



## Taking Control When We Are Angry

### OBJECTIVE:

This lesson deals with managing your anger when a conflict arises. Anger is often an instantaneous and instinctual response to a situation. It can range from mild annoyance to an overwhelming rage. We need to learn to step back when we find ourselves overwhelmed by anger, take a few minutes to breathe deeply or take a walk to calm down until the anger diminishes or passes so we can deal with the conflict in a rational manner.

### MATERIALS:

- 2 clear drinking glasses (jar or vase)
- Liquid dishwashing soap
- Baking soda - 4-5 tablespoons in small container
- White Vinegar
- Food coloring
- Baking pan



### PREPARATION:

Place a baking pan on the table or desk to catch the overflowing experiment. Place one glass in the center of the pan and add about  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of warm/hot water. You will need to add a few drops of food coloring and several drops of liquid dishwashing soap (Dawn works well). Add vinegar to the other cup. You can use about half a glass of vinegar. You will need about 4 tablespoons of baking soda in a small container.

### LESSON:

Explain to the students that everyone gets angry at times but sometimes we lose our self-control when we have strong feelings about things. It's easy to allow anger to grow and then you blurt out something you regret later.

Discuss with the students that we are like the colored water in the cup. The baking soda is like our anger. The Talk about what it is like when people make you angry. As you discuss this, add the baking soda to the water and food coloring mixture.

Next, slowly add the vinegar to the mixture. The mixture will fizz up and flow out of the jar.

As you add the more vinegar to the mixture, explain that this is what happens when someone makes us angry and we fight back, adding more to the mix until the situation explodes out of control. Discuss with the students that it is important that we need to learn that we have a choice not to do this. We can choose to be a better person. Instead of fighting back, we can keep a lid on the situation and do the right thing. Choosing to fight back can easily turn into violence.



Discuss the different steps for managing anger and advice on how to deal with someone else's anger or confrontations:

**1. Stop. Go no further and calm down.**

Words said in anger are rarely well thought out. And you can't take them back. If you find yourself really angry at someone, it is sometimes better to just admit those feelings and walk away to think about your response. It's fine to say, "I just need a few minutes to be alone and get my thoughts together."

**2. Talk about the conflict.**

Sometimes logic is anger's worst enemy. We're often angry about things that we've misinterpreted or blown out of proportion. We may think a friend did something on purpose to upset us, but when we look closer at the situation we realize it was unintentional. There are always two sides to every situation and we need to step back and look at the issue from the other person's perspective to make a good decision.

**3. Explore positive options.**

Sometimes we get angry because the same things keep happening over and over-our friends interrupt us, we get left out or our friend says mean things about us. Addressing these problems in a moment of anger can make things worse. It is important to bring it up in a positive manner because the other person(s) involved may not realize they are making you angry or may be able to change things to improve the situation.

**4. Pick an option.**

Evaluate all your options and consider the potential consequences of each option that could arise due to your decision. Once you have evaluated your options, the next step is to make a decision.

**5. Seek help if you can't resolve the issue.**

If you are concerned about or being confronted by someone else's anger, you should realize that your physical and emotional safety is important. Counselors or an adult can make it easier for you to deal with anger. If you feel threatened, it's OK to let someone know. Don't fuel the fire or participate in confrontations driven by anger. It is fine to say, "I want to talk to you about this, but not while you are angry." Walk away and find a more appropriate time to talk. You may want to encourage the person to talk to a counselor and remove yourself from the situation until they can get help.



**STOP** - go no further, calm down.

**TALK** - about the conflict

**EXPLORE** - positive options

**PICK** - an option

**SEEK** - help if you can't resolve the issue

## DISCUSSION:

1. What makes people mad?
2. What makes you mad?
3. Are there different types of anger? What are they?
4. Can you tell that a person is angry from body language?
5. What are some ways that people respond to anger?
6. Is it ever OK to be angry? If so, why?
7. Name one good way to respond to anger.
8. Name one way to control your own anger.
9. What do you do if you get angry?
10. Do you think people react to anger in different ways?
11. Have you ever gotten angry at someone?
12. Has someone ever gotten angry at you for no reason? How did you react to this situation?
13. What do you usually do when you get angry?
14. Which kind of situations make you angry?
15. Is anger an effective way of dealing with problems?

## ACTIVITY:

### Paper Chain Challenge

Students should be divided into groups (4 in a group usually works well). Using only one piece of construction paper, a scissor and glue per group, each team will build a paper chain. Hand out the Paper Chain Challenge instruction sheet provided in this lesson book to each group with the rules. Give the students 5-10 minutes to plan their design as a team. Extra paper should not be provided, so make sure the students plan carefully with their group. Give the teams 20 minutes to construct the paper chain. At the end of the 20 minute time limit, the chains will be laid out and measured. If the chain breaks during the measurement process, the team will need to choose which part of the chain will be measured. The team with the longest paper chain will be declared the winner. You can use



After the paper chain challenge, discuss the following questions with the group:

- How did the group make decisions today when building the paper chain?
- Why were you satisfied or unsatisfied with the way decisions were made?
- Did you express an opinion when a choice was available? Why or why not?
- Did everyone agree on one method to build your chain? How did you visualize the best result?
- What did you like or dislike about the way decisions were made?
- What does the word “cooperation” (working together) mean? Did you cooperate as a group or did you just jump right in and get started? Which choice would be better? Why?
- What are the rewards of cooperating?
- Did all the teams do the same thing when making their chain? Did they get a good result even if it was done differently? Why is that okay?
- Is it good to work together and find the best solution when working in a group? Why or why not?
- How does “cooperation” work when we are in a situation where there is conflict?
- What did we learn from this lesson?