

Dealing with Anger & Frustration

We all have days on the job when events, or simply our state of mind, cause us to feel angry or frustrated. Here are a few tips for dealing with those negative emotions.

- **Take three deep breaths.** Breath control is a great way of dealing with many problems from anger and frustration to actual pain. Breathe in through your nose for a count of ten, pushing the air down deep into your diaphragm, hold for a count of three, then release slowly through your nose for another count of ten.
- **Take a short walk.** Go outside and walk, or walk through the hallways and up and down a set of stairs—whatever is available to you. The change of scene will help and the exercise will calm you.
- **Step into the other person's shoes.** If it is a person who is frustrating you or making you angry, try to visualize what problems that person may be dealing with that caused them to step on your toes. Then forgive them.
- **Work pro-actively to prevent anger & frustration.** I think a quote used as a signature quote by Jan Moore, the librarian at Hillsboro High School in Hillsboro, TX best expresses this technique: "God grant me the serenity to delegate tasks when appropriate, the courage to say no, and the wisdom to know when to go home."
- **Know why you are angry.** Try to be aware of the types of situations that trigger your anger. Anger can be a way of dealing with deep fears of success, criticism or some other buried "treasure."
- **Be assertive rather than aggressive when expressing your anger.** You are a professional and can deal with concerns in a constructive way. Show that professionalism when discussing anger with friends or with the person who has made you angry.
- **Use visualization or "mantras" to remove yourself from your anger.** Visualize yourself in a "happy place," whatever that may be for you. I like to think of a beautiful garden with a stream running through it. Or use a mantra such as "I will be gentle with myself, I will love myself, I am a child of the universe being born each moment" (This mantra is actually a song from the CD *Fire Within* by Libana. Listening to the music can be a great way to fix the mantra in your mind.)
- **Let go of what is beyond your control.** The only one who can actually make you feel angry or frustrated is you. And you are the only one who can let go of those emotions. If you can't change it, don't let it make you make yourself miserable.
- **Brainstorm solutions to the problem.** If there is a situation that is constantly frustrating and angering you, try to think of a professional and constructive way you can deal with it.