



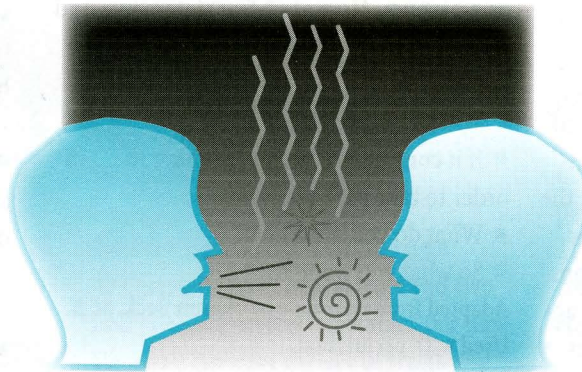
A Healthy Outlook!

301-460-2100 • FAX 301-460-2113 • www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/EAP • Vol.3 No.4

Keeping Anger Under Control

What is anger? Many people think that anger is caused by hormonal changes or brain activity. This is only partly true. Researchers have found that while hormones play a role in an angry response, there is always a cognitive (thinking) component. Some people think that humans are innately aggressive or warlike. While our behavior is sometimes hostile toward others, anger is not part of our basic nature. Frustration may lead to aggression, but it is not inevitable. Some people respond to frustrating events with anger, while others don't. Anger is

only one response to frustration. In many cultures, people are taught to respond to frustration in other ways.



Since Freud's day, psychologists have disagreed about the value of venting feelings. It may surprise you to know that today's research shows that expressing anger often results in more irritation and tension rather than a feeling of calm.

Why Expressing Anger Can Be Bad for You

Venting anger can produce the following kinds of harmful effects:

- Your blood pressure increases.

continued on page 2

New Responses to Anger

An angry response often results when we are unhappy with someone else's behavior. Here are some other responses you can choose instead of flying off the handle:

1. Set limits. Let's say a friend hasn't returned a book you loaned her. Now she wants to borrow another one. You could say, "I'm not going to be able to lend you this book until you return the first one."

2. Don't wait. When you realize that you're feeling annoyed by a situation, speak up. Don't wait until your annoyance escalates to anger.

3. Be assertive. Say in a positive way what you want from the other person. For example, say, "Please call me when you get home," rather than, "Would you mind giving me a call when you get there?"

Four Ways to Stop the Spiral of Anger

1. Call a time-out. This is a very effective technique for breaking the sequence of behavior that leads to a blowup. It works best if it is discussed ahead of time and both people agree to use it. Here's how it works: Either person in an interaction can

initiate a time-out. One person makes the time-out gesture like a referee in a football

continued on page 2

In This Issue

- 1 Keeping Anger Under Control
New Responses to Anger
- 2 Suggested Reading on Anger
Can You "Catch Up" on Lost Sleep?
- 3 Tips on Employee Recognition
Dietary Guidelines for Americans
- 4 Upcoming Events
EAP Services Offered During Summer
Ask the EAP

Controlling Anger, from page 1

- The original problem is worse rather than better.
- You come across as unfriendly and intimidating.
- The other person becomes angry with you as a result of your behavior.

Physical Effects of Anger

Heart. Researchers at Stanford University have found that, of all the personality traits found in type A patients, the potential for hostility is the key predictor for coronary disease. The combination of anger and hostility is most deadly.

Stomach and intestines. Anger has a very negative effect on the stomach and has even been associated with the development of ulcerative colitis.

Nervous system. Anger is bad for you because it exaggerates the associated hormonal changes. Chronic suppressed anger is damaging because it activates the sympathetic nervous system responses without providing any release of tension. It is a bit like stepping down on a car's accelerator while slamming on the brakes. ■

New Responses to Stress, from page 1

game. The other person is obligated to return the gesture and stop talking.

2. Check it out. If anger is a response to personal pain, it makes sense to ask the other person, "What's hurting?"

3. Make positive statements. It may be helpful to memorize a few positive statements to say to yourself when your anger is being triggered. These statements can remind you that you can choose your behavior instead of reacting in a knee-jerk manner. For example, "I can take care of my own needs," "His needs are just as important as mine," and "I am able to make good choices."

