

**Understanding, Controlling**

**Preventing**

***ANGER***

**Part II**

**Teacher's Guide**

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**Produced by**

**COLMAN COMMUNICATIONS CORP.**

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# Understanding, Controlling & Preventing

# ANGER

## Part II

Time: 15 minutes

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

#### Intended Audience and Uses

This video and its companion program, *Understanding, Controlling & Preventing Anger, Part I*, are intended to be used with youngsters, ages 12-17. The videos also can be used in adult settings, especially for parents of preteens and teens. It is important to note that the program has been designed to be used with a classroom teacher, facilitator, leader or adult counselor. *Part II* provides information for self-diagnosis, and gives control and prevention strategies. Both videos have been designed to be used in the following settings:

- Classroom: *Health curriculum* — Interpersonal Relations, Conflict Resolution; *Home Economics*

- curriculum* — Parenting and Family Living
- ☐ At-Risk Programs: Counseling and therapy
  - ☐ Small Group: Counseling and therapy
  - ☐ Youth Group: Religious youth programs
  - ☐ Parenting programs
  - ☐ Community Outreach: Counseling, Parenting, Conflict Resolution, Family Living programs
  - ☐ Family Counseling: Counseling and therapy
  - ☐ Detention Centers and Alternative Schools
  - ☐ Individual: Counseling and therapy

### **Program Synopsis**

The program opens with a brief review of the first video in this series. After the review, the purpose of the second part is given: to help individuals get stress under control and to restrain trigger thoughts. The first thing that must be done is recognize that anger is present. Then angry persons must accept that they are responsible for their own feelings and how they react to others. Once that has been accomplished, they can begin to alter their thought processes by accepting that others have legitimate needs and desires that may not always be compatible with theirs. Another way to alter one's thought process is to recognize when self-talk is toxic, and then turn it into healthy self-talk. There are several categories of toxic self-talk. One is *toxic shoulds*. The problem with *toxic shoulds* is that one person's *shoulds* are not necessarily another's. Another is that *shoulds* are often based on misinformation. *Entitlements* are a second kind of toxic self-talk. Sometimes people think they are entitled to something because they want it. *It isn't fair* beliefs form a third kind of toxic self-talk. The problem with them is that what may seem unfair to one person may be perfectly fair

to another. *If-then* statements are still another kind of toxic self-talk. However, life is often more complicated than *if-then* statements indicate. Toxic self-talk often involves *demonization*, a belief that someone is evil. *Making assumptions* and *global labeling* are the two other kinds of toxic self-talk mentioned. One of the most effective ways to stop toxic self-talk is to merely tell yourself "Stop!" whenever unhealthy self-talk emerges. Then consciously think of something positive, replacing those negative thoughts and feelings with healthy self-talk. The program then moves on to show various methods of reducing stress, the "tinder" of anger. Meditation, *muscle relaxation exercises* and physical activity are mentioned. Finally, *anger chains* are discussed. They are defined as a rapid exchange of punishing messages that may lead to physical violence. Ways to recognize when one is entering an anger chain are covered, and various methods of stopping the chain are shown.

## STUDENT OBJECTIVES

After viewing this video and participating in the suggested activities, students should be able to do the following:

- (1) ***Recognize and admit a problem with anger, if the problem exists.***
- (2) ***Name seven kinds of toxic self-talk.***
- (3) ***Give personal examples of at least three times toxic self-talk has been used.***

- (4) *Explain how to stop toxic self-talk.*
- (5) *Tell at least four ways to reduce stress.*
- (6) *Define an anger chain and tell four ways one can determine if he or she is entering an anger chain.*
- (7) *Tell ways to stop an anger chain.*

## **SUGGESTED LESS ON PLAN**

### **1. Instructional Strategies**

#### **a. Single-View Strategy**

If you would like to use this program as a single lesson, it is suggested you pass out the preliminary written material ("Vocabulary List" and "Viewer's Concept Guide") before showing the program. The vocabulary exercise may be assigned as seat work or done as a class exercise. The concept guide may be completed as the video is shown, or immediately afterwards. In either case, the questions should be read before showing the program. The remaining worksheets should be passed out and completed after the program has been screened.

