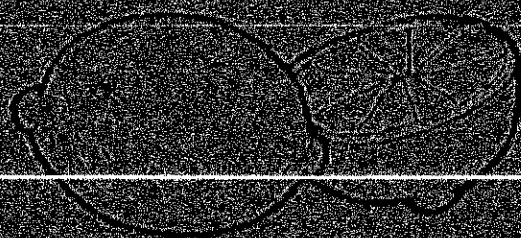


LEMONS

OR

LEMONADE?

An Anger Workbook for Teens



Jane Gilgun

Lemons or Lemonade?

An Anger Workbook for Teens

Jane F. Gilgun, Ph.D., LICSW



L. E. Bell Press
Minneapolis

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To teenagers

First, do no harm.

You have the freedom to chose. Search for the widest variety of choices. Talk to other people. Watch other people. See how successful people run their lives. Think of what your choices mean for the short-term and the long-term. Then chose, basing your choices of what is good for you and for others. Think consequences.

About the Author



For many years, Jane Gilgun worked with youth and families where the youth had experienced severe adversities and were at risk for aggressive and self-destructive behaviors and attitudes. Currently, she does research on children and families where the children are having difficulties at home and in school. Most of the children are dealing with the effects of adversities.

She also does research on how persons overcome risks for violent behaviors, the development of violent behaviors, and the meanings of violence to perpetrators. She has won two Silberman Awards, one in 1993 and the other in 1997 to fund the writing of her research. In 1995, she won the Excellence in Research Award from the College of Human Ecology, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

Dr. Gilgun is the author of many articles, co-developed the core courses of the Child Abuse Prevention Studies Program, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and was the developer and faculty director of the Violence and its Prevention series at the University of Minnesota. This series won an Outstanding Program Award from Continuing Education and Conferences, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.

She has a Ph.D. from Syracuse University in child and family studies and other graduate degrees from the University of Chicago in social service administration and from the Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium, in family studies and sexuality. Dr. Gilgun is a professor, School of Social Work, University of Minnesota, Twin Cities, and a licensed independent clinical social worker.

Foreword

Teenagers and Adversity

Millions of teens today face a range of adversities, such as parental chemical dependency, parental discord, abuse and neglect, poverty, homelessness, chaotic and dangerous neighborhoods, and discrimination based on social class, race, and gender. Conflict with peers and problems in schools can compound the effects of adversity and are by themselves adversities. Anger is an expectable response to such circumstances. Many teens express their anger in ways that help them feel better, but often these are temporary solutions that hurt them and sometimes hurt other people. Reactions such as overeating, cutting, fighting, lying, stealing, and running away are examples.

Yet, teens can learn to express their anger in ways that help them feel better and do not harm themselves or others. This workbook guides teen's anger toward constructive expressions that turn the lemons of adversity into lemonade.

Some teens value gang membership. Gangs can offer the sense of belonging and family that all persons want. Unfortunately, gangs often get what they want through aggressive and violent ways. Anger is one component of gang violence. Guiding gang members away from violence involves acknowledging the importance of being part of a group while showing gang members alternatives to violence. In other words, what young people want from gangs may be what most people want: respect, a sense of belonging, and a purpose in life.

Acknowledging the sources of teens' discontent, identifying how teens currently deal with their discontent, and guiding them toward attaining their goals without hurting themselves or others are goals of this workbook.

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Reasons to Be Angry

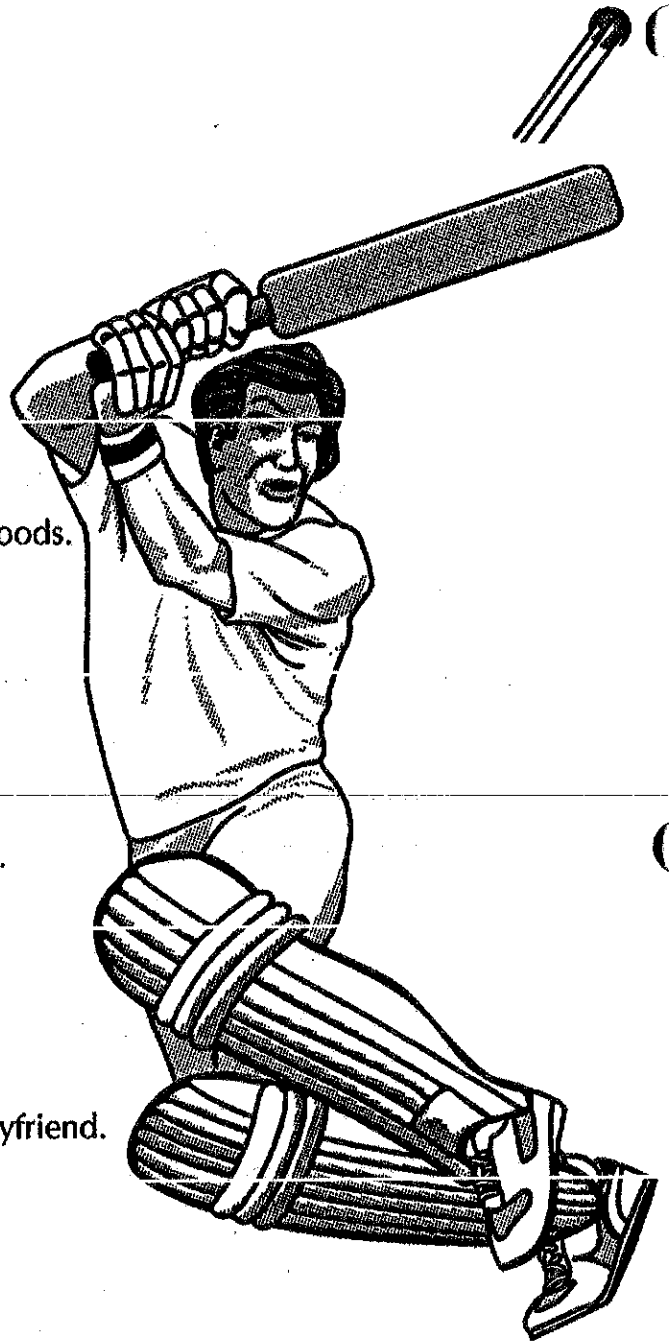
Some teens have lots of reasons to be angry. Bad things happen to good kids. Put a check mark in front of the things that have happened to you. Some of these things might not be happening now, but you can check them if they have ever happened, *even once*.

