

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE 101: THE ANGER MANAGEMENT DIARY

One of the most effective ways of dealing with anger is to identify the cause and establish any patterns involved. This template lets you capture situations where you reacted angrily, and gives you the opportunity to reflect on both the circumstances and your responses. Through proper reflection you will be able to determine more measured and rational methods of dealing with your anger.

Using this template:

1. Whenever you experience feelings of anger, complete a new entry in the diary. Capture the following information:
 - Time, date, place, parties involved: where and when the incident happened, and who or what your anger was directed towards.
 - Cause of anger: a description of the exact action or incident that caused you to feel angry.
 - Reaction: how you responded at the time, e.g. had an argument, threw something, or were able to suppress the anger.
 - Reflection: logically reflect on how and why it happened, then write down what you think about your reaction, e.g. was it a fair one, would you do the same again, are you ashamed? Wait to complete this section until you can reflect on it rationally.
 - Resolution: if you've learned anything from the experience, vow to do something differently; if you were happy with the way you reacted and would respond that way again, write it down here. Again, complete this once you're able to be objective.
2. Reflect on the entries that you've made in the diary. How often you do this very much depends on individual circumstances. Someone making regular entries should probably review it once a week; others who seldom use it will need less regular reflection.
3. When you review the diary, you should look for patterns (is there a consistent factor in your anger?). For example:
 - Is there a particular person who regularly makes you feel angry? What is it about them or their behaviour that provokes those feelings in you? It could be that by talking to them about the issue, you're able to resolve it. You may decide, however, that you need to remove yourself from any situation that you are both in (you might ask to move desks, for instance).
 - Do you experience anger at particular times of the day? Some people aren't at their best in the morning and take time to function properly. If this is you, don't schedule important meetings first thing, or ask if you can start your working day later.
 - Can you pinpoint a particular activity or event that angers you? Can you avoid or change it? For instance, if traffic driving to work is a problem, consider other transport options. If a certain task upsets you to the point of anger, can you trade with a colleague?
 - Do you react in a particular way every time you feel angry? If so, is there anything you can do to temper that reaction or channel it elsewhere? If you throw things could you count to ten next time you felt like doing it?
 - Look back on the reflection and resolution sections. Have you observed certain traits or characteristics in one circumstance that could be relevant to another? If you've taken steps to successfully resolve things in one case, could this also apply to another?

Anger management diary – date started:

Time / date / location / parties involved	Cause of anger	Reaction	Reflection	Resolution
<i>0902, 23 April, train Man with umbrella and woman with coffee.</i>	<i>Umbrella repeatedly hitting me; woman standing over me with coffee which she allowed to spill on my coat.</i>	<i>Fumed inside at their bad manners but didn't say anything for a while. I then shouted at both of them after being hit by the umbrella again.</i>	<i>I don't feel that I was irrationally angry, but I could have spoken up sooner to avoid a build-up of my feelings.</i>	<i>I will say something in a constructive manner at an earlier point next time, so that I don't allow my anger to build up.</i>