

Anger and Trauma Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Anger is a natural emotion that everyone experiences, but for many, it can feel overwhelming or difficult to control. For individuals with a history of trauma, anger can often be a response tied to unresolved past experiences. Trauma can shape how we perceive and react to situations, and this connection can sometimes intensify feelings of anger. This worksheet is designed to help you explore the relationship between your anger and past traumatic events, identify patterns, and develop strategies for managing your emotions in a healthy way.

Part 1: Understanding your anger

Identify your triggers: *List situations, people, or events that commonly trigger your anger.*

Describe your physical anger responses: *What physical sensations do you experience when angry? (e.g., clenched fists, racing heart)*

Describe your psychological anger responses: *What thoughts, feelings, emotions go through your mind?*

Consequences of anger outbursts: *How do your anger episodes impact your relationships, work, or daily life? How do you feel after an outburst?*

Part 2: Reflecting on trauma

Revisit key events (optional): *Write down significant events or periods in your life where you felt unsafe, hurt, or unsupported. (This section is optional; only proceed if you feel ready and safe to do so.)*

Impact of trauma: *How do you think these events have shaped your beliefs about yourself, others, or the world?*

Emotional responses: *What emotions arise when you think about these events? (e.g., anger fear, sadness, shame)*

Patterns between trauma and anger: *Can you identify any connections between the situations that trigger your anger and your past trauma?*

Part 3: Coping strategies

Current coping mechanisms: *How do you currently cope with anger? Are these strategies helpful or harmful?*

Finding new strategies:

Managing anger can be challenging, but there are practical techniques you can use to work through this emotion in a constructive way. Below are some strategies you might find helpful, along with examples to guide your practice. Feel free to adapt these techniques to suit your needs.

Mindful awareness:

Practice pausing when you feel anger rising and try using some of the following techniques:

1. Cognitive restructuring

- What am I feeling right now (emotionally and physically)?
- Is this reaction about the present moment or something from my past?

2. Deep breathing exercises

- Practice slow, deep breaths to calm your nervous system.
- Technique: Inhale through your nose for 4 counts, hold for 4 counts, exhale through your mouth for 6-8 counts. Repeat for 2-5 minutes.

3. Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR)

- Tense and relax each muscle group in your body, starting from your toes and moving up to your head.
- This can help release physical tension often associated with anger.

Action plan:

Brainstorm some new ways and strategies you will try to better express or cope with your anger. (e.g., journaling, deep breathing, walking away, seeking support.)

Section 4: Setting goals

Short-term goals: *What steps can you take to better understand and manage your anger in the next week?*

Long-term goals: *How would you like your relationship with anger to change over time?*

What will success look like for you? *Set a time to revisit and adjust your goals and strategies as you progress.*