovering from anger. This acts as a visual resource for the teacher to explain the process as follows:

- A. The Trigger phase – when something annoys you and sets off your anger.
- B. The Escalation phase – when your anger builds and grows stronger.
- C. The Crisis phase – when you're likely to hit out or 'blow it'.
- D. The Plateau or Recovery phase – when you start to calm down but you can still get upset and 'flare-up' very quickly if someone upsets you.
- E. The Post-Crisis Depression phase – when your body begins to calm down, your pulse slows, your breathing and heartbeat slow and you really start to feel more balanced. You may, however, also feel a little down after your explosion in the Crisis phase. You will reach your 'normal' state at this point.

It is important to reinforce the fact that this is the normal process of feeling and being angry. What is vital is to highlight the fact that once we have become very angry, it can take up to 90 minutes before our bodies reach their 'normal' physiological state. This is why it is so important to take care of ourselves and learn how to take 'time out' during the recovery phase. It is also very important for us to learn how to identify our triggers so that we can use self-calming strategies in order to avoid the Escalation phase and Crisis phase.

The pupils need to be made aware that learning such self-control skills will be central to the programme and not simply the focus of this first session. Self-calming and solution-focused problem-solving skills will help them to cope more effectively with a wide range of uncomfortable feelings.

The Feeling Angry poster can also then be used to further generalise the feeling of anger to the pupils. The teacher can show the poster to the group and read out the definition as follows: Anger is not always comfortable and you feel like hitting out.

The pupils can then focus upon the following questions making use of a circle time approach as outlined in the introduction. It will be important to reinforce the group rules and particularly the need to provide anonymous examples when discussing times that they or others have experienced this feeling. This will help to ensure the safety of all involved and reinforce the need to respect others feelings. When asking the pupils to formulate their own definitions for this feeling, the teacher can make use of the definitions sheet provided in the appendix. This reinforces the value and importance of the children's views and experiences as all their responses can be recorded and it can also be displayed for future reference during the session.

The questions for this Circle talk are as follows:

- ▶ What does anger mean to you?
- ▶ Can you give your own definition?
- ▶ What does it feel like in your body?
- ▶ What does it make you think?
- ▶ How does it make you behave?
- ▶ Is it a comfortable feeling?
- ▶ Is it useful?
- ▶ How do other people show their angry feelings?
- ▶ Why are some people afraid of this feeling? Are they right to feel this way?
- ▶ What would you do and say to help someone who looked as if they were feeling angry?

### Question Time

1. What made Caris so angry at first?
2. Was she right to be angry?
3. Why was John so angry?
4. Is it important to win? If so, why?
5. What do you think will happen next?
6. What would happen if someone hit out like this in your playground?
7. Have you ever felt angry like this? When? Why? What happened?
8. What advice would you give to John?
9. What advice would you give to Caris?
10. What things might help us all to manage our anger better in both the classroom and the playground?

### Act it out!

The pupils can act out the story until they get to the STOP hand.

They can then try to make up a different ending which is more positive for all involved. The teacher can encourage them to:

Think carefully about what the characters might say to each other i.e. saying how they feel and what they want rather than hitting out.

Work out a script for each character in which they make use of assertive 'I' statements rather than being aggressive. What could Caris have said to herself to calm down? Who else could have helped her? What could she have said to John?

## Activity Sheets – Feeling Angry

### An Anger Model

This poster can be found in the Appendix and can be used by the teacher to introduce the notion of an 'anger model', i.e. a picture of our anger and how we experience it. The model presented here is Novaco's Firework Model. This visual tool identifies three aspects of the anger process as follows:

**The Trigger** – this is the match that ignites a person's fuse.

**The Fuse** – this is the mind reacting and the persons' thoughts and feelings producing a sense of fear or threat.

**The Explosive Cylinder** – this is the body responding physiologically and may lead to the anger being expressed.

The pupils can then use this model as a prompt to designing their own personal anger models. All of us experience angry feelings at some point in our lives or our daily experiences. To be angry is to encounter a normal healthy emotion. It may be useful to discuss the different ways in which we experience anger and how we see anger or feel anger. For example, some pupils may describe their anger as an erupting volcano or a firework exploding or hurricane brewing and blowing up etc. Pupils are required to draw their own anger models in the drawing frame provided and to use colours and symbols in order to represent how they experience this feeling.