#### **b. Interactive Strategy**

The video has been designed to facilitate stopping at various places for the completion of written exercises and class discussion. The written exercises have been developed to expand, deepen and apply the concepts contained in each section of the video. Please refer to the are indicated by the "⚡" symbol, followed by the name of the written exercise(s) to be distributed. If you elect to use

the interactive strategy, you should hand out the "Vocabulary List" and "Viewer's Concept Guide" before viewing the program.

### c. Combined Strategy

If time allows, it is recommended that you show the video in one session, then show it again as an interactive lesson, using the stop points to hand out the exercises and discuss the various concepts presented in each section of the program. The video may be shown a third time as part of a review.

## **2. Introduction**

Review the first program with your group. Make certain that everyone fully understands the roles of stress and trigger thoughts in the formation of anger.

## **3. Previewing Activities**

Tell your class that now that everyone has a good idea of what anger is, how it's formed and how it can destroy happiness, personal relationships and one's physical health, it's time to move on to ways of controlling and preventing anger. Discuss possibilities, focusing on ways to dispel stress and eliminate trigger thoughts. Tell the class that in the second program much attention is given to how trigger thoughts are formed. Explain that if we can understand the formation of trigger thoughts, we can better understand how to control and prevent them. Pass out the "Vocabulary List" and "Viewer's Concept Guide." Have the class complete the vocabulary list exercise as a small group activity or as individual seat work. Then go over the Viewer's Concept Guide. Have the

students complete this exercise as they watch the program or immediately afterwards. If you are presenting the video as an interactive activity, please consult the transcript of the video (see below) to determine when to stop, and which exercises to use during the stop points.

#### **4. Post-viewing Activities**

If you have used the single-view strategy, distribute the remaining handouts. (See "Purposes of Handout Material," below). Go over each one, using it as a basis for discussion. Now it's time to have the participants apply the strategies learned in the second program to what they've learned about themselves in the first program. Have everyone take out "My Personal Responsibility Statement" written in Part I of this series. If you feel it would be helpful, instruct the participants be more concise by naming, in their statement, devices stated in the second video (say "stop!" or mention positive things about a demonized person, for example) that would help them take more personal responsibility. Then have your students take out the "Stress" worksheet completed in Part I. Next to each example, have them write which stress-reducing strategy would be most useful under each of the circumstances mentioned. Finally, have your students take out the "A Combustible Mix" worksheet. Have them rewrite the account, this time telling if an anger chain occurred, and, if it did, what strategies they could use to defuse the situation. In addition, have them explain if any toxic self-talk played a role in their anger. Now, have the participants rewrite and perform the situations in which they have become angry. The new, rewritten performances should incorporate what they've learned about toxic self-talk, anger chains, rechanneling and time outs.

## PURPOSES OF HANDOUT MATERIAL

*Vocabulary List, Part II:* To familiarize students with possibly unfamiliar terms used in the program.

*Viewer's Concept Guide, Part II:* To focus the viewer's attention on key concepts.

*Entitlements & Toxic Shoulds:* To give more detailed information on these two types of toxic self-talk; to provide an opportunity for self-examination of attitudes regarding entitlements; to promote self-awareness that one person's "shoulds" is not necessarily another's.

*"It Isn't Fair":* To help viewers determine whether a disagreement is the result of a difference of opinion or a true injustice; to assist viewers in prioritizing injustices in order to deal with them appropriately.

*"If-Then" Beliefs & The Demonization Process:* To help viewers better understand how "If-Then" beliefs are often based on faulty assumptions; to give additional information about demonization, and to help viewers analyze whether demonization is a factor in their thought process.

*Global Labeling & Making Assumptions:* To help viewers determine whether they globally label and make assumptions. To help viewers understand why making assumptions is easy to do.

*Anger Chains & How to Break Them:* To help viewers understand the implications of anger chains. To give them an opportunity to apply what they've learned about rechanneling and "time outs."

