



A Program of Conley Outreach Community Services
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Community Care Team News

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In This Issue

This issue explores the nature and root causes of anger, warning signs and where to go for anger management help. It was taken from an article written by Trang Rose, M.A., LCPC from TriCity Family Services.

Why Are We So Angry?

On any given day, look around and you will see people arguing with co-workers, gesturing at fellow motorists or swearing at each other. People don't just *seem* angrier today, studies show that society really *is* more hostile. A recent study by Scripps Howard News Service found 88 percent of respondents believe that people are more likely to express anger today than they would in the past. Also, a recent study by the Yale School of Management found as many as one in four U.S. workers may be chronically angry on the job. Additionally, a study by the American Automotive Association's Foundation for Traffic Safety found that incidents of aggressive driving continue to increase every year.

Immediate Gratification Assumed

With everything now available at the touch of a finger, our society has become one of impatience. Our fast-paced, hectic lifestyles rely on instant gratification and having everything readily available. Impatience, combined

with factors like divorce, a general breakdown in the family structure, more anonymity, and increasing levels of violence in the media are all factors experts believe to be contributing to the rising anger epidemic in America.

Whatever the cause, more and more Americans are letting their anger get to a boiling point before dealing with it. At that level, the anger is often acted out in harmful behaviors, such as swearing, road rage, or other aggressive or violent acts. **Further, children are learning poor anger management skills from a young age, either by modeling after their parents, the media or peers.**

A Natural Response

Anger is a very natural human emotion that is experienced by everyone. It only becomes negative when people allow it to facilitate behaviors that are harmful to themselves or others. In adults, learning effective ways to manage anger takes patience, insight, and the ability to recognize problematic behaviors. **Some signs that indicate current or potential problems requiring help include:**

- Short temper/impatience.
- Restlessness and agitation.
- Hitting and slamming objects, pets, or people.
- Desire to inflict harm.
- Verbal outbursts toward family, friends or coworkers.

- A sense of losing control over your life.
- Poor concentration or attention span.
- Physical health affected; increase in blood pressure, dizzy, headaches, clenched jaw, tight muscles, etc.
- You feel life should be fair, but it is not; and things are not how you want them to be.

Children and Anger

In children, anger is often a substitute for other feelings that they cannot identify. However, when it truly is anger that they are experiencing, children are often frightened by the feelings of being out of control. For this reason, it is helpful to encourage children to talk about what is bothering them and to teach them how to identify anger triggers before they feel out of control. Signs that a child may require intervention include:

- Behavioral outbursts, many times without obvious cause.
- Sleep problems.
- Fights at school or home.
- Physical attacks on others or animals, even among preschoolers.
- Disobedience from otherwise well behaved child(ren).
- Other reactions similar to those of adults.

Where to Go for Help

There are several area agencies with specific anger management programs.

TriCity Family Services, a private, not-for-profit counseling agency in Geneva, currently offers **Smart Choices** - anger management programs for children and teens, and **I-C.A.N.** for adults. **Smart Choices** is facilitated by qualified counselors and teaches participants the

skills to resolve conflict, manage anger, and develop alternatives to a potentially vicious cycle of violent behavior.

Sessions focus on topics such as the nature of conflict, emotions and anger response patterns, elements of effective communication, and tools for successful conflict resolution. **I-C.A.N.**(Control Anger Now) serves 6-8 adults at a time who are self-referred, not court ordered. Topics include forgiveness, relaxation, and identifying all of the emotions felt during an “anger” moment. For more information or to register, call (630) 232-1070.

Family Counseling, a not-for-profit agency located in Aurora offers three anger management courses. **M.A.R.S.** (Men Anger/Abuse Recovery Support) and **F.A.I.R.** (Female Anger Intervention Recovery) are group intervention programs for adults who have been abusive in domestic or adult relationships, are willing to take responsibility for their behavior, and have a desire to change. Both are open to court ordered clients and require screening evaluations. **Teen M.A.R.S. and F.A.I.R.** are individual family based programs for adolescents ages 13-18 who have been violent in family and/or dating relationships. The participants may be court ordered or voluntary. These sessions offer skill building in how to make choices and alternatives to violence. Parent participation is required. Call 630/844-2662 for more information.

Other Resources

Heartland Counseling	365-2880
Taking Control	801-1669
Breaking Free	897-1003
Ben Gordon Center	815/756-4875
Family Service Agency	815/758-8616
Community Counseling Center	966-7400