- ☐ Other people don't like you.
- ☐ You don't fit in.
- ☐ Other people don't respect you.
- ☐ Things that go wrong are your fault.
- ☐ Your mother doesn't listen to you.
- ☐ Your father doesn't listen to you.
- ☐ Your mother and father fight.
- ☐ Your mother gets high on drugs.
- ☐ Your father gets high on drugs.
- ☐ Your father gets drunk.
- ☐ Your mother gets drunk.
- ☐ You feel ashamed of your mother.
- ☐ You feel ashamed of your father.
- ☐ You hardly ever see your father.
- ☐ You hardly ever see you mother.
- ☐ You don't live with your family.
- ☐ You don't feel like you belong anywhere.
- ☐ Your mother and father are getting a divorce.
- ☐ Your mother and father are divorced.
- ☐ Other people pick on you.
- ☐ There's not enough money for food or nice clothes.



Reasons to Be Angry

- ___ Someone you love doesn't love you.
- ___ You feel ignored.
- ___ You are ashamed of where you live.
- ___ Other people steal your things.
- ___ You get yelled at.
- ___ Someone hits you.
- ___ You're not welcome in some neighborhoods.
- ___ Someone beats you up.
- ___ Your brother or sister tease you.
- ___ Someone makes you do sexual things.
- ___ Someone you loved died.
- ___ A pet died.
- ___ You don't have a girlfriend or boyfriend.
- ___ You move a lot.
- ___ You miss friends when you move.
- ___ You think you're ugly.
- ___ You don't have any friends.
- ___ You broke up with your girlfriend or boyfriend.
- ___ No one cares how you feel.
- ___ No one cares what you want.
- ___ You feel unloved.
- ___ You feel unwanted.
- ___ No one understands you.



How many of these items did you check? _____

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|----|
| • Did the things you checked make you feel angry? | Yes | No |
| • Did the things you checked make you feel sad? | Yes | No |
| • Did the things you checked make you feel angry and sad? | Yes | No |

Feeling Sad and Angry

Teens sometimes feel angry about these things. Sometimes they feel sad, too. Sometimes teens start out feeling sad and then they feel mad, or angry. Then they feel sad again. Sometimes teens just forget about these things, but when they think about them, they start feeling mad, sad, or mad and sad all over again.

This is just like being on a see-saw or a swing, **but it's not much fun.**

You might be feeling sad and mad or just mad or just sad right now. You can use the space below for anything you want. Have things happened to you that aren't on the list? You could write about them or draw them right here. Maybe there's someone you could talk to about these things.

My Space

Do You Deserve it?

Sometimes teens think they did something to deserve bad things. Some teens think that they are bad when someone treats them bad. Below are things some teens think. Circle yes or no to the following statements.

• <i>I do bad things.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Other people tell me I'm bad.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Sometimes I think I'm bad.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>I like being bad.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Bad things happened to me because I'm a bad kid.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>If I had been a better kid, bad things wouldn't have happened.</i>	Yes	No

If You Think You are Bad...Even Sometimes What is That Like?

Have you ever felt like you're a bad kid? What is that like? Some teens think being bad is good. Can you think of ways being bad is good? Use the space below to write about what it means to be bad. You could draw a picture if you want, or just leave it blank.

My Space

3

Do Other Kids Deserve it?

Teens sometimes believe that some people deserve to be treated bad. Circle yes or no to the following statements.

• <i>It's okay to make other people cry if I think they are bad.</i>	Yes No
• <i>Some people deserve to be beat up.</i>	Yes No
• <i>Some people deserve to be teased.</i>	Yes No
• <i>I can take things from other people if I want them.</i>	Yes No
• <i>It's okay to tease people I think are stupid.</i>	Yes No
• <i>It's okay to tease kids I think are ugly.</i>	Yes No
• <i>It's okay to do mean things to other people if I enjoy it.</i>	Yes No
• <i>It's okay to trick other people into doing things.</i>	Yes No
• <i>It's okay to force other people into doing things.</i>	Yes No
• <i>Some people deserve it when others are mean to them.</i>	Yes No

You can probably think of other things teens do to other people. Write them on these lines or talk to someone you trust.

What I Think

Teens have opinions about good and bad things in their lives. Check the items below that you agree with.

- ☐ Bad things can happen to good kids.
- ☐ Good kids sometimes do bad things.
- ☐ If someone does bad things to me, I want them to stop.
- ☐ It is wrong to do bad things to other people.
- ☐ It's okay to get back at people who do bad things to me.

