



BUILDING MY EMOTIONAL TOOLBOX

Temporary Relief or Lasting Change?



Ask Yourself...

**“Will this help me tomorrow...
or just for the next five minutes?”**

When we become angry, it's easy to react without thinking. Some reactions provide **temporary relief**, while others help us solve the problem and build **healthier relationships**.



TEMPORARY RELIEF

Feels better now...
but often creates more problems later.



Yelling



Slamming Doors



Drinking Alcohol



Avoiding People



Revenge



Isolating

VS.



LONG-TERM COPING

May take more effort today...
but helps tomorrow.



Deep Breathing



Taking a Walk



Talking to Someone



Exercise



Prayer or Meditation



Problem Solving



Mindfulness



Taking a Time-Out

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REFLECTION

Think about a recent time you became angry.

What did you do first?

Did it help the next day?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Only for a little while

What healthy coping skill could
you use instead next time?



REMEMBER

Temporary relief helps you feel better today.
Healthy coping helps you build
a better tomorrow.



MY EMOTIONAL TOOLBOX

Circle **THREE** tools you will practice this week.

☐

Deep Breathing

☐

Prayer or Meditation

☐

STOP Skill

☐

Exercise

☐

Wise Mind

☐

TIPP Skills

☐

Walking

☐

Taking a Time-Out

☐

Talking to Someone

☐

Problem Solving

☐

Mindfulness

☐

Asking for Help



MY COMMITMENT

One healthy coping skill I will practice this week is:

Name: _____ Date: _____

The Three Minds: Emotion, Reasonable, and Wise Mind

Directions: Read about each of the three ways of thinking. Then fill in the blanks using the words that best complete each sentence.



Emotion Mind

I'll make him pay.

What's happening: Emotions take over.

You feel _____ and your anger spikes.

Your body reacts—heart _____,

muscles tight, mind _____.

You focus only on the _____

and the need for _____ right now.

You want the other person to feel
what you feel.

Risk: You might _____, say something
you _____, act _____,
or make a choice that causes bigger
problems _____.



Reasonable Mind

If I lose my
temper I'll get arrested.

What's happening: Logic steps in.

You start _____ about facts
and _____. You remind yourself
there are _____ and _____.

Losing control could lead to _____,
_____, fines, loss of your _____,
damage to _____, and a permanent
_____.

Risk: If you rely only on _____, you
might ignore how _____ you still feel.
That can build up inside _____.



Wise Mind

I'm angry,
but I can choose
a better response.

What's happening: Balance creates a better choice.

You _____ your anger without
letting it _____ you.

You _____ the facts and also your
values and _____.

You choose a response that _____
you, _____ others,
and leads to _____ outcome.

What it looks like: You take a _____,
lower your _____, walk away if needed,
or calmly say how you _____.

Every person has
all three ways of
thinking.

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Emotion Mind

- Runs on _____.
- Reacts _____.
- Sees only the _____.
- Acts _____.
- May lead to _____.



Reasonable Mind

- Thinks about _____
and _____.
- Focuses on _____
and _____.
- Plans _____.
- Avoids _____.



Wise Mind

- Balances _____
and _____.
- Sees the _____ picture.
- Chooses what _____.
- Protects your _____
and _____.
- Leads to _____ outcomes.

★ Word Bank

anger	feel	impulsively	logic	job	walk away
faster	regret	better	jail	relationships	voice
hurt	consequences	yell	rules	emotions	respond
facts	attacked	control	relentlessly	problems	values



**Wise Mind is where
healthy decisions happen.**

It honors your feelings, uses your logic,
and chooses actions you won't regret.

STOP BEFORE YOU REACT

Pause today. Choose peace tomorrow.

Name: _____

Date: _____

THE SCENARIO

You are driving home after a long day. Another driver suddenly cuts in front of you without signaling. You slam on your brakes. Your heart starts racing, and you immediately feel angry.



What would you normally do?



STOP

Freeze.
Don't react immediately.

What is your first impulse?

☐ Yell ☐ Honk ☐ Speed up ☐ Tailgate ☐ Gesture

☐ Other: _____



TAKE A STEP BACK



TAKE A STEP BACK

Take one slow, deep breath.