## ANSWER KEY

### Viewer's Concept Guide, Part II:

1. Recognize that you have a problem with anger. 2. Ask if you often feel as if you're simmering inside, ready to explode; stomp around the house; throw things; act out in other ways. 3. Each person is responsible for his or her own feelings. 4. Toxic self-talk. 5. "Toxic shoulds" say that something should be a certain way, or a person should act in a certain way; "entitlements" say that you are entitled to something without having to work for it, or put out any effort; "it isn't fair" beliefs state that a person or event isn't fair to you; "if-then" statements say that if one thing is true, then another thing must follow; "demonization" is a view that a person is all bad; "making assumptions" jumps to conclusions without looking at the facts; "global labeling" says that someone always acts in a certain way. 6. By saying "stop" and then thinking something positive. 7. Meditation, breathing exercises, physical exercises, muscle relaxation. 8. Rapid exchange of punishing statements, loud and strained voices, extreme hand and arm gestures, distorted facial features, exaggerated body movement. 9. Rechanneling and time outs.

## TRANSCRIPT OF THE VIDEO

TINA: You always do this to me! I never get what I want!

MANUEL: You dissed me, man! You know what I do to guys who diss me? This! You loser!

NARRATOR: Examples of anger. If you've seen the first program in this series, you already know that anger can

destroy relationships, and according to scientists, can harm one's health.

Now, if you could get that stress under control, or if you could restrain your trigger thoughts, you could prevent the formation of anger.

The good news is that preventing and controlling anger is possible. But it does take time and hard work.

First, you'll need to recognize that you've got a problem with anger, if in fact you do.

In order to find out, you'll need to take an unflinching look at how you react to others. Do you often feel as if you're simmering inside, about to explode? Or do things just seem to set you off?

CHUCK: Peanut butter and jelly?

ERIC: What's it to you?

NARRATOR: Do you yell or snap at family members and friends?

ERIC: What I eat is my business, not yours!

NARRATOR: Do you stomp around the house? Slam doors? Throw things, or act out in other ways? If so, it's time to admit that you've probably got a problem.

After you recognize and admit that anger does play a role in how you react to people and events, you'll want to alter your thought process.

Perhaps the best way to begin that task is to accept the fact that you — and no one else — are responsible for your feelings and how you react to others.

For example, Eric could change his viewpoint so his brother's question about the snack would be less likely to provoke anger.

CHUCK: Peanut butter and jelly?

ERIC: Yeah, I gotta stop eating so much of this stuff — bad for my weight-loss program.

NARRATOR: In other words. Eric could view Chuck's words as just a simple question, not irritating meddling.

Altering your thought process may also involve accepting the fact that others have legitimate needs and desires that may not always be compatible with yours.

MIKE: Perfect timing! The game'll be on in two minutes!

TINA: I'm not watching that! Come on! Switch it to MTV!

MIKE: Are you kidding, Tina? No way! Hey, it's the playoffs, for Pete's sake!

TINA: You selfish jerk! You never think about what I want!

NARRATOR: It's also helpful to understand that it's not a good idea to try to change another person.

TINA (To herself): That's the last game he'll ever watch a game when Pm around!

NARRATOR: What you can do, however, is change the way you view that person and your reactions to him. So instead of saying...

TINA: All he ever thinks about is sports!

NARRATOR: ... you could expand your viewpoint beyond your own interests and wants. In other words, you could become more mature in your outlook

TINA: Okay, I know he enjoys football. So I can't really blame him for watching the playoffs.

NARRATOR: What Tina is doing now is conducting

what's known as healthy self-talk.

As people go about their everyday lives, they often talk to themselves about how they see the things, people and events around them.

This inner conversation reveals their state of mind. When self-talk is healthy, trigger thoughts are seldom, if ever, present.

When self-talk is unhealthy, or as psychologists say, "toxic," a foundation for trigger thoughts is present. Mental health experts have identified several categories of toxic self-talk. The first is known as "toxic shoulds." Here's an example.

MANUEL: Roberto shouldn't ignore me like that! He should treat me with more respect.

NARRATOR: One problem with "shoulds" is that your "shoulds" aren't necessarily someone else's.

Individuals may differ in what they *see* as proper behavior. Another problem with "shoulds" is that they're often based on either misinformation or, as is the case here, on inadequate information. Roberto simply didn't see Manuel because he wasn't wearing his glasses.

"Toxic shoulds" based on misinformation or inadequate information happen all the time. The results? A lot of unnecessary anger.

Now let's move on to "entitlements," another category of unhealthy self-talk. Entitlements say, in effect, "Because I want something, I ought to have it."