4. Be prepared with a memorized response. Here are a few statements and questions that will help de-escalate anger:

- What's bothering me is...
- If it continues like this, I'll have to ___ in order to take care of myself.
- What do you need now?
- So what you want is... ■

Adapted from an article by Sharon Beck, M.A. Used with permission.

Can You "Catch Up" on Lost Sleep?

Too many of us grab whatever sleep we can during the week and try to catch up on the weekends. But maintaining the same amount of sleep each night helps strengthen your sleep system. If you sleep for eight or nine hours on the weekend to make up for sleep loss during the week, you may disrupt your sleep on Sunday night. Many cases of insomnia start just this way. Such a pattern also begins a cycle of work-week sleep deprivation. It takes a week to "repay" a sleep debt and reach your optimal number of sleep hours. A good time to add on extra sleep is while on vacation.

Of course, not all of us have the option of sleeping longer. So here are steps you can take when there literally aren't enough hours in the day or night.

■ **Remain consistent.** Try to get the same amount of sleep each night. Get out of bed at the same time each day.

■ **Take naps when you can.** They are great refreshers. Try taking 20-minute naps on a consistent basis (if your schedule allows).

■ **Take advantage of the light.** Light is a good pick-me-up. Try to get outdoors for part of the day. If you're tired, sunlight helps to reinforce the body's sense of daytime/wake time.

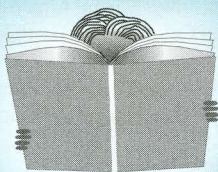
■ **Make sleep a priority.** When work requires longer hours or you're traveling, make sure to get back to your schedule as soon as you can. If need be, give up nonessential activities, but get your sleep. ■

Adapted from: *A Woman's Guide to Sleep*, Joyce A. Walsleben, Ph.D.

Suggested Reading on Anger

Matthew McKay, Peter Rogers, and Judith McKay,
When Anger Hurts: Quieting the Storm Within
Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 1989.

Gayle Rosellini and Mark Worden,
Of Course You're Angry (2nd Edition)
Center City, MN: Hazelden Foundation, 1997.



Carol Tavris,
Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion
New York: Touchstone, 1989.



Tips on Employee Recognition

In order to create environments that people like to work in, it is important for supervisors to be mindful of how they go about recognizing their staff. Listed below are some selected items adapted from The Guiding Principles of Recognition from a United States Department of Agriculture Policy.

- 1. Provide greater equity in the distribution of recognition.** All employees should be given an equal opportunity to be rewarded for the results of their work without regard to grade level.
- 2. Give recognition for specific achievements.** Actions that produce positive results, rather than subjective feelings and visibility, should be rewarded.
- 3. Involve coworkers and customers in recognition decisions.** Peers and customers often have a good awareness of the contribution that an employee makes. Experiment with ways in which to use such input.
- 4. Give recognition in a timely manner.** Employees feel that recognition given in a timely manner, such as spot awards, is most effective.
- 5. Emphasize group recognition.** Group recognition encourages teamwork and fosters the cooperation needed to address the many complex issues faced by your staff.
- 6. Keep recognition ceremonies simple and local.** Employees feel that recognition from within the local unit is more meaningful than recognition from higher-level offices and supervisors.
- 7. Give employees a choice.** Whenever possible, recipients should be allowed to choose in the type of recognition they receive.

Do you have any good ideas on employee recognition? Have you received recognition in the past that was meaningful to you? Let us know and we'll include this information in a follow-up article. ■

Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005: Key Recommendations for the General Public

By Beth Hardy and Scott Ernest,
Dietetic Interns, Sodexo MidAtlantic Dietetic Internship

Adequate Nutrient Intake

☺ Consume a variety of nutritious foods and beverages based on the Food Guide Pyramid Standards.

Weight Management

☺ To prevent gradual weight gain over time, balance calories from food and beverages by increasing physical activity.

