

Temperature Check: Providing Anger Management Tools for Youth

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SUMMARY:	Anger is a normal emotion everyone feels at times. Changes in routine, missing home, and social pressures are common camp scenarios that can bring up issues related to anger. Anger management is the process of learning of to recognize signs of anger and taking action to relax, cope and problem solve in a positive way.
TOPIC(S):	Understanding anger, Learning how to check-in with campers, Promoting healthy and creative coping strategies.
LEARNING OBJECTIVE:	This training will introduce participants to creative techniques to check-in with campers' emotion, as well as help campers (and staff) deescalate from triggering situations as well successfully cope with anger and frustration that might come up in a camp setting.
AUDIENCE:	This training's intended audience is camp staff and counselors. Activities described in the training can be modified to use with youth ages 5-18 in both group and individual settings.
TIMING:	45 Minutes - (30 minutes for presentation/activity simulation and 15 minutes for questions).
APPENDICES:	Workshop Handouts: PowerPoint
MATERIALS NEEDED:	Paper Candy (M&M's, starburst, jolly ranchers candies that have colors) Balloons, flour, cornstarch for making stress balls
SET-UP DETAILS:	Set up should take place away from any distractions preferably a secluded space. Set up details are based on facilitated activity.

SESSION TIMELINE & OUTLINE:

Introductions (5-10min)

- Facilitator will give a brief introduction about herself and what participants can expect from today's training.
- Weather Report Check in Activity (description below). As participants give their weather report the facilitator will ask everyone in the training session to say their name and their role within the camp setting as well.

Anger—What is it? (5min—Handouts will be provided for this section/ details in PowerPoint)

- Defining Anger.
- Anger as a Three Part Process.
- Review the basic ways in which Anger is dealt with.
- Review the Anger cycle handout and how it relates to youth as well as participants.
- Trigger Ball Activity (description below).

Preparing Your Activity Toolbox: Implementing De-escalation (15min)

Temperature Check: Creative Therapeutic Group Check in's:

I. Weather Report (5mins)

- Have campers/participants circle up facing one another. As the group leader you would start the check in by describing how you are feeling using the weather. After you have given your weather report you would ask for the person to the right or left of you to provide their weather report to the group.
- For example: *“Good morning team, today my weather report is sunny because I am looking forward to a fulfilled day we have planned!”*
 - ❖ Sunny - happy/excited
 - ❖ Cloudy - having an okay day
 - ❖ Raining/Hailing - having a bad day or bad start
 - ❖ Windy - Feeling scattered a lot going on
 - ❖ Hurricane, Tornado, Snow Storm - indicates camper may be really struggling with something and could benefit from some one checking in with them one on one.
- Everyone is not limited to stating one form of weather for example: *“Good morning team, today my weather report is cloudy with a chance of sun because I'm not feeling well but I am look forward to the basketball game!”*
- It's okay to ask those who give a negative weather report if there is a possibility for a chance of sun.

II. Rose, Bud, Thorn

- Have campers/participants circle up. As the group leader you would start the check in by explaining what your Rose, Bud, and Thorn are for the day After you have shared your Rose, Bud, Thorn you would ask for the person to the right or left of you to provide their Rose, Bud, Thorn report to the group.
 - ❖ Rose- A highlight of your day and or week.
 - ❖ Bud- Something you are looking forward to.
 - ❖ Thorn- Something that didn't go well during your day and or week.
- Example: *“My Rose for today is that we won the karaoke contest, my bud is that I am looking forward to the camp fire later and my thorn is that I scraped my knee during kick ball.”*

III. What's Your Playlist?

- Have each camper/participant check in with a song title that describes how they are feeling and explain why they selected that song title. With this check-in remind campers that we want to choose appropriate song titles.
- Example *"A song title to describe my day is Fireworks by Katy Perry because I am excited for the camp talent show!"*

IV. What's your Movie Genre?

- Have each camper/participant check in with a movie genre that describes how they are feeling or how their day is going and have them explain why they selected that genre.
 - ❖ Action
 - ❖ Comedy
 - ❖ Horror
 - ❖ Sci-fi
 - ❖ Romance
 - ❖ Drama
 - ❖ Thriller
 - ❖ Western
 - ❖ Adventure
 - ❖ Animation
- Example: *"My movie genre for how I am feel is comedy because I've been having fun the entire day."*