TEACHER: Okay, class. Hand in your reports before you leave today. And have a good weekend.

DINA: I ought to get a good grade on this because I really, really want to pass everything this term.

NARRATOR: Well, the fact is that nobody is ever entitled to anything just because she or he wants it. Life just does not work that way.

## ☞ Entitlements & Toxic Shoulds

The same can be said for "It isn't fair" beliefs, still another kind of toxic self-talk. The statement, "This isn't right because it isn't fair!" is an example.

The problem with "it isn't fair" beliefs is that what may seem unfair to one person may seem perfectly fair to another.

DANSON: Hey, Lee! How about giving me a chance?

LEE: Hold on, okay? I need about five more minutes to work on my jump shot.

DANSON: Why don't you give it up?

NARRATOR: To Lee, 35 minutes is a fair amount of practice time; to Danson, five fewer minutes is fair. Who's to say who is right?

## ☞ "It isn't Fair!"

Still another kind of toxic self-talk contains "if ... then" statements.

MARLA: If Ted really loved me, then he'd call more often. Oh, he's just full of it! He hasn't called all afternoon!

NARRATOR: Of course, its not necessarily true that "If Ted loved Marla, then he'd call her more often." Some people aren't all that comfortable talking on the phone. Or Ted simply may not be able to call.

DAD: Ted?

TED: Yeah, Dad?

DAD: I told you I want that garage cleaned out now!

TED: Okay, Dad.

NARRATOR: Toxic self-talk often involves demonization — statements in which the so-called "guilty party" is transformed into someone evil.

BOB: Here comes the "Crown Prince of Insult" himself.

NARRATOR: Of course, practically no one is truly demonic —that is, all bad. Almost everyone has positive aspects of his or her personality.

So when we demonize, we're setting ourselves up for an anger attack; it's easy to be angry at someone who's seen as evil.

Making assumptions jumping to conclusions without looking at the facts — is still another variation of toxic self-talk.

GLADYS: Ewww! They are so repulsive! Look at them! They're disgusting! They're making themselves up that way for only one reason — to hit on guys.

NARRATOR: The problem with assumptions is that they are very often wrong.

MAKE UP GIRL No. 1: Ready?

MAKE UP GIRL No. 2: Let's see. "Heavy make-up, 70's style, provocative." Yeah, I think we've got it now. Hey, we've still got 15 minutes. Let's run through our lines again, okay?.

NARRATOR: See? Now you can understand why making assumptions can be easily toxic.

## 6 "If-Then" Beliefs & The Demonization Process

Our final example of toxic self-talk is global labeling, telling yourself that someone *always acts in a certain way*, a way that you find offensive.

LINDA: That is SO annoying. Whenever I try to study, he starts drumming his fingers. Always! He never quits! Hey! Will you knock it off?

JACK: Oh, gee...sorry, I didn't realize what I was doing.

NARRATOR: Now that you know some of the major kinds of toxic self-talk that lead to anger, you'll be able to recognize them if and when they slip into your inner conversation. The next step is learning how to stop them dead in their tracks.

One of the most effective ways is to just tell yourself, "stop!" whenever they make an appearance in your mind. Then, think something positive.

MARLA: If Ted really loved me, then he'd call more often. Stop it! Okay, he doesn't have to call me whenever I want him to. He's not my slave. He has other things going on in his life besides me. I've got to realize that. Besides, he is so sweet whenever he's with me.

BOB: Here comes the Crown Prince of... Stop that! Wait a minute. Almost all people have something good about them. See, he's talking to those people, and he looks friendly.

NARRATOR: That's the idea. Now, in addition to pushing out toxic self-talk and replacing it with healthy self-talk you can stop hostility from becoming a problem by reducing stress.

Remember, stress is a prime ingredient of anger.

One of the best ways to reduce stress is to breathe deeply and evenly, especially when you feel the mental pressure or tension building up.

Any kind of physical exercise is another way to reduce stress.

Meditation — blanking out your mind, or concentrating on a single sound — also helps many people to reduce their level of stress.

Muscle relaxation exercises are still another way. One of the best methods to relax your muscles is to start with those on your face, relax them, then move down your body to your neck, shoulders and chest and so on...relaxing each part as you do until you get all the way down to your toes.