Your Opinions

You probably have other opinions about these things. Use the space below to express them. Draw, use water color, pastels, or write a poem. Do what you want with this blank page.

My Space

Your Opinions

You probably have other opinions about these things. Use the space below to express them. Draw, use water color, pastels, or write a poem. Do what you want with this blank page.

My Space

People I Respect.

You probably respect some people. Think of who they are. Then answer the following questions. If you don't know anyone you respect, then skip to the next page.

How do the people you respect treat other people? _____

How do they treat you? _____

What do these people do when they are disrespected? _____

What do these people respect about you? _____

What do you do to get their respect? _____

How do you know these people respect you? _____

Respect

Teens want respect. It's one of the best feelings in the world. Feeling disrespected is a big reason why teens get angry. Circle yes or no to the following statements about respect.

• <i>Respect means having friends who admire me.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>It's foolish to want respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Respect means recognition for the things you can do.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Everyone wants respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>When I'm disrespected, I get mad.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>I get back at people who disrespect me.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>The bigger the bit of drugs I can take the more I'm respected.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Real men get respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Most teens get angry when they are not respected.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>When I'm disrespected, I feel ashamed.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>When I'm disrespected, I feel like I'm no good.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Teens who have nice clothes, fancy cars, and drugs are respected.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>I'd give up a whole lot to get respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Having a wad of cash gets respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Self-respect is not important.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>People won't respect me if I don't have nice clothes, fancy cars, and drugs.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Respect is so important to me that I let other people use me.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Real women get respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Being good at sex gets respect.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>I will do anything to get the respect of some people.</i>	Yes	No
• <i>Making people afraid of me gets me respect.</i>	Yes	No

5

What Do You Do When You are Angry?



What do you do when you get mad? What do you do when you are sad? What do you do when you are hurt? What do you do when you are feeling all three—sad, mad, and hurt? Here are some things teens do. Put a check mark beside the things you do.

- ☐ You think you're no good.
- ☐ You feel like a fool.
- ☐ You smoke weed.
- ☐ You set fires.
- ☐ You don't talk.
- ☐ You draw pictures.
- ☐ You pick on other people.
- ☐ You listen to music.
- ☐ You hurt animals.
- ☐ You steal.
- ☐ You pretend everything is okay.
- ☐ You stay away from other people.
- ☐ You read a book or magazine.
- ☐ You destroy other people's property.
- ☐ You think about hurting other people.
- ☐ You think about hurting yourself.
- ☐ You do something nice for someone else.
- ☐ You look for someone who respects you.
- ☐ You feel you are watching yourself from far away.
- ☐ You get back at the people who made you feel bad.
- ☐ You look for someone to beat up.
- ☐ You look for someone to rob.



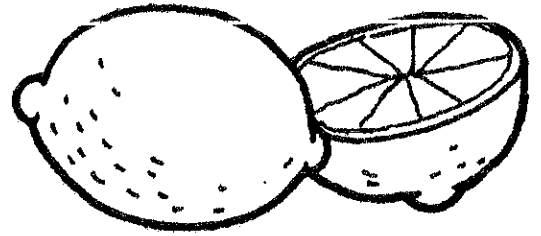
- ☐ You talk to someone about your being mad, sad, and hurt.
 - ☐ You drive very fast in a car.
 - ☐ You drink beer, wine, or liquor.
 - ☐ You think about getting back at the person who made you angry.
 - ☐ You sniff glue, gasoline, or other things.
 - ☐ You write down the things that make me angry.
 - ☐ You take drugs.
 - ☐ You think about running away.
 - ☐ You run away.
 - ☐ You work hard at something, like school work.
 - ☐ You dream about a better life.
 - ☐ You do sexual things to myself.
 - ☐ You do sexual things to others.
 - ☐ You eat a lot of food.
 - ☐ You throw up after you eat a lot of food.
 - ☐ You tatoo yourself or ask someone to tatoo you.
 - ☐ You cut yourself.
 - ☐ You watch yourself bleed after cutting yourself.
 - ☐ You do things to make other people mad at you.
 - ☐ You refuse to do what other people tell you to do. Like teachers who want me to do homework or parents who want you to come in at night.
-

How many items did you check? _____

There's nothing wrong with being upset and mad. You have reasons to be angry when bad things happen, like if you hardly see your father or mother, if you're not welcome in some neighborhoods, if someone you loves dies, if you feel disrespected, if you feel you don't belong anywhere, if you have been sexually abused, and if no one cares what you want. **What's important is what you do when you are angry and upset.**

6

Anger is Like a Sour Lemon Taste



For lots of teens, anger is like a sour lemon taste in your mouth. If you don't do something that helps anger go away, anger grows stronger and more bitter.

- Then it becomes like a great big lemon growing inside you. It gets so huge you feel as if you are going to explode.
- It's like someone squirts lemon juice in your eyes and you can't see.
- It's like someone stuffs a lemon in your mouth and the seeds go up your nose. You can't breathe.
- It's like someone straps a huge basket of lemons on your back and you feel as if your back is going to break. You do everything you can to get that heavy burden off your back. You can't.
- Anger can be sour. It can hurt. It can make you feel helpless. It can make you feel desperate.
- When you're angry, you can think you are a bad kid. You may think other people are laughing at you.
- When you're angry, you may think about getting back at other people. This is called revenge.

Doing Things to Make You Feel Better

People who are angry do things to make themselves feel better. Some of these things help the anger go away. Some of these things make the anger grow.

How do you feel when you are angry? Complete the sentences below.