V. Number Scale

- This is a check-in that is helpful if you are running low on time and would like to check-in with your group quickly. Have each camper/participant check in with a number on a scale from 1-10. One meaning that they are not having a good day, 5 they are having an okay day, and 10 they having a great day.
- Example *"I am feeling like a 7 today!"*

VI. Thumbs up

- This is a check-in that is helpful if you are running low on time and would like to check-in with the group quickly. Have campers/participants check in silently by indicating thumbs up, thumbs down, or thumbs side ways.
 - ❖ Thumbs Up—Good
 - ❖ Thumbs Side Way—Okay
 - ❖ Thumbs Down—Not so Good

VII. One Word

- This is a check-in that is helpful if you are running low on time and would like to check-in quickly. Have each camper/participant check in with one word that describes their day. No further explanation is required. With this check-in remind campers that we want to choose appropriate words.
- Example *"Silly"*

Group De-escalation Techniques/ Activities

I. **Trigger Ball**

- On a large size beach ball using a sharpie marker write down various questions/statements related to Anger. Have campers/participants toss the ball around the circle. As a person catches the ball they are to say their name, read and answer the question located under their right thumb (you can get creative and choose various fingers). Once they have finished they toss the ball to another camper/participant in the circle and they are to say their name, read and answer the question located under their right thumb. You would repeat this until everyone in the circle has gone. While some questions may seem personal you can let participants know that if they feel uncomfortable sharing they can pass or choose another question on the ball.
- Suggested Questions:
 - ❖ Name your top three triggers (define trigger for campers).
 - ❖ Name two things you do that help you to calm down when you are angry?
 - ❖ When you are triggered do you prefer space or to have someone to talk to?
 - ❖ Do you like to listen to music when you are feeling angry?
 - ❖ What are two ways you deal with angry thoughts and feelings?
 - ❖ Have you ever tried to hurt someone you were angry with? What happened?
 - ❖ Do you think it's a good idea to hold anger inside? Why or why not?
 - ❖ Think of a time you were angry with an adult at school or in the community. What happened and how did you respond?
 - ❖ Do you think violent shows, movies and games make people angrier? Why or why not?
 - ❖ How does anger affect how you get along with others?
 - ❖ What could peers do to help you feel angry less often at camp?
 - ❖ Talk about a time you responded to anger in a positive way and it made the situation better.
 - ❖ Think of a time you were angry with a friend. What happened and how did you respond?
 - ❖ Have you ever teased or called a person names when you were angry? What happened?
 - ❖ Think of a time you were angry with someone in your family. What happened and how did you respond?
 - ❖ Is there anything you have been angry about for a very long time? What happened and why does it still bother you?
 - ❖ Have you ever been so angry with someone that you and the person stopped being friends? What happened?
 - ❖ Have you ever reacted to anger in a way that got you in trouble with adults at home? What happened?

II. **Snow ball Fight**

- Provide each participant three pieces of paper. Have each participant write down on each paper one thing that makes them angry, then have them crumple up each paper. Another alternative can be what are three things you do to calm yourself when you are angry.
- Set a timer or a song for maximum two minutes and each participant will take their three crumpled paper balls and begin to throw at other participants. Participants can pick up other paper balls thrown to re throw at others. Once the timer ends each participant is to pick up three paper balls (it does not have to be their initial paper ball).
- Once students each have three paper balls back in their possession the facilitator will restate the statement: three things that make me angry and will begin to read the three papers in their possession and share if any of the things mentioned on the paper are things that make them angry as well.
- This will continue until everyone in the group has shared the statements on their three papers.
- Some discussion questions could be:

- ❖ Were you surprised to see that other people in the group get angry by the same things as you?
- ❖ How did it feel to write down your anger then release/throw it away?

III. Starburst Anger Game

- Have each participant take up to five candies from the Starburst, Jolly Rancher, or M&M bag.
- For each color candy a participant has taken they have to share out the following.
 - ❖ **Orange:** What is something you do to calm yourself when you feel angry?
 - ❖ **Red:** Share a time when you were really angry with a friend what happened?
 - ❖ **Yellow:** Who in your family deals with anger in a positive way? What do they do?
 - ❖ **Pink:** Share a way your body feels when you are getting angry.
- Statements can be modified depending on the type of candy that is being utilized for the activity.