### Self reflection Activity – The Traffic Lights

This activity introduces the pupils to a stepped approach to solving problems. This makes reference to the traffic light motif in three stages:

**STOP**, standing for stop and calm down, what is the problem? i.e. identifying what the problem is, articulating this and stating the problem either verbally or in writing.

**WAIT** – what is the feeling? It may be that the problem engenders many feelings and these also can then be recorded. List some solutions - The pupils are then asked to identify a maximum of four different things that they could do in order to solve this particular problem and

**GO**, make a plan, choose which of the solutions you would try out first, if it doesn't work then return to your plan and have another go.

This traffic light method is made use of throughout the programme within the reinforcement activities. It can be used for a range of more difficult or more complex situations and also for more straightforward problems that the children experience on a daily basis. In this session it will be helpful for the children to identify the problem that they have which involves them feeling or getting angry with someone or something or a specific situation. They may have been unable to identify these individual problems during the circle talk aspect of the session.

### Take Home Task – Anger Diary

The pupils are required to keep an Anger Diary for a one week period. They are asked to describe when and why they got angry, identifying specific triggers, how they felt, what they thought and what they did as a result of these triggers. They are then asked to think about the consequences of their behaviour and to reflect upon how they might make use of more helpful strategies next time. The chart is fairly straightforward to use and requires minimum amounts of recording. What is most important here is that the pupils take the opportunity to identify specific triggers and how these affect their feelings, thought processes and behaviours. The idea here is to identify the most common trigger or triggers and to consider how they can deal more effectively with the feelings engendered on future occasions.

## Plenary

A Circle time approach can again be used and the pupils can focus on the following questions:

- ▶ How did we feel at the start of this session?
- ▶ What have we learnt about feeling angry in this session?
- ▶ Have we learnt anything new about ourselves?
- ▶ Have we learnt anything new about others?
- ▶ Will we change the way we deal with this feeling in the future?
- ▶ Have we learnt any new skills or strategies that may help us?
- ▶ On a scale of 1-10 (1=not at all, 5=quite, 10=a great deal) how useful do we now feel this lesson has been?
- ▶ What would we like to be different about this lesson if it was repeated for others in the future? What ideas do we have?

## Ideas for reinforcement and development

- ▶ Pupils can think of something that has made them feel angry recently. They can imagine that they are in this situation again and make use of the Emotions Scale found in the Appendix in order to visualize a better outcome for themselves.
- ▶ Pupils can write their own ending to the story from the stop hand. This can be illustrated and presented in the form of a mini book.
- ▶ Pupils can use a traffic light method, found in the Appendix, to solve an anger problem. If someone continually curses their mother when they go into the playground, they can make use of the stepped approach in order to try and solve this particular problem.
- ▶ Pupils can listen to 'angry' music such as the closing orchestral end to Act 2 of the Walkure by Wagner or the Count's Third Act aria from the Marriage of Figaro. They can imagine what the characters may be feeling and thinking and thought-storm all the words that they would associate with this music in order to then complete anger poems.
- ▶ Pupils can design posters to illustrate how the body feels when they get angry very quickly. The illustration should include the following:

**Muscles tightening up and fists clenching**

**The face going red or pale**

**The mouth going dry**

**The pupils dilating and the eyes appearing bigger**

**The nostrils flaring**

**The heart racing**

**Faster breathing**

**A churning stomach**

**Sweating**

**Very quick movements of the body.**

- ▶ Pupils can thought-storm a series of problems that they would associate with this feeling. They can particularly focus on events in the playground and then make use of the problem-solving sheet or the feelings scale found in the Appendix in order to solve these particular problems.
- ▶ The pupils can design a series of Top Tip cards for anger management. These can include all the different strategies that they have learnt in the lesson and can be kept in an Anger Ideas Box within the classroom.