When I'm angry, I think about _____

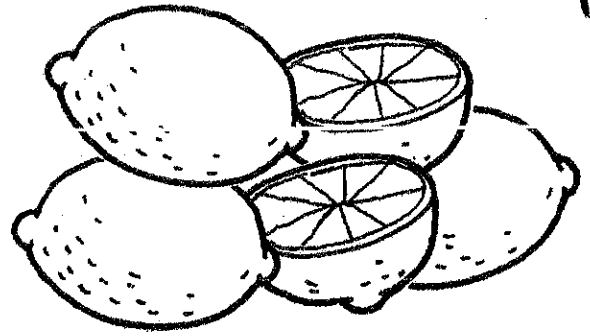
When I'm angry, I want to _____

When I'm angry, I think I'm a _____

When I'm angry, I feel like _____

7

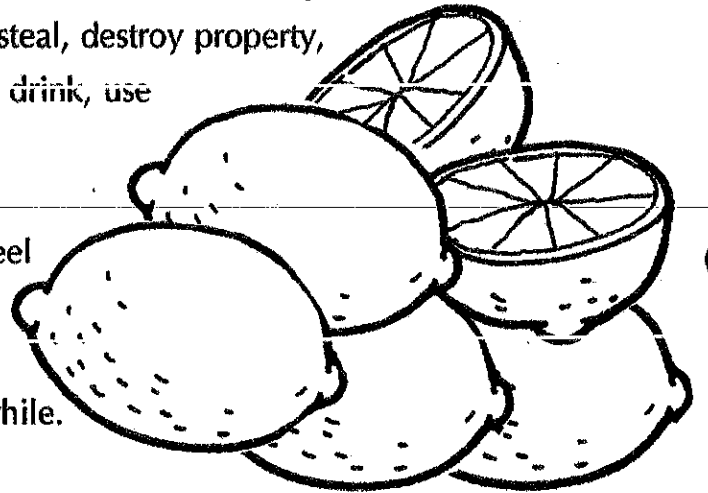
Feeling Better... for a Little While



Teens do lots of things to make themselves feel better. Sometimes these things hurt other people and themselves. These things help teens feel better for a little while. Before you know it, the teens feel bad all over again.

Teens may pick on other people, steal, destroy property, fight with other kids, run away, set fires, drink, use drugs, do sexual things, eat too much, and cut themselves.

And you know what? Teens do feel better when they do these things...for a little while. Some teens feel terrific when they do these things...for a little while.



Good Feelings that Turn Bad

These good feelings don't last. In a little while, you start feeling bad again. Sometimes you are ashamed of what you did. Sometimes you feel guilty for what you did. You think about the people you hurt. You're sorry you hurt other people.

Did you ever feel sorry for hurting other people?

Yes No

The Endless Circle

Sometimes, you feel so bad about what you did, you want to feel better. So, once again you do things that make you feel better for a little while. Once again you do things that hurt yourself or other people. Then you feel bad because of what you've done to feel better.

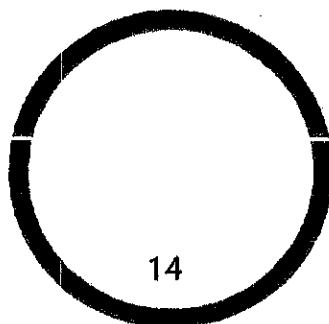
Does it make any sense to feel bad after you've done something to feel better? Yes No

It gets to be like a big circle. You feel bad. You feel desperate. You want to feel better.

It's like the hamster in the wire wheel. Around and around you go. You can't jump off the wire wheel.

You're stuck, like a car stuck in sand. The wheels go around and around, but the car doesn't go anywhere. The sand flies right in your face, and you can't get out of the way.

- *Have you ever felt like a hamster in a wire wheel?* Yes No
 - *Have you ever felt like a car stuck in sand?* Yes No
-



8

Making Lemonade



You know what? You can make lemonade out of the lemons of anger. Think of how lemonade tastes on a hot day. Your throat is dry and maybe even a little sore. You bring the glass to your mouth. The flecks of lemon slide over your tongue. The lemonade fills your mouth and slides down your throat. You finish the lemonade and say, "Ah. It tastes so good to me."



There are things you can do that will make lemonade out of the lemons of anger. These things won't make you feel ashamed or guilty afterward. You won't get in trouble if you do them. You will feel proud of yourself. Some people may think you're a wimp, but many others will respect you. The sour lemon taste of anger will turn to the sweet taste of doing something good. You will feel good about being you, maybe not at first, but after a while you will.

When you do them, you won't hurt other people. You will not hurt yourself. When you do them, the good feelings will last and last and last.

You may even feel proud that you did them. Other people will be proud of you. You will make lemonade out of the lemons of anger.

Making lemonade out of lemons can be hard work. At first, it might not seem like fun. Keep at it. You will be rewarded!



It's important to want to.



☺ **Throw a rubber ball against the garage.** Find a rubber ball or tennis balls and throw them as hard as you can against the side of the garage. Make sure there's no one around whom you could hit. Pretend the person you're angry at is there. Yell at the person every time you throw the ball.

Maybe you could tack a target on the wall. See how many times you hit the bull's eye. Pretty soon you will have a good throwing arm for baseball.

Pretty soon you will have a good throwing arm for baseball.

