

LESSON 23



BREAKING ANGER'S CONTROL

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GOAL

To understand how to break anger's control and escape its hold over your life.

STUDENT OUTCOMES

Students will:

- review why anger is a powerless choice.
- understand the four stages of mastering anger.
- experience a game that illustrates the difficulty of getting out of anger once an invitation is accepted.
- identify how they get stuck in anger after accepting an invitation.
- identify the steps necessary to get out of anger after accepting an invitation.

ACTIVITIES

23.1 Pertinent Points	5 minutes
23.2 Mastering Anger Continuum	10 minutes
23.3 Breaking Anger's Hold Game	15 minutes
23.4 Accept Invitation - Stay In Anger	5 minutes
23.5 Accept Invitation - Get Out Of Anger	10 minutes

TRANSPARENCIES

T57 Mastering Anger Continuum
 T58 Totally Powerless
 T59 Somewhat Powerful
 T60 Assertive Response to Anger

ACTIVITY SHEETS

AS70 Mastering Anger Continuum
 AS71 Totally Powerless
 AS47 Responses to Anger
 AS72 Somewhat Powerful
 AS73 Assertive Response to Anger

PERTINENT POINTS

PP7 Here's the Point!

PREPARATION

Activity 23.3 requires one six foot piece of heavy string for each student. It is helpful to have an additional adult to supervise the game.

**PIECE OF
INFORMATION
TO OPEN CLASS**

*Aggression,
in what ever form,
is an acquired strategy
for dealing with anger,
NOT a biological inevitability.*

Carol Tavris

Review the main points about anger being a powerless choice made so far. This is a continuation of the HERE'S THE POINT! sheets. Have students turn to Pertinent Points PP7. Complete Sections VI and VII. Read each sentence aloud. Have students supply the answer orally for each blank and then fill in the correct response.

- VI. As a POWERFUL person you understand when you become angry you lose your power and become powerless.**
- A. _____ is a feeling of displeasure or hostility over a real or supposed injury, insult, or unmet expectation. (Anger)**
 - B. Anger is NOT an uncontrollable _____. (reaction)**
 - C. Anger is ALWAYS a _____. (choice)**
 - D. No one can _____ you angry. (make)**
 - E. _____ your anger does not help you get rid of it. (Venting)**
 - F. Anger is ALWAYS a _____ choice. (powerless)**
 - 1. Using verbal or physical violence does not maintain _____ and _____ for yourself and others. That's powerless. (dignity) (respect)**
 - 2. Thinking your anger is _____ means you demand others respect your rights, but you are willing to say and do things to them that do not respect their rights. That's powerless. (justified)**
 - 3. When you use anger as a tool to _____ others to get what you want, you are being sneaky and underhanded. That's powerless. (control or manipulate)**
 - 4. When you become angry, you often feel you are backed into a corner and you have no other _____ but anger. Having only one choice is powerless. (choice)**
 - 5. When you are angry, your body's _____ response has been activated. You cannot use your _____ to think well. That's powerless. (fight or flight) (brain)**
 - 6. When you accept an invitation to become angry you have given _____ of your feelings to the other side of the POWER LOOP. That's powerless. (power and control)**

BLANKLINE MASTER Pertinent Points Packet

VI. As a **POWERFUL** person you understand when you become angry you lose your power and become powerless.

- A. _____ is a feeling of displeasure or hostility over a real or supposed injury, insult, or unmet expectation.
- B. Anger is **NOT** an uncontrollable _____.
- C. Anger is **ALWAYS** a _____.
- D. No one can _____ you angry.
- E. _____ your anger does not help you get rid of it.
- F. Anger is **ALWAYS** a _____ choice.
 1. Using verbal or physical violence does not maintain _____ and _____ for yourself and others. That's powerless.
 2. Thinking your anger is _____ means you demand others respect your rights, but you are willing to say and do things to them that do not respect their rights. That's powerless.
 3. When you use anger as a tool to _____ others to get what you want, you are being sneaky and underhanded. That's powerless.
 4. When you become angry, you often feel you are backed into a corner and you have no other _____ but anger. Having only one choice is powerless.
 5. When you are angry, your body's _____ response has been activated. You cannot use your brain to think well. That's powerless.
 6. When you accept an invitation to become angry you have given _____ of your feelings to the other side of the **POWER LOOP**. That's powerless.

