



All of the service of Hashem is dependent upon the improvement of one's character traits.

Vilna Gaon - Even Shleima, Chapter 1

Anger Management for Positive Results Module

Packet 1

לא יהיה בעל חמה נוח לכעוס, ולא כמת שאינו מרגיש; אלא בינוני: לא יכעוס אלא על דבר גדול שראוי לכעוס עליו, כדי שלא יעשה כיוצא בו פעם אחרת.

One should not be hotheaded and easy to anger, and he should not be like a dead person that does not feel. Rather he should be moderate - he should only get angry over something significant which deserves his anger, in order that the next time he will not even get angry over that.

Rambam, Hilchos De'os, Chapter 1, Halacha 4

November 12, 2006

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Contact Information

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Use of Material

The material in this *ACTT Module Packet* is intended for the use of the ACTT organization’s members and any other individuals interested in creating and sustaining meaningful changes in their lives. If an organization is interested in using this material, the ACTT organization would appreciate your contacting us. Thank you.

ACTT Anger Management for Positive Results Module – Packet 1

Goals of Anger Management for Positive Results Module

- To develop an awareness of what causes anger and strategies to control it.
- To develop an understanding of anger as a *teacher*, learning both about our passions and our ability to cope with adversity and frustration.

Module Duration

Anger Management for Positive Results will be covered in several parts. This initial module will last for 8 weeks.

To Do List

- If you are not yet a member of the ACTT Organization, fill out a membership application and submit it
- Fill out the “ACTT *Anger Management for Positive Results* Commitment Form”, keep a copy for yourself and submit a copy to the organization
- On a daily basis:
 - Follow the Learning Schedule and record your *Anger Management for Positive Results* activity in your “ACTT *Anger Management for Positive Results* Activity Log”
 - Record your maintenance activity (from the *Ahavas Chesed, Judging Favorably and Kavanah During Davening* modules) in your “ACTT *Anger Management for Positive Results* Activity Log”
- Participate in the chizuk activities, as desired:
 - ACTT *Anger Management for Positive Results* kick-off event and face-to-face discussion group meetings
 - ACTT online discussion group and e-mail list
 - Read inspirational material from sources recommended by the ACTT organization and also distributed by the ACTT organization
 - Recommend inspirational material to the ACTT membership and submit inspirational material to be distributed to all the ACTT members

Anger Management for Positive Results Resources

The following are some resources for learning about *Anger Management for Positive Results*:

- [Anger: The Inner Teacher - A nine-step program to free yourself from anger](#) by Rabbi Zelig Pliskin; Artscroll/Mesorah; ISBN: 1-57819-175-0
- [Guard your Anger](#) by Rabbi Moshe Goldberger; Targum Press/Feldheim; ISBN: 1-56871-183-2
- [The Trail to Tranquility](#) by Rabbi Lazer Brody; Llumina Press; ISBN: 1-59526-108-7

Where Does Anger Come From?

By Rebbetzin Feige Twerski

Reproduced from www.aish.com/family/rebbitzen/Anger_Management.asp

Rabbi Dessler teaches that the human being is comprised of two manifestations of the “I.” One is the essential “I,” the G-dly image within each and every one of us. This is referred to as the soul, the higher part of ourselves.

The other “I” is what we popularly call the ego, what Freud referred to as 'id.' In a sense, it is the counterfeit “I”, the lesser part of us that masquerades as an advocate on our behalf, but can in fact take us far afield into muddy waters.

Hillel, the great sage of the Mishnah, refers to the essential “I” in the following two comments: “If I am not for myself, who will be for me?” and “If I am here, everything is here!” Both comments suggest that it is the individual exclusively who must give life and definition to one's loftier, G-dly self.

Unquestionably, this is achieved by the choices one makes. “If my better self is here” – in charge, in control, driving my behavior, then “everything is here.” If I am not for myself (my essential self) – giving expression to the purpose of my existence, who will do it?

The ego, the lesser self, is prideful, territorial, arrogant and totally absorbed in its desires and wants. Anger is a reaction of the ego to a perceived affront, a sense of diminution of its power. Frequent anger attacks or outbursts should be warning signals to the individual that the lesser part of themselves has taken up too much space and dominion over their person.