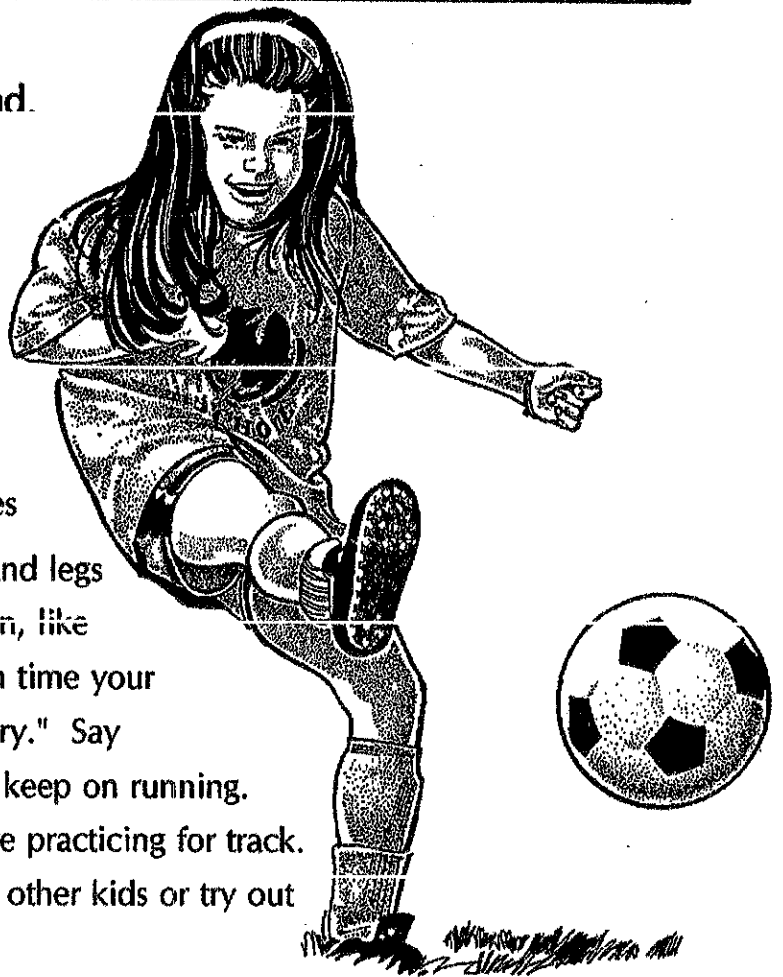
☺ **Kick a soccer ball around.**

Take your a soccer ball. Go a field or a park. Kick that soccer ball as hard and as far as you want. Yell as loud as you want about how angry you are. You also might get pretty good at soccer.

☺ **Run.** Put your running shoes on and run. Run until your chest and legs ache. Run wherever it's okay to run, like sidewalks and the playground. Each time your foot hits the ground, say, "I am angry." Say whatever else you want to say, but keep on running.

Other teens will think you are practicing for track. Pretty soon you might want to race other kids or try out for the track team.

☺ **Jump rope 100 times without stopping.** Pretend you are working out to get on the basketball team. Each time you jump up and down, you are building your calf and thigh muscles. If anyone makes a joke of what you are doing, say, "Try it. You'll like it."



☺ **Dig holes in the backyard.** Ask your parents where in the back yard you can dig. Using a shovel, dig as many holes as you want.

Dig as deep as you want. When you are finished, shovel the dirt back into the holes. Start all over again. You may end up with a freshly dug garden.

☺ **Plant seeds in your new garden.** Water them.

Watch them grow. If you planted flower seeds, give your flowers away. If you planted vegetables, give them to other people, too.



☺ **Listen to music.** Find music that helps you think of the good things about your life. Some songs are funny. Sometimes they talk about things that are fun to do, like swinging on swings, walking in the woods, playing with other teens. Find that kind of music and get your mind off what is making you angry.

☺ **Dance to music.** Sometimes dancing to music will help you think about happier things. Move around. Shake your body. Move your hands and feet to the music.

"I'm a good person who sometimes makes mistakes."

☺ **Substitute good thoughts for bad.** Whenever you start thinking things like "I'm bad" substitute, "I'm a good person who sometimes makes mistakes."

☺ **Ask questions.** If you think you are a bad person because of what someone else has done to you, find someone to talk to about this. Other questions you might ask are, "Is this person telling me something true about myself?" "Do other people think it's true?" These are hard questions to ask, but it's important for you to ask them.

☺ **Think consequences.** Something might seem like a good idea at the time. Think of the good things and the bad things that could happen if you do what you want to do. Don't fool yourself. If what you do hurts yourself or other people, this is not a good consequence.

Think consequences.

Consequences is a hard word. Choose the correct *word* to complete the sentences below. Doing this will show you what **consequences** means.

1. Mea took Mario's bat. Mario felt like crying when he found his bat was gone. The consequence of taking the bat was **Mario** felt _____.

sad glad

2. Mea was proud of the bat at first. When she found out that Mario felt sad about losing his bat, Mea felt guilty. The consequences for **Mea** of taking the bat was first _____ and then _____.

pride shame happiness guilt

3. Mea returned the bat. She said to Mario, "I'm sorry I took the bat." Mario said, "I'm mad at you for taking the bat, but I'm glad you gave it back." Mea felt good about returning the bat, but sad that Mario was mad. She hoped Mario would forgive her. Mario did forgive Mea after Mea never again stole other people's things. The consequence for **Mea** of giving the bat back was Mario _____.

never forgave her forgave her

What are consequences? _____

☺ **Think whatever you want.** Thinking is the greatest thing. No one can stop you from thinking. Don't let anyone else tell you what to think. Make up your own mind. It's a free county. Think whatever you want.