Even though you may become very good at reducing your stress levels and stopping unhealthy self-talk you still may find yourself caught up in a heated discussion once in a great while, one that seems to be careening out of control.

When people argue, they often try to influence the other person through a series of rapid exchanges of punishing messages.

When they do, they often become involved in what's called an "anger chain."

### 🌀 Global Labeling & Making Assumptions

In anger chains, each outburst of anger invites another, in retaliation, then another...and another...until those involved head into *very* dangerous territory — physical violence. Anger chains are easy to detect.

In addition to the rapid exchange of punishing messages, voices often become strained and loud as the anger chain escalates.

TODD: I said, I dare you! I dare you!

NARRATOR: Hand and arm gestures are common, also.

JOHN: Well then, come on! Hey, man...come on! I'm ready! Or are you just chicken?

NARRATOR: Facial features are often distorted.

TODD: No, I'm not a chicken!

NARRATOR: And body movement may be exaggerated.

JOHN: So what are waiting for? Huh?

NARRATOR: Because anger chains can lead to physical violence, they should be stopped immediately. There are several ways to do it.

One is called "rechanneling," and it works best when the anger chain first begins. Rechanneling statements move the argument away from its punishing exchanges.

PHYLLIS: We're both getting upset. Let's talk when we're not so stressed.

NARRATOR: Another possible way to defuse the situation is to ask about what's bothering the person with whom the argument has started.

MARCELLA: Look, there's something's wrong here. It's not my being late. You want to tell me about it?

NARRATOR: "Time outs" can be a highly effective way to quickly defuse anger chains. As soon as the chain begins, a "time out" sign is made.

CJ: Time out...

NARRATOR: ...is the only thing that needs to be said, if anything. You should not say, "You're making me angry," or

"You're getting out of control!" Comments such as those invite retaliating responses, and the anger chain will begin to build once again.

During the "time out" period, both parties would do well to exercise to reduce the stress and tension, as well as purposely put "stops" on any unhealthy self-talk. After the time out, they can talk more calmly.

## 🌀 Anger Chains & How to Break Them

Controlling and preventing anger, then, requires a lot of work because, at its core, it demands changes in how you think and how you react to others.

It requires that you grow — that you develop the capacity to restrain your emotions and broaden your understanding of how others think and feel.

It asks that you recognize your own feelings and admit to yourself that anger does play a role in your reactions to people and events.

Controlling and preventing anger asks that you understand that others may have legitimate needs and desires that are not compatible with yours.

It requires that you identify the kinds of toxic inner talk you may have, and then learn how to stop it in its tracks.

Controlling and preventing anger asks that you learn to reduce your level of stress through exercise, muscle relaxation, breathing techniques or meditation, or through a combination of those methods.

It requires that you have the presence of mind to recognize

when you and others are entering into an anger chain, and then employ a number of techniques to stop the chain in its tracks.

Controlling and preventing anger takes effort, time and energy. But it's worth it because good relations with others are the result. And the ability to have good relations is one of the things that makes life enjoyable and fulfilling!

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## **Viewer's Concept Guide, Part II**

**Instructions: Answer the questions in the provided spaces.**

- 1. What is the first step one must take to control and prevent anger?**
- 2. How can you tell if you have a problem with anger?**
- 3. Who is responsible for your feelings?**
- 4. What forms the foundation of trigger thoughts?**
- 5. Name five kinds of toxic self-talk. Explain each one.**
- 6. How can one prevent toxic self-talk?**
- 7. What are four ways to reduce or eliminate stress?**
- 8. Name five signs that indicate an anger chain is developing.**
- 9. Name two ways to immediately stop an anger chain.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Entitlements & Toxic Shoulds

In our society, it is generally believed that we have three entitlements, or things we are entitled to at birth — life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. (Notice that happiness itself is not an entitlement. Only the right to *pursue* it is an entitlement.)

Everything else must be earned.

Whether we have more entitlements than those three is open to debate. Some people might say, for instance, that every child is entitled to a safe, supportive home and a good education. Others say everyone is entitled to live in a crime-free environment. Nevertheless, most things that we want or need must be earned. That is the nature of life.

If we think we are not getting what we're entitled to, we tend to become angry about it. The more entitlements we think we have, the more likely we'll become angry.