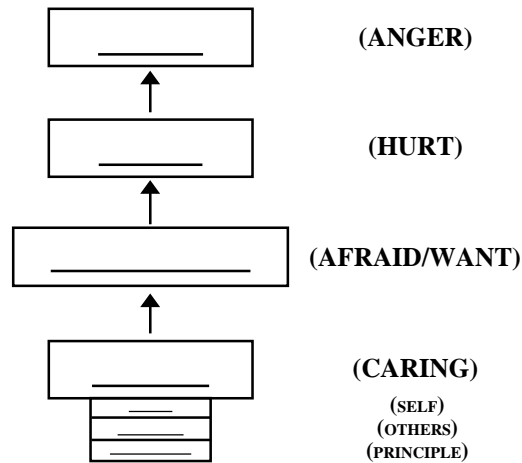
VII. **POWERFUL PEOPLE** understand this chart.

FEELINGS THAT LEAD TO ANGER

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VII. POWERFUL PEOPLE understand this chart.

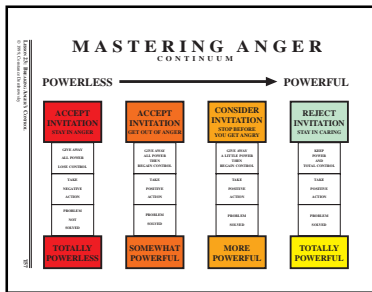
FEELINGS THAT LEAD TO ANGER



ACTIVITY 23.2

MASTERING ANGER CONTINUUM

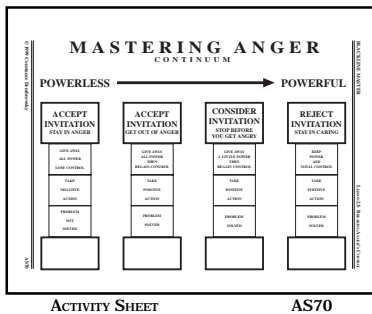
10 MINUTES



Use the MASTERING ANGER CONTINUUM transparency T57 as you present the four stages of moving from powerless to POWERFUL in breaking anger's control over you. Refer students to Activity Sheet AS70 and have them fill in the blanks as you go.

Developing the ability to master your anger is represented by this chart. There are four stages in this process.

1. Accept invitation - stay in anger
2. Accept invitation - get out of anger
3. Consider invitation - stop before you get angry
4. Reject invitation - stay in caring



1. ACCEPT INVITATION - STAY IN ANGER

Point to the left-hand box.

In this stage you accept an invitation to become angry, you move into anger, and stay there. You give away all your POWER and control to the person who sent you the invitation. You get stuck in anger. Because you are operating out of anger you respond by taking negative actions. These actions do not maintain dignity and respect for yourself or others. That is why they are negative.

By taking some kind of negative action, the result at this stage is always the same. The problem is not resolved. Actually, additional problems and difficulties are created by using negative responses.

For these reasons, this response is totally powerless.

2. ACCEPT INVITATION - GET OUT OF ANGER

Point to the second box from the left.

At this stage you accept an invitation and move into anger. When you move into anger you give all your POWER and control away to the person who gave you the invitation.

However, the difference between this and the first totally powerless box is that in this one you don't stay in anger. You take positive action and move out of anger to regain your control and POWER. After you are back in control, you are no longer operating out of anger and so you can take positive action to resolve the issue or problem from which your anger arose. Now the problem can be resolved.

This response is initially powerless because you move into anger. However, you turn it into a somewhat POWERFUL position because you get out of anger before you act negatively.

3. CONSIDER INVITATION - STOP BEFORE YOU GET ANGRY

Point to the third box from the left.

In the third stage you are progressing along the continuum toward the POWERFUL end, but you are not yet there. In this response you consider the invitation. This means that you have gotten the other person's invitation and you are thinking about accepting it and going to their anger party. Considering it means you have moved out of caring. When you have moved into afraid/want, it's as if you are standing on the sidewalk outside the house where the party is being held. When you move on up into hurt, it is like standing at the front door about to take that last step into the anger party.

However, after considering this invitation, you choose not to go on into the party. You make a choice to turn around and leave before you enter the house and move all the way into anger. You walk away and move from hurt back through afraid/want and into caring.

You gave up some of your control and POWER because you moved out of caring. However, you never turned it all over to the person who sent you the invitation because you didn't move into anger. It doesn't take you as long to regain control. You take positive actions to resolve the problem while maintaining dignity and respect for yourself and the other person. This stage is more POWERFUL than the first and second stages because you never actually accepted the invitation. It's not as POWERFUL as the fourth stage because you did move out of caring for a short time.

4. REJECT INVITATION - STAY IN CARING

Point to the right hand box.

In this last stage you have reached the POWERFUL end of the continuum. Your response to the invitation at this point is to reject it as soon as you receive it from the other person. Since you reject it right away, you never move out of caring.