How does taking one breath help?



OBSERVE



OBSERVE

Notice your thoughts, feelings, and what your body is doing.

What am I thinking?

What am I feeling?

What is my body doing?



PROCEED MINDFULLY



PROCEED MINDFULLY

Ask yourself:
"What choice will help me tomorrow?"

What is the healthiest response I can choose?

☐ Slow down and continue driving. ☐ Turn on calming music.

☐ Take another deep breath. ☐ Remind myself that arriving safely is more important than being right.

☐ Let the other driver go. ☐ Other: _____

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IF I REACT WITH ANGER...

What might happen?



IF I USE THE STOP SKILL...

What could happen instead?

REMEMBER



The STOP skill interrupts the anger cycle before it becomes aggression.



PAUSE. BREATHE. OBSERVE. CHOOSE.

Practical Skills for Calming the Body

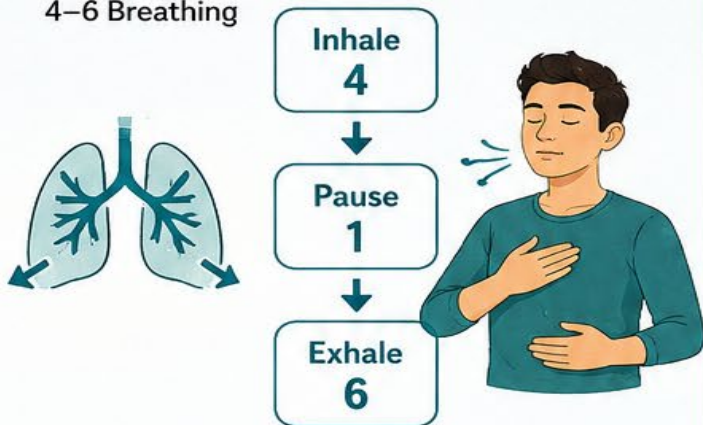
Now that we know how to interrupt anger, let's practice skills that calm the nervous system.



1 CONTROLLED BREATHING

Teach

4-6 Breathing



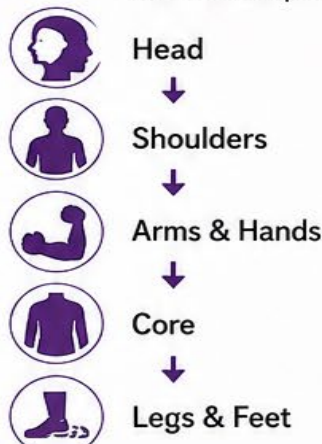
Then actually practice together.

"I'll count with you."

Five breaths.

2 PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Instead of body parts only, Use five steps.



Each muscle group

Tense 5 seconds

Relax 10 seconds

Then ask:

"What changed?"



3 GROUNDING

Teach

- 5 Things you see
- 4 Things you feel
- 3 Things you hear
- 2 Things you smell
- 1 Thing you taste



Grounding brings attention back to the present moment instead of staying trapped in anger.

4 ONE MINUTE MINDFULNESS

Instead of just saying

- Observe
- Breath
- Body
- Thoughts

Guide them.

- "Sit comfortably."
- "Breathe slowly."
- "Notice your breathing."
- "Notice your shoulders."
- "Notice thoughts without judging them."
- "Let them pass."

End

"What did you notice?"



These skills calm your body.
A calm body supports a calm mind.





CBT

Change Your Thinking,
Change Your Reaction

Name: _____ Date: _____

What is CBT?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) helps you recognize how your thoughts affect your feelings and behaviors. By changing unhelpful thinking patterns, you can change how you feel and respond.



It's not always the situation that causes anger—it's often the meaning we give the situation.

HOW IT WORKS

Situation → Thought → Feeling → Behavior → Outcome

★ **Directions:** Use the example below to guide you. Then complete the second scenario on your own.

	1. SITUATION What happened?	2. AUTOMATIC THOUGHT What went through your mind?	3. FEELING How did you feel?	4. BEHAVIOR What did you do or want to do?	5. OUTCOME What happened as a result?
EXAMPLE	Someone cuts me off in traffic.	They did that on purpose!	Angry, frustrated, irritated	Yell, tailgate, make an angry gesture	More stress, possible conflict, possible legal consequences
YOUR TURN	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____	1. _____ _____ _____ 2. _____ _____ _____

CHALLENGE & REFRAME

Look at your automatic thought. Is it 100% true? Is it helpful? Try replacing it with a more balanced thought.