Physical Activity

- ☺ Engage in regular physical activity and reduce sedentary activities to promote health, physiological well-being, and a healthy body weight.
- ☺ To reduce risk of chronic disease in adulthood, engage in at least 30 minutes of moderate activity on most days of the week.

Food Groups to Encourage

- ☺ Consume two cups of fruit and two and one half cups of vegetables per day. Choose a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables.
- ☺ Consume three or more one-ounce equivalents of whole grain products per day.
- ☺ Consume three cups per day of fat-free or low-fat or equivalent milk products.

Carbohydrates

- ☺ Choose fiber-rich fruits, vegetables, and whole grains often.
- ☺ Limit added sugar and starchy food intake to reduce incidence of dental cavities.

Fats

- ☺ Keep total fat intake between 20–25 percent of calories.
- ☺ Consume less than 10 percent of calories from saturated fat and less than 300 mg per day of cholesterol.

Sodium

- ☺ Consume less than 2,300 mg (approximately one teaspoon of salt) of sodium per day.

Alcoholic Beverages

- ☺ If you choose to consume alcoholic beverages, do so in moderation, defined as the consumption of up to one drink per day for women and up to two drinks per day for men.
- ☺ Do not consume alcohol if you are pregnant, lactating, under the age of 21, addicted to alcohol, have a medical condition, or are on medication that could react adversely to alcohol.

Food Safety

- ☺ Clean hands, food contact surfaces, and all fruits and vegetables.
- ☺ Separate raw, cooked, and ready-to-use foods while shopping, preparing, or storing foods.
- ☺ Cook foods to the recommended temperatures to kill microorganisms.
- ☺ Refrigerate perishable foods promptly and defrost frozen foods properly.
- ☺ Avoid all unpasteurized milk or products made from unpasteurized milk, undercooked eggs, meat, poultry, and fish.

For more information visit <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines>

Contributed by Susan E. Ghelman, R.D., L.D., Food Service Supervisor, Division of Food and Nutrition Services, 301-670-8295 ■



Upcoming Events

Summer 2005

• June 5–11:

National Headache Awareness Week

<http://www.headaches.org/consumer/NHAW/NHAW05.html>

• June 13–19:

National Men's Health Week

To heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys

<http://www.menshealthweek.org/>

• June 27:

National HIV Testing Day

National Association of People with AIDS

1413 K Street, NW, Suite 700, Washington, D.C. 20005

800-458-5231 or 202-898-0414

nhtd@napwa.org, www.napwa.org/hivtestinfo/index

EAP Services Offered During Summer

The Employee Assistance Program is open all year for both 10-month and 12-month employees. If you would like to meet with a counselor during the summer, even if you do not work during the summer, give us a call to schedule an appointment Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. ■

Quote:

"The artist is nothing without the gift, but the gift is nothing without work".

— Emile Zola

Ask the EAP

Q. At our school, there was recently an incident that was very traumatic for both our staff and students. Does the EAP provide any support when something like this happens?

A. Yes. The EAP is part of the MCPS Mental Health Crisis Response team. This means that in the event of a traumatic incident in your school or office, the EAP is available to provide on-site crisis support. Working closely with the field offices, we are frequently called in to provide support for anyone who is impacted by what happened.

Do you have a question for the EAP?
Send your questions via FirstClass, Outlook,
or the Pony to Jeff Becker.

A Healthy Outlook!

To help employees with troubling issues before they become overwhelming.



EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE

SPECIALISTS: Debbie Tipton
Robyn Rosenbauer
Jeff Becker

EAP at North Lake Center
15101 Bauer Drive
Rockville, Maryland 20853
phone: 301-460-2100
www.mcps.k12.md.us/departments/EAP

Important Notice: Information in *A Healthy Outlook!* is for general information purposes only and is not intended to replace the counsel or advice of a qualified health professional. For further questions or help with specific problems or personal concerns, contact your employee assistance professional.

You may contact us or send your questions and comments to
Debra_Tipton@fc.mcps.k12.md.us.

Please note that e-mail is not necessarily confidential.