



MANAGING ANGRY MOMENTS

Trigger Thoughts vs Coping Thoughts

Health Promotion
**STRENGTHENING THE
ENERGISEUR LES FORCES**
Promotion de la santé

Trigger Thoughts

Trigger thoughts escalate one's emotions, physical sensations and actions. They create a reactive response to stressful situations.

Trigger Thought Examples

- He is always ignoring me.
- I'm sick of having to tell him over and over to turn off the T.V.
- He is always so disrespectful.

Coping Thoughts

Coping thoughts de-escalate emotions, physiological sensations and actions. They allow for a calm response to a stressful situation.

Coping Thought Examples

- He may not have heard me, or he may have become distracted.
- He is not doing this to purposefully ignore me.
- He enjoys watching T.V so much that it is hard for him to listen.

STRESSOR + COPING THOUGHT = PROBLEM SOLVING SITUATION

STRESSOR + TRIGGER THOUGHT = ANGER SITUATION

Instructions

Circle the coping thoughts that would help you to stay calm when you feel yourself becoming angry and/or create two coping thoughts that would work for you.

1. Just stay cool. I can stay calm. I'm going to take deep breaths and relax my muscles.
2. It's not worth it. Who will know or care in a month? If I want peace, then I have to let some things go. I will calmly state what it is that I object to, and then let it rest.
3. Just relax. I don't have to blow it like him/her. If I stay calm we can make this better. Think. What do I need to do? Pick a skill.
4. This isn't a "my way or no way" situation. I can compromise. Ask quietly what she/he wants, listen and then say what I think.
5. That conclusion I made is an assumption. I need to check it out. I'll ask the other person for more information.
6. This is not a disaster, just a problem to be solved. I'll state the problem clearly.
7. It's okay to feel angry. I won't let it control me. I can use my skills and assess the situation. What do I want?
8. Just stay with the problem. I can figure out what the problem is, and then say it clearly.
9. I am really angry. I can't think straight. I need to take a time out now.
10. The bottom line is that I control me. I can always leave. Do I need a time out right now? Yes. I'm taking one.
11. This is going to upset me, but I know how to deal with it.
12. My muscles are starting to feel tight. Time to relax and slow things down.
13. My anger is a signal of what I need to do. Time to instruct myself.
14. I can't expect people to always act the way I want them to.
15. No one is right, no one is wrong. We just have different needs.
16. Just as long as I keep my cool, I'm in control.
17. If I start to get mad, I'll just be banging my head against a wall, so I might as well relax.
18. Anger is a signal that it's time to cope.
19. _____
20. _____

(McKay and McKay, 1989)