Self-righteous rationalizations aside, anger is seldom, with very few exceptions, viewed favorably in Jewish sources. Only the pretense, the feigning of anger, as when one is registering disapproval of children's behavior, is a show of anger deemed appropriate. But the requirement in those situations is that the person, not the anger, is driving the carefully thought-out response. If the anger is driving the person, it will not be emanating from a healthy place and will escalate out of control. Conversely, if the better part of the person is running the show, the anger will be a measured and constructive response.

Rabbi Yitzchak of Vurka, a leader of Polish Jewry about 200 years ago, used to robe himself in a special cloak before presenting himself in an angry mode. For him it was a disciplined act that had none of the impulsivity that renders anger so destructive. Indiscriminate anger is a negative emotion. It distorts personality and upsets mental equilibrium. The Talmud teaches: “When a person gives in to anger, if he is wise, his wisdom leaves him. If he is a prophet, his power of prophecy leaves him; if greatness was decreed for him from Heaven, anger will cause him to be degraded.”

Even Moses, the most exalted of human beings, found himself spiritually compromised on the very rare occasions that he succumbed (however justifiably) to anger. “When any man gives way to rage, even the Divine Presence abandons him” (Talmud, Nedarim). Anger has been likened by the Talmud to idolatry, heresy, to serving other gods. Clearly, the message is that when one is in the grips of anger, it is not G-d, the proprietor of his better self that he is serving. It is his ego that holds him hostage and is dictating the terms of his behavior. The Talmud sums it up with the succinct statement: “Whoever is enraged, all kinds of demons have power over him.”

King Solomon, the wisest of all men, cautions us about the mind, body and emotion connection: “Remove anger from your heart (thus) remove pain from your body” (Ecclesiastes), underscoring the fact that the object of the anger is not the only victim who suffers. The bearer of anger is ultimately the greatest loser on every score – spiritually, emotionally and physically.

The Mishnah in Ethics of the Fathers (5:14) enjoins us to “be slow to anger and easy to pacify.” The inference of the Mishnah is twofold. Firstly, the Mishnah does not say “never get angry,” rather its

exhortation is to be slow to anger. It holds out for us a realistic and doable goal: work on getting your anger under control, hence “be slow to anger.”

Secondly, the Mishnah's teaching is that a proneness to anger is not an inborn or hopeless trait of character. Our sages teach that while such a temperament might be “something in a man's nature that he is prone to follow; but with a discipline of wisdom, he can gradually free himself from it until his heart changes completely into something new.”

Rabbi Israel Salanter, the founder of the Mussar movement (self-growth initiative), often commented that the loudest sound in the universe was the breaking of a bad habit, the pattern of one's character trait, and moving on in a positive direction.

Controlling Anger

From Rambam, Hilchos De'os, Chapter 2, Halacha 3

English translation reproduced with the permission of Feldheim Publishers, Jerusalem/New York, from Mishneh Torah Volume One – The Book of Knowledge by Maimonides; Notes and English Translation by Moses Hyamson

Anger too, is an exceedingly bad passion, and one should avoid it to the last extreme. One should train oneself not to be angry even for something that would justify anger. If one wishes to arouse fear in his children and household, or in the members of a community of which he is the head, and desires to exhibit anger, so that they may amend their ways, he should make a show of anger before them, so as to correct them, but in reality, his mind should be composed like that of a man who simulates anger and does not really feel it.

The ancient sages said, “He who is angry – it is the same as if he worshipped idols.” They also said, “One who yields to anger, – if he is a sage, his wisdom departs from him; if he is a prophet, his prophetic gift departs from him.” Those of an irate disposition – their life is not worth living.

The sages therefore, charged us that anger should be avoided to such a degree that one should train oneself to be unmoved even by things that naturally would provoke anger; and this is the good way. The practice of the righteous is to suffer contumely and not inflict it; to hear themselves reproached, not retort; to be impelled in what they do by love, and to rejoice in suffering. Of them Scripture says, “And they that love Him are like the going forth of the sun in his strength.” (Judges 5:31).

ACTT Module Packet Appendix



ACTT Commitment Form – Anger Management for Positive Results Module

Remember, it is better to commit to less – you can always do more!

