

USING ASSERTIVENESS TO TRANSFORM ANGER

UNDERSTANDING ANGER – When it comes to managing anger, assertiveness is key. Assertiveness is a skill that allows you to express your opinions, feelings and rights, while not being disrespectful to or harming others.

3 PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATING ANGER

THE PASSIVE ZONE

 **You win** x  **I lose**



Having trouble saying no even when you really want to. Letting resentment build up inside.

THE ASSERTIVE ZONE

 **You win** x  **I win**

Expressing what you feel and need in a calm and respectful manner.

THE AGGRESSIVE ZONE

 **You lose** x  **I win**

When you have something say but you lose your temper and direct your anger towards another person.

ASSERTIVENESS IS AIMING FOR THE WIN / WIN.

PRACTICAL TASK 1

Track your anger over a few days and identify which pattern of communication you tend to use the most. Who do you get angry with? Why? Where does this happen? How do you express your anger?

PRACTICAL TASK 2

Think of all the people that you get angry with. Rank them on the following scale from who you get angry with the most to who you get angry with the least. Remember that your anger may be felt and expressed passively (implosion) or aggressively (explosion).

1- _____
(The person who you get angry with the most)

2- _____

3- _____

4- _____

5 - _____

6 - _____

7 - _____

8 - _____

9 - _____

10 - _____

(The person who you get angry with the least)

TACKLE YOUR ANGER BY LEARNING YOUR ASSERTIVE BILL OF RIGHTS

The following rights highlight the freedom you have to be yourself without disrespecting others. Having identified your communication pattern, over the next few days learn your Assertive Bill of Rights. Use these as guidelines when communicating with others, especially when you are feeling angry.

- ✓ I have the right to have and express my own feelings, thoughts, opinions and have them taken seriously by others
- ✓ I have the right to make a request
- ✓ I have the right to say no without feeling guilty
- ✓ I have the right to set my own priorities
- ✓ I have the right to make mistakes
- ✓ I have the right to change my mind
- ✓ While I have these rights, others have these rights too!

TRANSFORM YOUR ANGER WITH HEALTHIER CONVERSATIONS

- 1. USE "I" STATEMENTS** – Keep the focus on the problem you are having, not on accusing or blaming the other person.
- 2. STATE THE PROBLEM USING FACTS, NOT JUDGMENTS** – This describes your difficulty / dissatisfaction and explains why you need something to change. For example: "The car is low on petrol can you fill it? I need to drive to work tomorrow" instead of "You let the car run out of petrol and now you expect me to fill it?"
- 3. EMPATHY / VALIDATION** – Try to say something that shows your understanding of the other person's feelings. This shows them that you're not trying to pick a fight and helps them to feel heard. This will improve how the other person communicates with you too.
- 4. MAKE CLEAR, DIRECT REQUESTS** – Don't invite the person to say no. Example: "Will you please ...?" instead of "Would you mind ...?" or "Why don't you ...?"