You might not always want to say what you think because it could get you in trouble with your parents or teachers or you might get into a fight with other teens. Feel free to think whatever you want, but you are not free to hurt yourself or other people. Talking to wise elders helps to decide what you think.

☺ **Write in a diary.** The diary is a place for your special thoughts. When you're feeling angry, you could write your thoughts down in words, you could draw pictures that show how you feel, or you could cut out pictures from magazines and paste them in your diary.

You could tell stories in pictures or in words or both. Sometimes you might want to write in your diary when you are not angry but are feeling good.

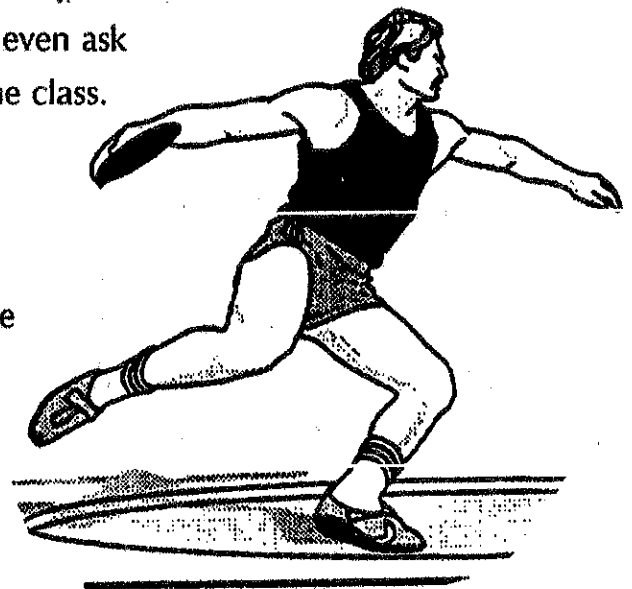
☺ **Read a joke book.** Go to the library and ask the librarian where the joke books are. Read the jokes alone or with a friend, whatever you want. Read them out loud to yourself if you want to.

Laugh as loud as you want. You might even ask your teacher if you could tell a few jokes to the class. Other books that are not joke books can be a lot of fun to read, too.

☺ **Dream about the future.** What do you want out of life? Do you know anyone who has the kind of life you want? How did that person get that kind of life?

Can you do anything to get that kind of life for yourself? Who can you talk to about getting the life you want?

Can you give up something now to get the kind of life you want in the future?



☺ **Remember: Good things come to those who wait.** This old saying is true for a lot of people. Sometimes you have to work very hard to get what you want. Sometimes you have to give up things you want now to get what you want in the future.

Sometimes you have to ask other people for advice. Some people read books to find out how to get what they want. Some people listen to the stories old folks tell. You can learn a lot from wise old folks.

☺ **Have a pretend conversation**
with someone who isn't there. It could be your father. Or your mother. Or your favorite aunt who died.

Find a picture of that person. If you don't have a picture, you could draw one. Then, pretend the picture is the person. Talk to the picture. Maybe you want to tell the person something that makes you angry. You might want to tell a funny story.



You might want to pretend you are the person you want to talk to. It could be like a game that goes like this. First, move two chairs to face each other. Dining room or kitchen chairs work well. Then, sit in one chair and be yourself. Talk as if the other person is sitting in the other chair.

After you have said what you want to say, sit in the other chair. Pretend you are the person you just talked to. Give an answer to whatever you just said as if you are now that person. Then, you can switch back to the other chair and be yourself again and say something back. Keep doing this until you want to stop.

Be on the lookout for someone you can talk to.

☺ **Find a friend to be with.** Sometimes when you're feeling angry, just being with people you like can help you feel better. Visit them, or call them on the phone. You might tell them about your anger or you could ask them how their day is going.

☺ **Talk to someone you trust.** Be on the lookout for someone you can talk to. Some teens watch another person for a long time before they decide they can trust this person.

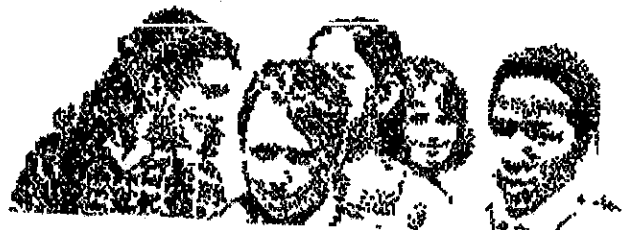


How do you know when you can trust another person? That is a hard question.

There are lots of adults who like teens and want to help them out.

People you can trust are nice to other people. They don't make fun of other people. You feel good when you are around them. They don't ask you to do things that could get you in trouble. They don't try to trick you. They don't trick others.

Who are the friends you can talk to? Write their names here.



Living well is the best revenge.

☺ **Stand up for yourself.** Sometimes people who are hurting you will stop if you tell them to. You might have to practice with someone else about what to say, someone you trust. You could say to the person who is hurting you, "I don't like what you do. I want you to stop."

If the person doesn't stop, never believe there is something wrong with you. The behavior of the person who is hurting you is wrong. Find someone to talk to about the person who is hurting you. Don't keep it a secret. You have nothing to be ashamed of.

☺ **Write a play, a poem, or make up stories about respect.** What does it mean to be respected? Can you think of ways to show what respect is? Can you think of ways to show what respect isn't? There are many kinds of respect and disrespect. Maybe your play, or poem, or stories could show three or four different kinds of respect and disrespect. If you want you can draw pictures about respect and disrespect.