From this position of caring you never give up any of your power and control to the person who sent the invitation. You respond in a positive way. You recognize there is a problem and you take steps to resolve it. You act in ways that maintain dignity and respect for yourself and the person who sent you the invitation. This position is totally POWERFUL because you have become the master of your anger.

Now we are going to play a game that illustrates what happens when you accept an invitation to become angry.

ACTIVITY 23.3

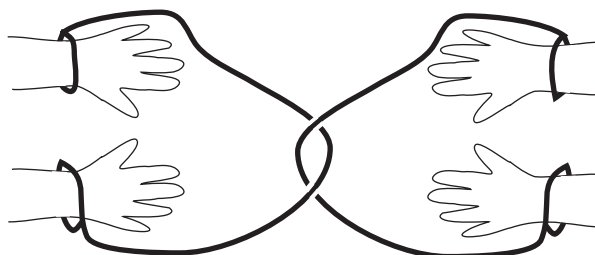
BREAKING ANGER'S HOLD GAME

15 MINUTES

NOTE: You will want another adult to help supervise this activity to ensure students carry out the activity safely and no one unties their rope to complete the task. This task is designed so that all the students will initially fail to complete it. If a pair should be successful, move them away so they can observe, but not tell others how they succeeded.

Explain to students that they will be working in partners. Each student will have a six foot piece of rope that will be tied with one end around one wrist and the other end around the other wrist.

The partners' ropes will be looped through each other as the following diagram illustrates.



Explain that you will be coming around to tie the ropes around each student's wrists. Using a square knot, ropes should be tied around the wrist loose enough to not hurt, but tight enough so it can't come off.

This game represents what happens when you accept an invitation and move into anger. You become trapped in the anger. The object of the game is for each of you to get untangled from the anger (your

partner) that is holding you captive. There are a few rules for this game.

You cannot slip the rope off your hand to get untangled.

You cannot untie the rope from your wrist or you partner's to get untangled.

You operate in a POWERFUL way, maintaining dignity and respect for yourself and others.

You work quietly and cooperatively with your partner so that each of you can get free from the grip of anger.

Any horsing around disqualifies you from the game.

Pair students. Have pairs spread out around the room. You and your assistant distribute the ropes by actually tying them on each student's wrists. Do not give out the ropes ahead of time. After all pairs are tied together, have them begin.

Encourage them by saying such statements as these.

You can break the hold of anger.

You can get your control back from anger.

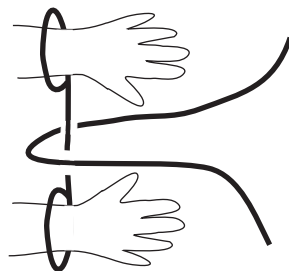
You do not have to let anger continue to control you.

You are giving them the end goal without telling them the steps of how to accomplish it.

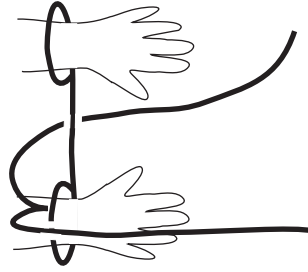
Allow students to work for several minutes. They should work to the point of being frustrated at realizing how difficult this seemingly impossible task is. Have students stop. Demonstrate as you explain how to work the ropes to get untangled.

One partner holds his hands out in front with the palms down.

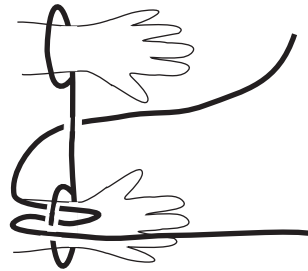
The other partner grasps his own rope in the middle of its length.



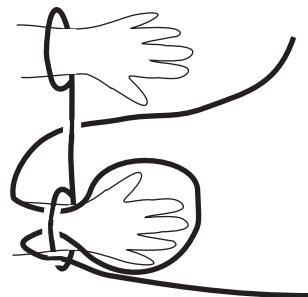
That partner, working his own rope, takes the point of the rope he has grasped and places it behind (on the side away from him) the rope on one of his partner's wrists so it is resting on the back of the partner's hand.



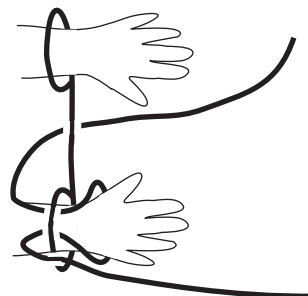
He pushes his own rope toward himself under the rope on his partner's wrist.