The list below sets out some commonly believed entitlements. On a separate sheet of paper, tell how and why they must be earned, not given.

*Good friends, good grades, three meals a day, good health, respect, popularity, nice clothes, good looks, enough money to buy the things I want, a brother and/or sister who doesn't fight with me, a parent who doesn't treat me like a baby.*

It's very easy for us to think that someone *should* act one way or another. As the video mentioned, however, one person's "should" is not necessarily another's. In some families, children should be seen but not heard at the dinner table. In other families, children are expected to be full participants in dinner conversations. In some societies, people should eat with their hands; in others, they're expected to use eating utensils.

Toxic shoulds often are the result of tunnel vision. That is, people who say, "It should be this way," or "She shouldn't behave like that" are overlooking the other person's viewpoint. Being able to see another individual's viewpoint is a sign of maturity. Young children believe everyone sees the world exactly as they do. They do not understand that *nobody else* sees the world exactly they

Name \_\_\_\_\_

do, because nobody else has had their exact rearing nor their exact genetic makeup, which, in part, determines how they view the world.

On a separate sheet of paper, list what you consider to be five "reasonable shoulds," then discuss them with your classmates. You may be surprised to discover that *your* "reasonable shoulds" may not be so reasonable to your fellow students.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## "It Isn't Fair"

In the video, a basketball player felt it wasn't fair that his teammate took more than thirty minutes to practice. How often do you feel that someone isn't fair and become angry about it? Sometimes, anger is the result of two people looking at the same thing differently. That's what happened in the video. When we tell ourselves that "it isn't fair," it's often a good idea to ask ourselves whether or not it's just a difference of opinion.

Of course, there are times when circumstances aren't fair. Everyone has unfair things happen to him or her. Sadly, injustice is a part of life. Nobody can escape it.

Read the three situations below. Decide which ones are really differences of opinion or truly unfair. Write your decision on a separate sheet of paper and explain your reasoning.

*An umpire calls you out on a close play. A teacher give you an F for cheating on a test and you didn't cheat. A friend says you treated him disrespectfully.*

When truly unfair things happen to us, it's often helpful to ask whether anger is the best way to handle the situation. For example, let's say your best friend unjustly accuses you of betraying a confidence. Which response would be most likely to set the record straight?

- (1) Become angry and scream at her, saying that she doesn't know what she's talking about.*
- (2) Listen calmly, then state that you believe someone has given her some misinformation because you would never betray the confidence of a best friend.*

Obviously, the second choice would be more likely to produce the desired result. Why? Because people tend to either withdraw, become defensive or retaliate when confronted with anger. So anger is generally counter-productive when dealing with an injustice.

It also may be helpful to you to categorize injustices in the following way: (1) Small injustices that can be ignored or shrugged off. (2) Normal injustices that can be dealt with calmly and rationally. (3) Big injustices (remember the girl who was attacked in the opening of the first program?) In which anger is justified.

Read each situation below. Decide whether it should be ignored, dealt with calmly and rationally, or whether it merits anger. Write your answers on a separate sheet of paper and explain your reasoning.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

***Your brother says you've eaten all the ice cream when your sister is the one who's done it. You see a mother strike her child in the grocery store. A friend accuses you of failing to give back a jacket he loaned to you two weeks ago. Your father says you can go to the movies if you finish your homework, then refuses to let you go when you've shown him you've done all your assignments. The class goof tells you your hair looks weird after you've gotten an expensive haircut.***

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## "If-Then" Beliefs & The Demonization Process

Toxic "if-then" beliefs are almost always based on misinformation or on faulty assumptions. You saw an example in the video. Marla said that, "If Ted really loved me, *then* he'd call me more often." But as you saw, that wasn't the case at all.

Marla made a common error. She *assumed* that Ted's mind, situation and behavior patterns were similar to hers. But Marla *isn't* Ted. His mind, situation and behavior patterns are different from hers. Getting angry at Ted won't help build the relationship. Understanding and accepting that Ted is different will help set things right. Complete the sentences below. Then exchange them with the person next to you. You'll be amazed at the differences. The next time you catch yourself making a toxic "if-then" statement, remember this exercise.

