



Our ongoing services:

- Stoppit Anger Support Group, every Wed. 6:30-8:30 PM at Family Health Care, Rainbow and SW Blvd
- Individual, Couples and Family Training
- Workshops- professional and consumer
- Presentations for professional staffs, churches, support groups
- Workplace and employee conflict resolution

www.anger.org



News from Anger Alternatives

From the Desk of Jerry Medol, Director

Anger Alternatives is starting a monthly newsletter to better communicate with individuals and agencies that are part of our growing community.

We will present:

- Original materials such as the article written by Rusty and me in this issue, called “Anger and Control.”
- Items or links from other sources that we find appropriate to pass on.
- Announcements of Anger Alternatives’ services and activities.

We invite and welcome all feedback from our readers about our newsletter and our website www.anger.org. and invite and welcome suggestions on subjects you would like to hear us talk about.

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Upcoming Workshop

Training—the-Trainer Workshop March 28 & 29

Co-sponsored by Two Rivers Psychiatric Hospital. For professional staff and service providers.

Certificates of Attendance for 10.5 hrs will be provided For more information, [click here](#).

Anger and Control

By Jerry Medol and Rusty Fleischer

Like everything else in life, anger is what you make it. For us anger is energy with a message. It tells us when something is not ok. It points to stress or distress and gives clarity as to what is happening and what needs to be addressed. It's not that way for a lot of people. We know that. We make our living working with people who have difficulty handling their anger.

One of the most common expressions of anger is through control. Needing to be in control is a behavior that has to do with not knowing how to trust and not feeling safe. It is a top down behavior with one person trying to exert control over another person, “my way or the highway”. Controlling behavior is often a result of not being trusted as a kid, or never having learned how to ask for what you want. This is a behavior that usually is learned growing up as a child and adolescent.

Control lasts as long as it can be enforced, and it comes at a price; you have to supervise what you ‘conquer.’ Control situations are repressive and don't nurture love. Intimacy and trust get to be hard to experience if not rare. The relationship probably stops being fun. Blame and resentment, defensiveness and isolation become normal and an unhealthy way to communicate. Respect can change to demands for obedience and

compliance.

From our experience, people with control issues usually have a lot of fear of trusting and an intense fear of things not working out unless they make them work out. Control is usually a safety issue for them. Controlling people often don't know how to trust, so they don't feel safe without knowing that things are under control, and that will mean their way.

An example of this type of relationship can be identified between a parent and teenager who doesn't want to straighten up his room according to the parent's standards (or is it demands?). All the energy spent on shouting, threats and tears never bring a respectful solution. Usually the mental list a parent creates to validate these demands is a form of self-justification. Phrases and questions like "This is my house... "how will he learn to be responsible?" ..." I should be respected, I am the parent..." are typical examples. Instead, maybe the parent needs to be asking himself questions such as: Is this working? What keeps me from letting go? What am I accomplishing by being so insistent and controlling? Can't I trust my child to find his own way even it is different from mine? What is the price we all are paying for me needing to "win"?

Bottom line, the anger expressed is hurtful and disrespectful to all involved and it is teaching children and teenagers to be controlling instead of finding a solution based in mutual respect and without shame.

Anger and controlling behavior are found in many other relationships. We have seen it take place between couples, siblings, parents and children of all ages, and employees on all levels. It happens at home and in the workplace.

If you resonate with any of this or something similar, it may mean you personally are dealing with anger and control issues. If so, you can change those behaviors because all behavior is learned. You can learn tools to respond to what is going on instead of reacting and imposing yourself on others. You can learn tools to figure out what it is you need and how to ask other people to support you in what you want to accomplish.

If you have somebody in your life who acts in controlling ways, recognize that you are not responsible for that person's behavior and accept that you may not be the one to bring the light to this person. You can only take care of yourself by finding support for yourself and address your own anger. Being in a relationship with a person who has an anger problem, in all likelihood means you have an anger problem of your own.

For more information on dealing with anger issues, please visit