Original Automatic Thought

1. _____

2. _____



More Balanced Thought

1. _____

2. _____

COMMON THINKING TRAPS



Which ones did you notice in your thoughts? (Check all that apply.)

- ☐ **Mind Reading** – assuming you know what others are thinking
- ☐ **Jumping to Conclusions** – making a decision without all the facts
- ☐ **Catastrophizing** – expecting the worst
- ☐ **Personalizing** – taking things too personally
- ☐ **All-or-Nothing Thinking** – seeing things as only good or bad
- ☐ **"Should" Statements** – having rigid rules about how things should be



REFLECTION

- What is one situation that often triggers your anger? _____
- What thought do you usually have in that moment? _____
- What is a healthier thought you can choose instead? _____
- How will this help you respond differently? _____

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MY CBT TAKEAWAY

One thing I will practice this week:



Remember:

You can't always control what happens,
but you can control your thoughts—and how you respond.



Name: _____

Date: _____

ACT Acceptance & Commitment Therapy

A mindful Approach to a meaningful life.



ACT helps you build **psychological flexibility**—the ability to be present, open up to difficult thoughts and feelings, and take action toward what matters most.



The Goal: Stop struggling with what you can't control and start building a life that is rich, meaningful, and worth living.

THE 6 CORE PROCESSES OF ACT



1. ACCEPTANCE

Open up to and make space for difficult thoughts, feelings, and sensations instead of fighting or avoiding them.

What is something difficult I tend to avoid or struggle with?



2. COGNITIVE DEFUSION

Notice your thoughts for what they are—just thoughts, not facts. Create distance so thoughts don't control you.

What is a negative thought I often get stuck on?



3. BEING PRESENT

Focus on the here and now with an open, curious, and nonjudgmental awareness.

What helps me bring my attention back to the present moment?



4. SELF-AS-CONTEXT

See yourself as more than your thoughts, feelings, and past. You are the observer, not the story.

How can I remind myself that I am more than my thoughts or feelings?



5. VALUES

Identify what matters most to you—the kind of person you want to be and the life you want to live.

What are my top 3 values?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____



6. COMMITTED ACTION

Take steps—big or small—that move you toward your values. Keep showing up, even when it's hard.

What is one small action I can take this week that aligns with my values?

HOW ACT HELPS



Reduces the struggle with painful thoughts and emotions.



Builds resilience and emotional strength.



Increases clarity about what matters.



Supports meaningful action and lasting change.



Improves well-being and overall quality of life.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

When I am feeling overwhelmed or stuck, I can use ACT to...

1. Accept: _____
2. Defuse: _____
3. Be Present: _____
4. Remember I am more than my thoughts by: _____
5. Connect with my values by: _____
6. Take action by: _____

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**You can't always control what shows up in your life,
but you can choose what you do with it—and where you go next.**



TIPP SKILLS

Quick strategies to calm your body and mind in moments of intense emotion.

T TEMPERATURE



Cool your body to calm your mind.

- Splash cold water on your face.
- Hold your breath and put your face in cold water.
- Use a cold pack on your face or back of your neck.



Lower your body temperature to reduce emotional intensity.

I INTENSE EXERCISE



Use intense movement to release built-up energy.

- Run, climb stairs, or do jumping jacks.
- Push your body hard for 5–10 minutes.
- Get your heart rate up!



Burn off stress hormones and reset your body.

P PACED BREATHING



Slow your breathing to slow your emotional state.

- Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4 counts.
- Hold for 2 counts.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth for 6 counts.
- Repeat several times.



Deep, slow breaths signal safety to your body.

P PROGRESSIVE RELAXATION



Release tension from your body, one muscle group at a time.

- Tighten a muscle group for 5 seconds.
- Release and relax for 10 seconds.
- Move from head to toe.
- Notice the difference.



Relax your body to calm your mind.

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Use TIPP skills anytime you feel overwhelmed.

Practice makes calm easier.