*If you truly love someone, then you give that person ...*  
*If you despise someone, then you....*  
*If someone yells at you, then you...*  
*If you make a mistake, then you...*  
*If you want to make a good impression, then you...*



Demonization can happen slowly, over time, or can occur quite rapidly. Generally, however, it happens in small steps. It usually starts with a statement or behavior that you believe merits disapproval. Then, you begin to think about it. You could dismiss the statement or behavior, but somehow it grates on your nerves. Then, over time, you begin to think of other things the offending party has done. Slowly, a "demonization filter" emerges in your mind. Events or statements that are perfectly harmless now take on a dark meaning. Eventually, whenever you see the "demon," his words and behavior, no matter how innocent, appear evil.

Have you ever demonized someone — an acquaintance, family member or teacher? If so, describe in the box below how it happened. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, write five positive things about the demonized person. It may be very difficult, but be persistent.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Global Labeling & Making Assumptions

When the words "always," and "never" creep into our thoughts, there's a good chance we're using global labeling. Here are some examples:

*"She never wants to do what I want to do."*

*"I always have to be the one who apologizes." "He always tries to annoy me."*

*"She never returns what she borrows." "He always cheats when we play."*

Of course, it's much easier to become angry with someone who *always* does the wrong thing and *never* does what's right. The problem is that nobody really fits that description.

Have you ever globally labeled someone? If so, describe the process and the label in the space provided.

Making assumptions is easy because it doesn't require much thought or analysis. You merely see or hear something and then jump to a conclusion. You don't have to deal with any facts. The girl in the washroom is a good example. The fact that the girls in heavy make-up were getting ready to perform in a play failed to make any impact on her assumption. To her, they were making themselves up to "...hit on guys." She didn't take the time to find out what the real situation was. Have you made an assumption and become angered because of it? If so, describe what happened in the space below. Use the back of this page if you need more room.

## Anger Chains & How to Break Them

Anger chains can be dangerous because, if not stopped, they can lead to physical violence. Whenever there's a rapid exchange of punishing statements (name-calling, cursing, blaming, verbal demonizing, etc.) an anger chain has begun. It's very difficult to stop an anger chain from escalating once it starts unless you know exactly what to do. Anger chains are particularly difficult for males to stop. Research has shown that males tend not to think rationally when the emotional part of their brain has been activated. (Females, on the other hand, are able to experience emotions and think rationally at the same time).

Disengaging from an anger chain early is easier than disengaging later. That's why it's so important to recognize some of the most important signs of an anger chain:

- Rapid exchange of punishing statements
- Loud and strained voices
- Extreme hand and arm gestures
- Distorted facial features
- Exaggerated body movement

The video mentions two ways to stop an anger chain. The first is rechanneling. If you recall, this method moves the argument away from its punishing exchanges. Rechanneling statements include, "Let's talk when we're not so stressed," and "I'd like to cool down before we continue." Two others include, "I'm becoming too upset to discuss this in a way that will solve the problem, so let me calm down before we continue," and "I need to think about this, but I'm too agitated right now. I need some time to sort this out."

"Time outs" are a somewhat more simple way. Merely say, "Time out," and leave the room. Acknowledge that the conversation will continue after a cooling off period.

In both instances, it would be a good idea to do something to reduce the stress at that time. Any one, or combination, of the methods shown in the video will work — meditation, physical exercise, muscle relaxation and breathing exercises may be very helpful. Listening to calm music is another way to reduce stress.

Most people have been involved in an anger chain. In the box below, tell about the last time you were caught up in one. Then, tell how you could have defused the situation by using a rechanneling statement or a time out.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Vocabulary List, Part II

Instructions: On the lines, write the definition of the terms listed below.

Component \_\_\_\_\_

Consequence \_\_\_\_\_

Unflinching \_\_\_\_\_

Meddle \_\_\_\_\_

Alter \_\_\_\_\_

Compatible \_\_\_\_\_

Toxic \_\_\_\_\_

Inadequate \_\_\_\_\_

Entitlement \_\_\_\_\_

Demonization \_\_\_\_\_

Repulsive \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Assumption \_\_\_\_\_

Provocative \_\_\_\_\_

Consciously \_\_\_\_\_

Meditation \_\_\_\_\_

Careen \_\_\_\_\_

Detect \_\_\_\_\_

Escalate \_\_\_\_\_

Defuse \_\_\_\_\_