Please PRINT all information

This commitment does not constitute a vow; I am doing the following, bli neder

From ___/___/___ To ___/___/___

In memory of _____

As a zechus for:

a refuah shelaimah for _____

a shidduch for _____

parnassa for _____

other _____

- ___ *Anger Management act(s) daily in a ☺ mood*
(ACTT recommends 1-2 acts daily – the *ACTT Daily Activity Log* has suggestions)
- *Performing one or more of the following maintenance activities in a ☺ mood*
(ACTT recommends a total of 1-2 acts daily – see the corresponding Module Packet for suggestions)
 - ___ *Kavanah During Davening act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Judging Favorably act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
 - ___ *Ahavas Chesed act(s)* *daily or* *weekly*
- *Learning ___ minutes daily from* (ACTT recommends 5 minutes daily):
 - The ACTT *Anger Management for Positive Results Learning Schedule Book* (see *ACTT Daily Activity Log*)
 - Guard your Anger by Rabbi Moshe Goldberger
 - The Trail to Tranquility by Rabbi Lazer Brody
 - Other _____

Please PRINT all information

Name: _____ Date _____

Email address: _____ Tel. number _____

Address: _____

☺ *Be happy with your ability to Improve Yourself and Grow!* ☺

Please email form: commitment@actt613.org or mail: ACTT, 48 Edgemount Road, Edison, NJ 08817

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ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Anger Management for Positive Results Module

		Learned (√)		Activity		
Date		√	Book	Step	√	Notes (description of activity, comments, etc.)
Sat	11/18/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.3		
Sun	11/19/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.4		
Mon	11/20/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.5		
Tue	11/21/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.6		
Wed	11/22/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.7		
Thu	11/23/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.8		
Fri	11/24/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.8A,B		
Sat	11/25/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.8C,D		
Sun	11/26/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.8E		
Mon	11/27/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.8E		
Tue	11/28/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	1.9 - 1.11		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Anger Management for Positive Results Module

		Learned (√)		Activity	
Date	√	Book	Step	√	Notes (description of activity, comments, etc.)
Wed	11/29/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.1		
Thu	11/30/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.2, 2.3		
Fri	12/01/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.4, 2.5		
Sat	12/02/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.6		
Sun	12/03/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.7, 2.8		
Mon	12/04/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.9		
Tue	12/05/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.10A		
Wed	12/06/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.10B		
Thu	12/07/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.11		
Fri	12/08/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.12		
Sat	12/09/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	2.12		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Anger Management for Positive Results Module

		Learned (√)		Activity		
Date		√	Book	Step	√	Notes (description of activity, comments, etc.)
Sun	12/10/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	2.13		
Mon	12/11/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	2.13, 2.14		
Tue	12/12/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.A1		
Wed	12/13/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.A2		
Thu	12/14/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.A3		
Fri	12/15/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.A3		
Sat	12/16/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.A4		
Sun	12/17/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.B1		
Mon	12/18/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.B2,3		
Tue	12/19/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.B4,5		
Wed	12/20/06		Anger: Inner Teacher	3.B6		



ACTT Daily Activity Log (continued) – Anger Management for Positive Results Module

		Learned (√)		Activity	
Date	√	Book	Step	√	Notes (description of activity, comments, etc.)
Thu	12/21/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C1		
Fri	12/22/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C2		
Sat	12/23/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C3		
Sun	12/24/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C4		
Mon	12/25/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C5		
Tue	12/26/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C6		
Wed	12/27/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C6		
Thu	12/28/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C6		
Fri	12/29/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C6		
Sat	12/30/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C6		
Sun	12/31/06	Anger: Inner Teacher	3.C6		

Glossary

Ahavas Chesed	.....loving kindness
B'li Neder	.....without making a formal commitment
Bitachon	.....trust in Hashem
Chesed	.....kindness
Chizuk	.....moral support
Davening	.....praying
Hakaras HaTov	.....gratitude
Kavanah	.....concentration
Klal Yisrael	.....the Jewish people
Lashon Hara	.....evil tongue (speech) that denotes gossip and defamation
Machsom L'fi	.....guarding one's tongue
Midah	.....character trait
Midos	.....character traits
Mussar	.....ethical teaching
Neshamah	.....soul
Nisayon	.....a test
Parnasa	.....livelihood
Refuah Shleimah	.....a complete recovery from an illness
Sefer	.....a book
Shidduch	.....a match of two eligible and marriageable Jewish singles
Shiurim	.....classes
Siddur	.....prayer book
Talmidim	.....students
Tefillah	.....prayer
Tefillos	.....prayers
Teshuva	.....repentance
Zechus	.....merit