

Anger Management Toolkit

Being aware of your payoffs



This worksheet is designed to assist you in developing your personal skills to better manage your current situation.

If you are having trouble understanding this worksheet or need support, please call a MensLine Australia counsellor on 1300 78 99 78.

Things to think about

Payoffs are hidden reasons why we keep doing things that are damaging or unhelpful. If you often use anger to try to resolve situations, there may be an underlying payoff attached to your response. This worksheet is designed to help you identify these payoffs and how to change them for the better.

Below are some of the hidden reasons, or payoffs, why people don't change. There may be others.

- 1. Feeling Powerful**
The quick hit of adrenaline that comes from blame, violence or hurting others. Wanting to have power over another person.
- 2. Self-pity**
Indulging in feeling sorry for yourself. Feeling like you are the victim. If I am the victim, I have a right to retaliate.
- 3. Self-righteousness**
Needing to be 'right'. Feeling that it is a weakness to admit you are wrong.
- 4. Scared of being vulnerable or insecure**
Not wanting to admit that you are sad, afraid or helpless - so you get angry instead.

Generally, people hold onto negative payoffs because they are missing a positive quality, feeling or experience. For instance, if you have a payoff of needing to feel powerful, what you may really need is a sense of personal confidence. As an example, if people are laughing at you, you may choose to feel powerful by throwing a punch. However, if you were personally confident enough, you would ignore the comment or laugh it off.

Activity

Step 1: Identify which payoff you use most

Think back to a recent angry moment you have had, with the idea of payoffs in mind. Reflect upon why you felt the anger and what the main payoff was. There may be more than one payoff. However, choose the first one that comes to mind.

Step 2: What is the antidote to your payoff?

Now you have identified your payoff, look for the positive quality, feeling or experience that you are really wanting. An example has been given, but you might like to add your own.

FEELING POWERFUL:

Are you really looking for personal confidence?
Or ...

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SELF PITY:

Are you seeking love? Or ...

SELF RIGHTEOUS:

Are you looking for a sense of self-esteem? Or ...

INSECURE:

Are you really needing to feel safe? Or ...

Step 3: Finding ways to feel better about yourself

What can you do to create the positive quality, feeling or experience that does not require the angry payoff? Make sure it is achievable and realistic. See the worksheets on self-care.

Example: I can find personal confidence by training for the half marathon.

Attempt this action this week.

This worksheet is part of a series on anger management, communication and self-care. You may find it useful to complete other worksheets in this series. For more information or assistance, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78



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Call 1300 78 99 78
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Identifying other emotions



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Things to think about

When things go wrong, anger and frustration are often the easiest feelings to express. Yet anger can hide other feelings such as helplessness, hopelessness or feeling sad, hurt or afraid. When these feelings are hidden, anger becomes the usual response. By not being aware of what your anger is made up of, you remain angry.

Anger can become the response to many feelings and thoughts, and can then become a habit.

Activity

Think back to one of those angry moments you have had. It doesn't have to be a major event. Now, with that time in your mind:

1. What was the situation that made you angry?

Example: A car pulled out unexpectedly in front of me or I had an accident with another car, completely damaging my vehicle.

When we are angry there is nearly always a need or want that has not been met. Sometimes this unmet need or want is something material such as money or a possession and at other times it is more a feeling or quality such as being respected or feeling loved.

2. What was the unmet need or want?

Example: In the case of the car pulling out in front of you, the unmet need may be a sense of your personal safety (a feeling or quality).

If you had an accident, the unmet need may also be your car (a physical thing).

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3. Now consider the unmet need or want. Consider what other emotion this unmet need or want has triggered.

Example: The fact that you feel your personal safety has been compromised may lead you to feel fear as well as anger. If you lost your car in an accident, you might also feel shocked and/or saddened.

Next time you are feeling angry try to identify the other emotion that is underneath. Then when you are talking about the situation you have a chance to focus on the feelings behind your anger. This can lead to more productive conversations and less likelihood of conflict. See the 'I' statement worksheet for more info on how to work on this.

4. What is the main other emotion you were feeling? (Circle one or two at most)

- angry AND sad
- angry AND hurt
- angry AND afraid
- angry AND helpless
- angry AND shocked
- angry AND ashamed
- angry AND ... (add another emotion not listed)

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