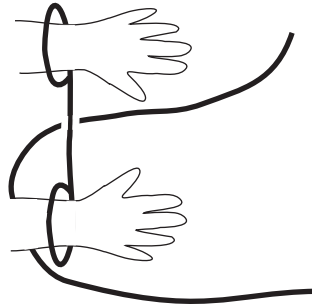
He pulls through enough rope to pass it down over his partner's hand.



His own rope is now under his partner's hand. He pulls his own rope back through his partner's rope on the under side.



They are now untangled.



Have students untangle themselves. After everyone is untangled, students untie their ropes and return them to you.

When all students are seated again, use the follow questions to discuss the activity.

How did the first part of this activity represent what it's like when you have moved into anger. (It's hard to get out of it. Anger's hold is very strong. You couldn't get away from anger.)

I clearly stated the goal, which was to get out of the grip of anger, to get untangled. Why couldn't you achieve that goal? (couldn't figure out how to do it, didn't know the steps to do it)

Is just having the end goal, knowing what you want to do, enough to allow you to achieve it? (no) **Why?** (You must know how to do it. You must know the steps or the process to use.)

When you know where you want to go, or what you want to accomplish, and you don't know how to get there, what happens to you? (think you can't do it, see yourself as helpless, become defeated, give up, think, "What's the use?")

Continue using the MASTERING ANGER CONTINUUM transparency T57.

In the first part of this lesson, we discussed all four of the ways you can respond to an invitation to become angry from totally powerless to totally POWERFUL. In the second step you learned that you could get out of anger after you had given up your control to it.

Did I explain how to do that? (no)

In step three, I said that you could stop yourself from moving into anger even after you moved out of caring.

Did I go through how to do that? (no)

In the last and most POWERFUL way, I said that you could reject the invitation altogether and stay in caring.

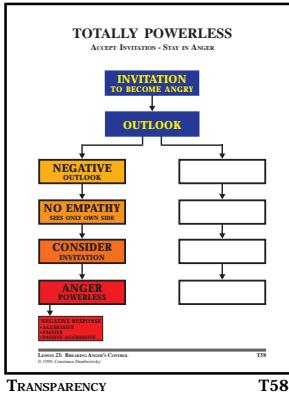
Did I tell you how to do that? (no)

Knowing that those things are possible doesn't do you much good unless you know how to do them. It's like the game we just finished. Knowing you could get untangled didn't do you much good. It is

understanding how to do the step-by-step skills which will allow you to do it successfully.

Point to the last three boxes on the chart. The next few lessons will give you the step-by-step tools to operate in those three successively POWERFUL ways to master your anger.

ACTIVITY 23.4 **ACCEPT INVITATION - STAY IN ANGER** **5 MINUTES**



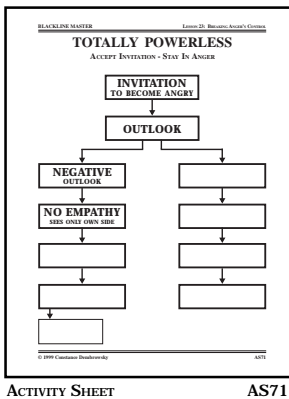
Use the TOTALLY POWERLESS transparency T58. Refer students to Activity Sheet AS71. Tell students to fill in the blank boxes on their charts as you go.

Let's look in more detail at what happens when you are operating in the first stage of the Mastering Anger Continuum. This is the totally powerless position of accepting the invitation, moving into anger, and staying there.

The invitation comes to you and gets filtered through your outlook box, which is negative. So you end up on the left side of the chart. That negative outlook means you are suspicious and see the world as you against them. That leads you to having no empathy, so you make no effort to see the other person's side or perspective. You automatically think this invitation is an attack done purposely to hurt you. You consider the invitation.

If your attitude is the one we just described, are you going to accept this invitation? (yes)

You accept the invitation and move into anger. From here you act negatively. In a previous lesson we discussed the three negative ways you can react once you are in anger.



Refer students to Activity Sheet AS47. Have students identify which three of these responses are negative. (aggressive, passive, and passive-aggressive) Have students explain how a person would act in each of these three and why that is a negative and powerless response.

Refer to the transparency as you make the following points.

This chart illustrates giving power and control of your life to anger. It illustrates what happens when you get stuck in anger. To represent this, the entire right side of the chart is blank because, for the totally powerless person, that choice doesn't exist.