IV. Creating Stress balls

- Please see instructions here: <https://www.thesprucecrafts.com/how-to-make-a-stress-ball-1244219>
- This is fun camp activity in which campers/ participants can make their own personalized stress ball to keep with them throughout their camp experience. The act of repeatedly squeezing the ball releases tension and helps to relieve stress that may occur.

V. Turtle Time (for younger kids)

- When our emotions run high, having a code word or signal to initiate a calming activity is important. “**Turtle Time**” can serve as that signal. Explain to campers/participants that turtle time helps us to pull our scattered energy back to ourselves so that we can feel focused and calm. It also helps us to slow down so that we can get calm, collect our thoughts and decide what to do. Here are the steps:
 1. Get into your shell. Close your eyes and imagine collecting all of your scattered energy around you and pulling it into your shell. You can give yourself a hug or roll up into an actual ball if that feels better. (For campers who are often upset, or who need to establish a greater sense of safety, you can create a tangible shell space by putting a blanket over a table and asking them to go into their “shell” under the table).
 2. Once you get into your shell, take three, slow deep breaths.
 3. Think about possible calm ways you can return to the situation or back to the activity you were completing. Or you can name the situation that was bothering you and decide on some ideas for addressing it.

Individual De-escalation Techniques-(5min—Handouts will be provided for this section/ details in PowerPoint):

- Twenty Minutes
- De-escalation is not all about verbal communication it's also about nonverbal communication.
- Working through silence.
- Accountable questions: What could you have done better in the situation? What about the situation triggered you?

Creating Break Spots/Calm Corners

- **Break spots**—If you are at a camp that takes place outdoors rather than an inside area you should designate a “break spot” which is a safe area outdoors where a camper can go if they are feeling triggered. Remember to set a timer for 10-15 minutes, ask the camper to practice taking three deep breaths and utilizing a stress ball. After the timer is complete the camper is expected to return to the group. The goal is to help campers begin to regulate their own emotions without much help of staff.
- A **Calming Corner** is a quiet area of the room equipped with soft furnishings and soothing materials to help a student de-escalate when upset. The purpose of the calm-down corner is to get out of fight or flight and engage the thinking part of the brain again. Until the anger has subsided, a youth can’t really learn or continue with the group activity.
- Designate areas in your camp sites whether it’s in an office or in a bunk space to serve as the Calm Down Corner. There should be multiple available to campers/participants.
- Calm down corners should include the following:
 - *bean bag chair(s) or floor cushions/large pillows*
 - *soft rug*
 - *relaxation CD and player*
 - *headphones*
 - *books, magazines*
 - *low partitions/dividers for privacy*
 - *visual calming strategies*
 - *visual timer*

Calm Corner Process

1. Select an out-of-the way area in the camp site or bunk room to create the Calming Corner.
2. Furnish the space with a soft rug, beanbag chairs, floor cushions and/or large pillows, a relaxation CD and player, headphones, books and magazines, etc.
3. Set up the partitions to provide enough privacy for the student while still allowing visibility by camp staff.
4. Post a set of visual calming strategies in the area to provide self-managing reminders for the student.
5. Talk with the youth privately and explain how and when to use the area. Let youth know they can go to this area at the first sign of becoming upset. Tell youth that you or another staff member will meet them back there and together you’ll quietly agree on a time limit to use the area. Set the visual timer for the agreed upon amount of time.
6. When the time is up, privately reinforce the youth to return to the group.
7. If you feel that the camper is beginning to use this area frequently and suspect they are possibly avoiding work, you may decide to start providing a limited number of break tickets campers can specifically use in the morning and in the afternoon to curtail this behavior.

ADDITIONAL NOTES FOR BRINGING IT BACK TO CAMP:

- The check-ins are also a fun way to kick off a staff meeting.
- The Rose, Bud, Thorn Check-in can be used with campers at the end of the day as a way to get feedback from campers about what went well and what they are looking forward to.