The Cycle of Anger

**Event Trigger** An event or situation “triggers a person’s anger.

**Negative Thoughts** Negative and irrational thoughts result from the event trigger.

**Emotional Response** Negative thoughts lead to negative emotions, such as anger and frustration.

**Physical Response** The body responds automatically to anger, with several symptoms, such as pounding heart.

**Behavioral Response** The person reacts based upon thoughts, feelings, and physical symptoms.
## Connecting Emotions, Thoughts, and Actions

When you face a tough situation, try this strategy for understanding your emotions and thinking them through.

1. **Feel the emotion.** Emotional states are strong but fleeting. An emotion may last only about 90 seconds, and then passes naturally (unless it is triggered again through thinking).

2. **Notice your thoughts in relation to your emotions.** I felt *that* and I thought *this*. Break thoughts and emotions apart into steps.

3. **Apply reason.** Write a few thoughts down. For each thought, consider: Is this thought true? Is it helpful? Is it necessary to think about this now?

4. **Expand your thinking.** Imagine another way of viewing the situation, a different, more helpful thought.

5. **Notice the outcome.** Be aware of your emotions might have changed.

6. **Act positively.** Choose actions in a way that will make the situation better rather than making it worse.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What?</th>
<th>What is the connection among emotions, thoughts, and actions? What have you learned about your own cycles of emotions?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>So What?</td>
<td>Why is it important to be able to manage anger? In a difficult situation, how can you change how you think about or view a situation?</td>
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<tr>
<td>Now What?</td>
<td>What positive actions can you take using this new awareness of emotions and thoughts?</td>
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