	DEFINITION	ANGER'S ENERGY OR	ACTIONS TAKEN
AGGRESSIVE	• acting on your anger in a way that is hostile or harmful to another or yourself	• directed outward	• yell/roar • push, shove, kick, shove, hit, throw, throw things, etc.
PASSIVE	• acting on your anger in a way that is not harmful to anyone	• diffused	• act as if nothing happened • avoid other people • stay away • cry • eat • sleep • drink • smoke • drink • use drugs
PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE	• acting on your anger in a way that is harmful to another or yourself	• in, directed, distributed	• act as if nothing happened • avoid other people • stay away • cry • eat • sleep • drink • smoke • drink • use drugs
ASSERTIVE	• acting on your anger in a way that is not harmful to anyone	• out (up, healthy way)	• yell/roar • push, shove, kick, shove, hit, throw, throw things, etc.

Use the SOMEWHAT POWERFUL transparency T59. Refer students to Activity Sheet AS72. Tell them to fill in the blanks as you go.

Let's move on to the second stage of the Mastering Anger Continuum. This represents the first step away from total powerlessness. In this stage you accept the invitation, move into anger, and then get out.

The invitation gets filtered through your outlook, which is negative, so you end up on the left side. You are not able to have any empathy, and you perceive the invitation as a purposeful attack. You briefly consider the invitation, then you accept the invitation and move into anger.

In this second stage of the continuum, you have started the journey toward the POWERFUL end because you are aware that there is an alternative to anger. Since you are aware of it, the right side of this chart is filled in.

Let's look at what you do in this second stage to get out of anger once you're in it.

You use an assertive response to move out of anger. The chart you have on Activity Sheet AS72 illustrates the flow out of anger through assertiveness. (Point this and the following out on your transparency T59.) Once you respond assertively, you regain control of yourself which moves you over to the right side of the chart. Having control of yourself creates a positive attitude. From there you can move down this side to get back into caring.

Use the ASSERTIVE RESPONSE TO ANGER transparency T60 as you present the following information. Refer students to Activity Sheet AS73.

Let's look at the step-by-step process that makes up an assertive response.

1. **ADMIT YOU ARE ANGRY.**

What does admit you're angry mean? (It means to say to yourself that you accepted an invitation. It is facing it and avoiding denial.)

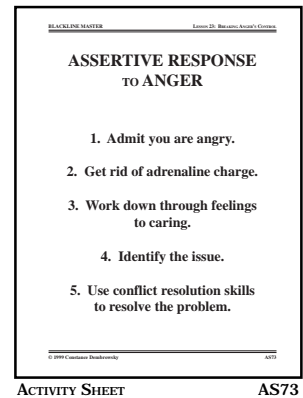
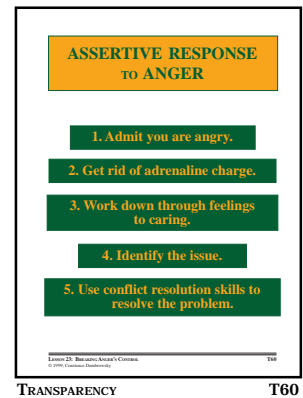
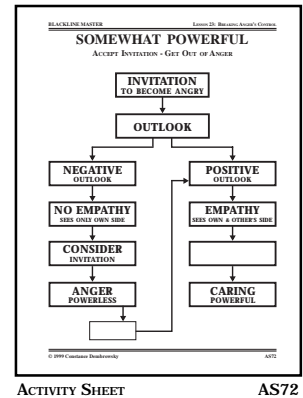
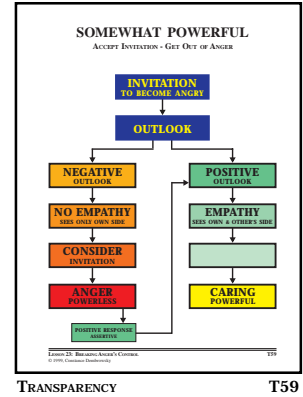
Why is that important? (You can't deal with anything unless you put it on the table where you can do something about it.)

2. **GET RID OF ADRENALINE CHARGE.**

What are the two ways you can get rid of negative energy? (positive physical exercise, deep breathing exercises)

3. **WORK DOWN THROUGH FEELINGS TO CARING.**

What is the progression of feelings from anger to caring? (anger, hurt, afraid/want, caring)



4. IDENTIFY THE ISSUE.

How do you identify the issue? (get down to caring to figure out what it is that you really want)

What is the difference between the *incident* and the *issue*? (The incident is what sparked the anger. It is the person drowning in the river. The issue is what gave rise to the incident. It is what caused the men to fall in the river in the first place.)

5. USE CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS TO RESOLVE THE PROBLEM.

We have not yet addressed these skills. In future lessons we will go through the step-by-step process to resolve conflicts in ways that maintain dignity and respect for both parties, and in which both people are satisfied with the results. That's called win-win conflict resolution.

What did you learn today that will help you acquire more POWER and control in your life?