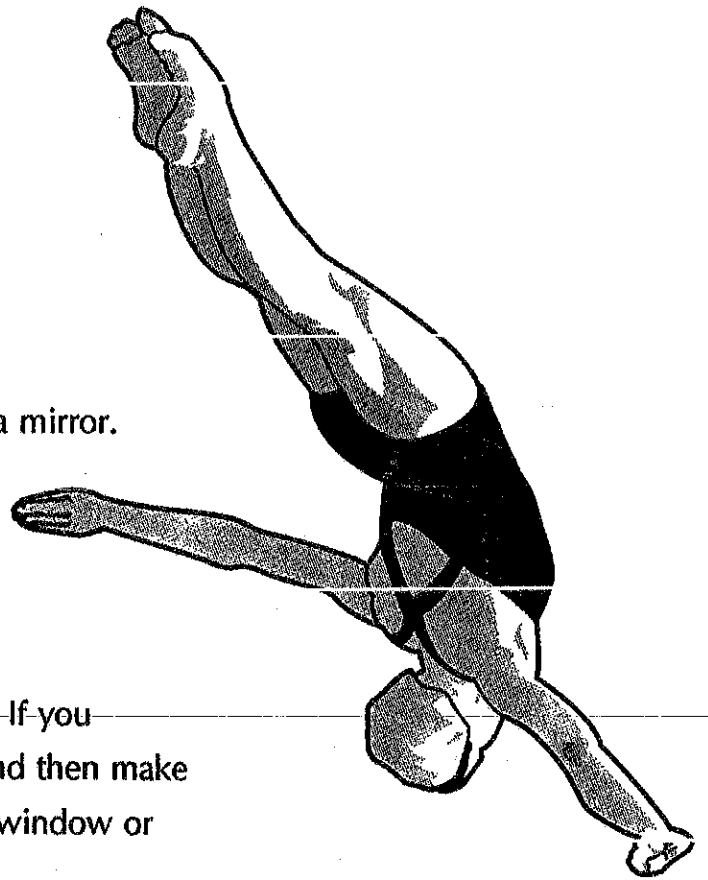
☺ **Learn about your cultural heritage.** Do people disrespect you because of your cultural heritage? Living well is the best revenge. You can find out about your cultural heritage. You can join groups that celebrate your culture. You can get books out of the library and read. You can earn enough money to travel to the places your family came from. You can find out firsthand that there is much to respect about your own cultural heritage.

☺ **Do something for someone else.** No matter how mad or sad you feel, there are other people who appreciate you when you do something nice for them. How about raking the yard without being asked? What other nice things can you do for other people?

Can you find a friend or two to plan a project that will help the whole neighborhood? How about cleaning up the park? Or watching over little kids in the playground? What about volunteering at the Boys' and Girls' Club for special events?

☺ **Apologize.** If you have hurt someone, tell this person, "I am sorry I hurt you. I hope you can accept my apology. If you can't, I will understand." Talk to friends and adults about how to apologize. You could practice apologizing with other people or by yourself in front of a mirror.

☺ **Make restitution.** This means to make up for something you've done that hurt someone else. Maybe you've broken someone else's toy. To make restitution, you would buy a new one. If you broke someone's window, apologize and then make up for it. You could pay for fixing the window or do errands or chores.



Learn to do something really well.

☺ **Learn to do something really well.** When you are angry, do something you like. It doesn't matter what it is as long as it doesn't hurt you or other people. Practice a lot so you can do it really well.

Maybe it's playing the guitar or shooting hoops. Or diving. Maybe you like math. Other teens like to read.

You might find other teens who like what you like. Soon, you will have new friends.

☺ Say, "I am hurt by what you did." It's great

to tell persons who have hurt you, "I am hurt by what you did." It would then be wonderful if these persons would say to you they're sorry, that they never meant to hurt you, and they will do all they can to make restitution. It would be great if they could say they did not think consequences and that they especially did not think about the consequences for you.

Wouldn't it take away a lot of your anger if they said, "I hope you can forgive me." Finally, wouldn't it be great if they made up for hurting you by consistently thinking of the consequences for you from then on?

Sometimes this is possible. Teens who have experienced severe adversities benefit enormously when they can speak directly to the persons who have hurt them. Teens need the help of other people to do this. Sometimes teens and other family members work with professionals to reach the point where the teens can speak directly to adults and other teens about angry thoughts and feelings.

Unfortunately, for many teens, the persons who have hurt them are no longer available. They could have died or for many other reasons are not part of the teens' lives. Perhaps they have a serious mental illness or are chemically dependent. Some teens risk verbal and physical abuse if they try to talk to persons who have hurt them. There are many reasons why teens might not have opportunities to express their feelings directly to the persons whose behaviors have hurt them.

With guidance from adults, the exercises in this book can help most teens learn to express their anger appropriately and directly. Anger is a powerful force that can lead teens to bring about positive change for themselves and others.



Lemons or Lemonade?

Anger can be as sour and bitter as lemons or you can turn lemons into lemonade. Anger can give you a lot of energy. You can use that energy to feel better in ways that seem to make you feel better but only make you feel worse.

You will know you're doing the right thing when what you do makes you feel better, does not hurt you, and does not hurt others.

