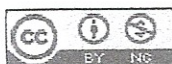


INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS HANDOUT

Managing Interpersonal Anger

1. Assume the best; give the benefit of the doubt
 - Remind yourself that there are always many possibilities that could explain why anyone behaves as they do.
 - Remind yourself that everyone is doing the best he/she can.
2. Nonjudgmental stance: Let go of “shoulds”
 - Let things be as they are.
 - Notice and accept your dislike of things that are different than you wanted
3. Notice that your emotions color your understanding of what happens
 - Remind yourself that emotions lead us to conclusions, and emotional conclusions are often incomplete, if not completely inaccurate.
 - Identify and distinguish your thoughts from facts.
 - Identify which facts are consistent, inconsistent, or are ambiguous in supporting your emotional conclusion.
 - If there is any doubt, check out your conclusions by asking the person and accepting the answer. (If necessary, remind yourself that you cannot be sure of others’ thoughts, feelings, intentions, or motivations without asking.)
4. Use opposite to emotion action, beginning by considering the other person’s perspective and empathizing with his/her experience of the situation.
 - Continue opposite action by gently avoiding, or acting with kindness.
5. Focus on regulating before acting on any conclusions
 - Focus on breathing, distracting, urge-surfing, self-soothing, and/or wise mind before accusing, attacking, or leaving in anger.
 - Remind yourself that even if your conclusion is correct, you will be more effective in dealing with it once you are emotionally regulated.
6. Turn the mind by asking: “Do I want to be right or effective?” and use willingness to be effective.

Seth R. Axelrod, PhD, 5-19-2009



INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS WORKSHEET

Managing Interpersonal Anger

Prompting event: What led up to this interaction?

Rate your anger intensity from 0 (none) to 100 (most intense): _____

APPLY ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING

Describe ways to give the other person the benefit of the doubt:

Identify judgments about the person or the situation:

Restate by describing the unpleasant facts, consequences, or dislikes:

Identify any emotional conclusions you are making:

Identify **facts** that support these conclusions:

Identify **facts** that are ambiguous or do not support these conclusions:

Describe use of opposite action to decrease anger:

Describe use of skills to get emotionally regulated before acting:

Ask yourself whether you would rather be **right** or **effective**? If necessary, turn your mind to effectiveness, and describe your effective behavior for this situation:

Rate your anger intensity again from 0 (none) to 100 (most intense): _____

Seth R. Axelrod, PhD, 5-19-2009

