

Session Topic: Feeling (Dealing with Anger)

Developmental Level: Middle School

Purpose: To help the students identify what triggers their anger and to talk about healthy ways to deal with it when it arises.

Materials Needed: Thermometer drawn on the board, handout "How Do I Handle My Anger" and "Practice Positive Self-talk", Deep breathing instructions, Muscle relaxation instructions

Description of Session:

1. Tell the group that you are going to talk about anger in today's group. Begin the discussion by asking what their triggers are that make anger rise. Point to the thermometer, near the bottom, and say some things make you annoyed. Point higher up and say some things make you pretty mad. Point near the top and say some things make us feel like we could explode. Point to the very top and say some things make us feel like we will lose control. Ask the students to give you examples for each of those levels of anger and write them on the board.
2. Hand out the "How Do I Handle My Anger" handout. Give them a few minutes to complete. Mention how if they answered "true" to any of those questions, they may have trouble handling their anger. That's why we are going to talk about different ways we can manage our anger.
3. Talk about how it's important to know our triggers and the feelings in our body when we are about to explode with anger. When we feel those ways, we can take steps to cool down.
4. Talk about healthy ways to cool down.
 - Deep breathing - guide students through a brief deep breathing exercise (handout)
 - Muscle Relaxation - guide students through a brief muscle relaxation exercise (handout)
 - Positive Self Talk - Talk about how the ways we talk to ourselves about situations matters greatly. Negative self-talk includes criticizing yourself, blaming yourself or others for problems. Walk through a couple of examples with the students. Then pass out handout for them to practice for themselves.

Discussion Questions:

1. What is something new that you learned about anger today?
2. What is the biggest thing you'll take with you today that you can utilize at home?

Reference: Waterman, J. and Walker, E. (2009). *Helping At-Risk Students*. New York: Guilford
Managing Anger; A Self-Care Handbook/ Helping At-Risk Students