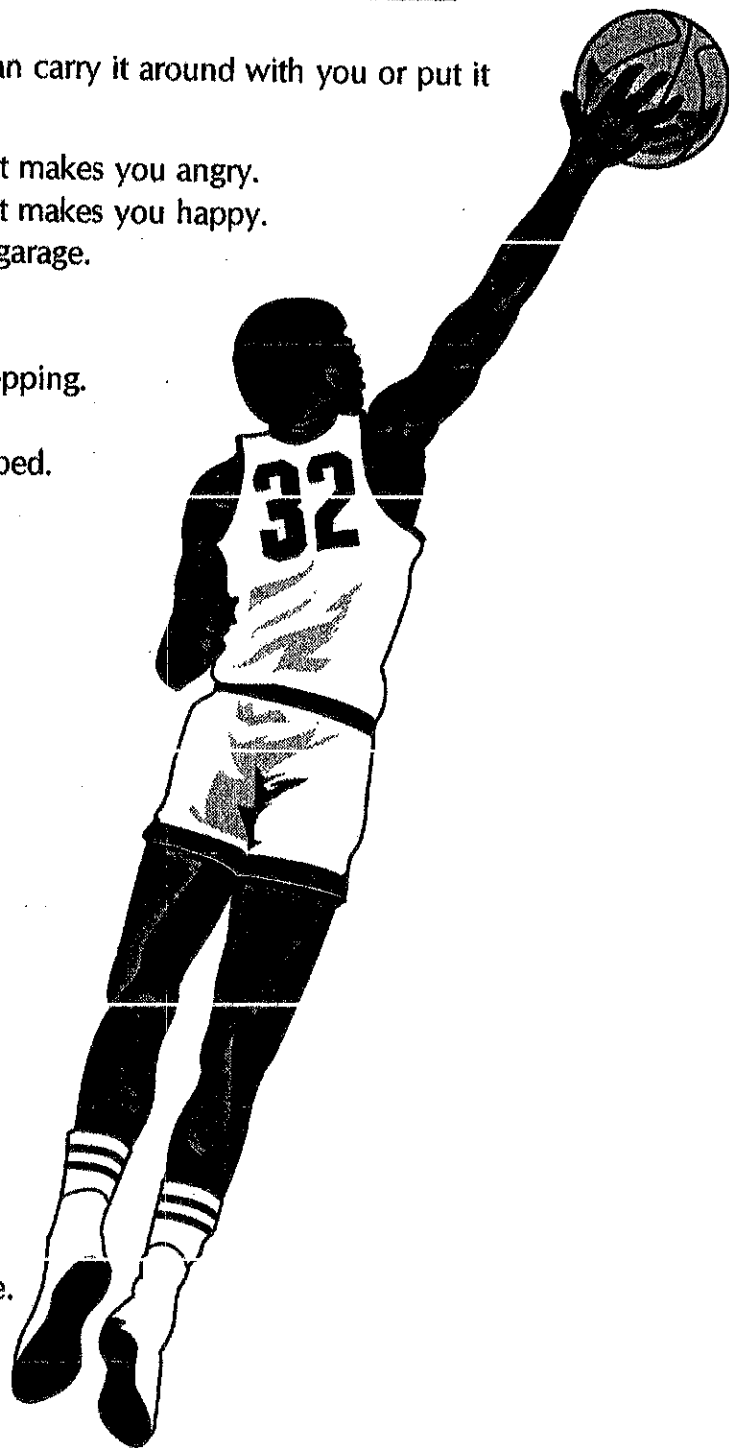
Remember, there's nothing wrong with wanting to feel better when you are angry. In fact, it's important to help yourself feel better when you are angry. It is wrong to feel better by hurting others or yourself. Using anger the right way will help you get many of things you want. It will also help you make friends and get along with other people.

Best of all, anger can help you make things better for other people. Think of the bad things that have happened to you. Did big kids beat you up when you were little? Now that you are big, you can get involved in harassment prevention programs in school or at neighborhood centers. Did you want someone to talk to when you were little? Now that you are big, you can be that person for another little kid. Is there violence in your neighborhood? Did you lose someone you loved to violence? Now that you are older, you can do something about it. You can join community demonstrations against violence. You can participate in peace programs. It's up to you. Lemons or Lemonade?

The Making Lemonade Checklist

This checklist is for you. You can carry it around with you or put it on your wall. It might come in handy.

- ☺ Draw a picture of something that makes you angry.
- ☺ Draw a picture of something that makes you happy.
- ☺ Throw a rubber ball against the garage.
- ☺ Kick a soccer ball around.
- ☺ Run.
- ☺ Jump rope 100 times without stopping.
- ☺ Dig holes in the backyard.
- ☺ Plant seeds in your new garden bed.
- ☺ Listen to music.
- ☺ Dance to music.
- ☺ Substitute good thoughts for bad.
- ☺ Ask questions.
- ☺ Think consequences.
- ☺ Think whatever you want.
- ☺ Write in a diary.
- ☺ Read a joke book.
- ☺ Dream about the future.
- ☺ Remember: Good things come to those who wait.
- ☺ Have a pretend conversation with someone who isn't there.
- ☺ Find a friend to be with.
- ☺ Talk to someone you trust.
- ☺ Stand up for yourself.
- ☺ Write a play, a poem, or make up stories about respect.
- ☺ Learn about your cultural heritage.
- ☺ Do something for someone else.
- ☺ Apologize.
- ☺ Make restitution.
- ☺ Learn to do something really well.
- ☺ Say, "I am hurt by what you did."



From Lemons or Lemonade? An Anger Workbook for Teens
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Doing Something Really Well

