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# TAMING THE ANGER BEE

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*Tame the Anger Bee before it poisons your health, your job, or your relationships!*

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## The 8 tools of anger control



### Tool 3: Learn to respond rather than react

*Think of your brain as a juke box where most of your records— your reactions to different situations— were recorded well before you reached adolescence. Then, as life goes on and every time someone pushes your buttons, you automatically play the record that fits each situation.*

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Coming in November  
Tool 4

*-Changing conversations  
with yourself*

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Take, for instance, being bitten by a big, black, dog at age 3. As a normal child your brain would make a record called “become afraid when you see a big black dog.”

*Fast forward to age 28.* You have forgotten the dog incident at age 3. You are walking down the street and pass a dog that is big—and you guessed it— black. You automatically feel anxiety and apprehension and you want to avoid it,

even though it is behind a gate and cannot harm you now. You find yourself thinking things like, “Big black dogs are dangerous,” and “It’s better to walk on the other side of the street.”

And so it is with many anger reactions. We find people and situations that literally “push our buttons,” and we respond just like that juke box that automatically pulls down a record and starts playing it.

Of course, there are times when we SHOULD play the usual record. For instance, many social ills in our society are solved by people becoming righteously indignant (a form of anger) and taking action to correct an evil or a wrong.

Other times, anger gets people’s attention and they start taking us more seriously. *But*, 95% of the time, the negative far outweighs the positive when we lose control of our anger feelings. *The costs are usually high and the benefits low.*

Most of the time, anger simply doesn’t get us what we desire or need in the first place and only makes things worse in terms of consequences to us, our “victims,” and to the people (like children or employees) who may witness it.



**The AngerCoach™**  
Dr. Fiore & Associates

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*As humans  
we can de-  
cide how to  
deal with  
our anger  
triggers*

Rather than reacting to anger triggers, here are five steps you can learn to **choose** how to deal with the situation—to **respond** rather than **react**.

### 1 Awareness

Become more **aware** of patterns of behavior you exhibit to life triggers. The first step in changing behavior is to become aware of it and recognize it as it is occurring. For instance, *“Whenever she talks to her mother on the phone, I want to grab the receiver and slam it down.”*

### 2 Consequences

Learn to **think of consequences** before you act impulsively. Ask yourself: *“If I do that it will only make matters worse; she will think I don’t like her mother; it will stop us from being close tonight; Is it worth it to get angry?”*

### 3 Listen

**Listen to the conversation you are having with yourself** and have a different one! As human beings, we have the ability to monitor our own thinking patterns - to think about what we are thinking about: *“ why am I thinking she shouldn’t talk to her mother? Why am I trying to control her? What right do I have to demand she give me attention instead of being on the phone? Am I the center of the universe?”*

### 4 Replace

**Interrupt your normal pattern** of behavior and replace it with conscious behavior that moves you closer to your real

goals: *“What are my options in dealing with this besides getting angry?”*

- Go over and kiss her on the neck.
- Whisper, “I could use some attention.”
- Tell her how it makes you feel when she spends so much time on the phone instead of with you.

*Pick your battles* and learn to accept irritating behavior without getting upset.

### 5 Observe

Watch how **differently people respond** to you after you start doing things differently. For instance, your husband complains about his boss. If your usual response is to say something like *“I’m tired of hearing you complain about her - would you like to hear about a day that was really horrible?”*, try support and understanding: *“ I’m so sorry you had such a tough day; would you like to tell me more about it?”* See if he doesn’t respond to you differently than normal. It is much better to try to change other people’s response to you by changing you first - rather than just demanding that they change to satisfy your needs.

### Discuss these tools with Dr. Tony

A *new* and *free* monthly one-hour telephone chat session with Dr. Tony—a great opportunity to learn how to apply the 8 tools of anger management to your life. E-mail [Drtony@angercoach.com](mailto:Drtony@angercoach.com).



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