



PURPOSE OF GROUP: to explore how self-talk impacts anger
to identify triggers to anger
to increase anger management skills

MATERIALS NEEDED: pens/pencils for each group member
print p. 4-5 of guide; have enough copies for each group member

1.

-Facilitator opens group by introducing topic, **self-talk** (and how it impacts anger).

-Self-talk is essentially the constant dialogue we have running through our head!

-Unfortunately, our self-talk is often negative, whether it is about ourselves, other people, or situations we're in. The following are examples of negative self-talk:

-**About ourselves**: "I can't do this!"; "I'm so stupid!"

-**About others**: "She's doing this to me on purpose!"; "He's such a jerk!"

-**About a situation**: "This is always happening to me!"

*You can ask group members, "Do you struggle with negative self-talk? Why do you think that is?"

-It's important to become more aware of our negative self-talk because it impacts our emotions & behaviors. For example, **it can escalate our anger.**

-Example: Mike's classmate is throwing paper airplanes, which have hit Mike twice. Mike thinks, "He's doing this on purpose! He's trying to embarrass me. If it happens again, I will fight him!"

*You can ask group members, "How does negative self-talk affect your anger?"

2.

-Our negative self-talk is often about ourselves because **we tend to blame, criticize, doubt, & judge ourselves.**

-We are our own worst enemy!

-Our harsh inner dialogue about ourselves can escalate our anger, but positive self-talk can cool us down! See the following example & take note of the difference between the negative self-talk & the positive self-talk:

-**Scenario:** James is writing a paper, and he's getting flustered because he's not a good writer

-**Negative self-talk:** "I can't do this! I'm no good. I'm about to explode!"

-**Positive self-talk:** "Breathe- you got this! Take your time & you'll be fine. Take a break if you need to"

3. Our negative self-talk also contains a lot of distortions. **Distortions can further escalate our anger.** The following are examples:

-**"Should" Statements:** "She should have been here by now!"; "I shouldn't make mistakes"

-**Black & White Thinking:** "He is completely useless!"; "I'm such a failure"

-**Jumping to Conclusions:** "This is not going to work!"; "He did that on purpose!"

*You can ask group members, "Can you think of other cognitive distortions that might contribute to anger?"

4. Group members will now participate in an activity in which **they will further explore their self-talk.**

*Give them handout, "**Self-Talk & Anger**" (on p. 4 of this guide). Read the example & ask them to complete the handout

*You can also give them the handout on p. 5, "**Examples of Positive Self-Talk**"

*Allow them to share when they're done

4a. After the activity, you can ask group members the following questions:

-Look at the scenarios you wrote down. Do you think positive self-talk would have made

a difference in how you handled those situations? Why or why not?

-How else might positive self-talk help you? (i.e. it will help self-esteem, increase motivation, decrease anxiety, etc.)

5. Facilitator can conclude group by going over more ways to manage anger.

-Consider creating an anger journal. Log daily triggers/situations/thoughts when angry.

This would allow you to **identify patterns** that contribute to your anger

a. Awareness is key! You can't work on your anger until you're aware of what's contributing to it

-Use relaxation techniques (i.e. breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation exercises, etc.)

-Allow yourself "time-outs"

a. Examples: Pause & walk away from argument if you're too heated; take a break if you're working on something that is making you frustrated

-Get your anger out in a safe, effective way- art, poetry, music, physical activity, etc.

*You can ask group members, "What are some other ways you can manage your anger?"

Self-Talk & Anger

<u>Situation</u>	<u>Negative Self-Talk</u>	<u>Reaction/Consequence(s)</u>	<u>Positive Self-Talk To Use Instead</u>
Example: I was writing a paper, and I was getting flustered because I'm not a good writer.	I can't do this! I'm no good. I'm about to explode!	I was too frustrated & angry to focus. I only worked on the paper for 20 more minutes and turned in subpar work.	Breathe- you got this! Take your time & you'll be fine. Take a break if you need to.
1.			
2.			
3.			

Examples of Positive Self-Talk (for anger)

“I can handle this”

“I’m going to let this go. It’s not worth it”

“I’m in control”

“It’s okay to make mistakes”

“Breathe & relax”

“Don’t take this personally”

“Keep calm & carry on”

“Don’t rush to judgment!”

“It’s okay that I’m feeling angry. It’s how I handle it that counts”