

# Victims of Anger Abuse and Trauma Effects

Sticks and Stones may break bones but words will harm as well!!!!

# Anger and hateful words are verbal abuse at it's worst!

- ▶ Judging, cruel and hateful words leave long lasting emotional cuts, bruises and scars on a persons soul
- ▶ When someone hurts us with hateful words we play that tape over and over and the rumination creates a growing pressure cooker within us of negative thoughts and emotions which grows and grows into a harmful result
- ▶ Emotions guide us in facing predicaments and tasks too important to leave to intellect alone - danger, painful loss, persisting toward a goal despite frustrations, bonding with a mate, building a family, etc.
- ▶ Each emotion offers a distinctive readiness to act, each points us in a direction that has worked well to handle the recurring challenges of human life (The Human Brain)

# ANGER IS A POWERFUL EMOTION

- ▶ If anger isn't handled appropriately, it may have destructive results
- ▶ Uncontrolled anger can lead to arguments, physical fights, physical abuse, emotional abuse, psychological abuse, assault and self harm
- ▶ Well handled anger can be a useful emotion that motivates for positive change
- ▶ Words can and do hurt - a lot!!
- ▶ Anger attacks can wound, destroy, ruin and kill

# WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

- ▶ All emotions are, in essence, impulses to act, the instant plans for handling life that has been instilled in us.
- ▶ The very root of the word “emotion” is *Motere*, Latin “to move,” plus the prefix “e” to connote, “move away,” suggestion that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion.
- ▶ Each emotion plays a role in our lives and helps us to “move” to something or away from something.
- ▶ Emotions have biological identifiers as well. With anger there is a surge of blood which flows through our body to our hands, heart, increasing our hormones - adrenaline - an energy.
- ▶ The mind/body or “head and heart” (emotional and rational) operate in tight harmony for the most part in our bodies and balance emotional and rational thoughts. They are meant to work together for maximum effect but anger breaks that harmony.

# LeDoux

- ▶ LeDoux stated that life's earliest years lay down a set of emotional lessons based on the interactions between infant and caregiver, creating wordless blueprints for emotional life as one grows. (Science, How Scary Things Get That Way, 1992).
- ▶ Neuroscientists use the facts when anger takes over and we just “can't think straight” - the emotional brain controls rage and compassion. But the prefrontal cortex is the brain region responsible for working memory. But circuits from the limbic brain to the prefrontal cortex mean that the signals of strong emotion - anxiety, anger, and so on can create neural static, sabotaging the ability of the emotional brain to maintain working memory.
- ▶ Continual emotional distress can create deficits in a child's intellectual abilities, crippling their capacity to learn.

# Problems anger causes in children cont.

- ▶ IQ testing shows a child's continual agitation and impulsivity increases
- ▶ Primary school boys who had above average IQ scores were not doing well in school and found via neuropsychological testing to have impaired frontal cortex functioning (Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 1999)
- ▶ Increase impulsivity, anxiousness, often disruptive and troublesome behaviors are shown - suggesting faulty prefrontal control over their limbic urges
- ▶ Children exposed to verbal abuse and anger are at a high risk for problems like academic failure, alcoholism, criminal behavior - not because their intellect is deficient, but because their control over emotional life has been impaired
- ▶ The emotional brain controls rage and compassion and our emotional circuits are sculpted by experience through childhood - and the parents love and compassion for their children helps determine that experience

# EFFECTS OF ANGER ON FAMILIES

- ▶ Family ties are one of the strongest contributors to individual character development
- ▶ When anger is part of a family's tradition, it spreads itself much like a virus to future generations. Angry people come from angry families. The wider the spread, the more difficult the anger is to contain
- ▶ The effects of anger on families is usually apparent in the way that members relate with one another. Our earliest communicating and relating to others occurs within the family
- ▶ Patterns of anger in relationships are then taken and recreated in later relationships outside the family.
- ▶ A committed, well designed treatment plan can repair the damage of having been raised in an angry family system

# ANGER IN RELATIONSHIPS

- ▶ Anger is one of the most common negative patterns in relationships
- ▶ Some couples report that it is their anger that makes the relationship feel alive
- ▶ Anger takes root in insecure relationships where open communication is absent and the emotion of love is buried beneath years of resentment
- ▶ These relationships typically have hopelessness in the present and doubt about the future
- ▶ Look at the Anger Triangle



# THE ANGER TRIANGLE

## ANGER BEHAVIORS

- ▶
- ▶ Justifications, controlling, blaming, entitlement, misconceptions, ruminations, negativity, jealousy, minimizing, poor communications, power imbalance in relationships, etc. The foundation of the anger triangle is where the problems in anger management begin. Our learned behaviors triggers, attitudes towards a person, situation, event, and circumstance, can cause us to move in 30 seconds or less, to an “action” fueled by anger.



# BIHARI BOX

▶ The Bihari Box is another example of how anger effects others



# PHYSICAL EFFECTS OF ANGER

- ▶ Anger triggers the body's "flight or fight" response
- ▶ Emotions triggering this response include fear, excitement and anxiety
- ▶ Adrenal glands flood the body with stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline
- ▶ The brain does an "emotional" flush which over rides the amygdala's ability to send appropriate response to other areas of the brain and dumps everything into limbic system causing anger responses
- ▶ Brain shunts blood away from the gut and towards muscles, in preparation for physical exertion - heart rate, blood pressure and respiration increase
- ▶ Body temperature rises and skin perspires, teeth can clinch, etc.
- ▶ Constant flood of chemicals and associated metabolic changes that go with recurrent unmanaged anger can eventually cause harm to many different systems of the body

# Physical effects continued

- ▶ Some short term and long term health problems have been linked to unmanaged anger:
- ▶ A. Headache
- ▶ B. Digestion problems such as abdominal pain
- ▶ C. Insomnia
- ▶ D. Loss of control
- ▶ E. Pessimism
- ▶ F. Negative thinking
- ▶ G. Strong feelings of guilt
- ▶ H. Shame
- ▶ I. Remorse
- ▶ J. Self-Blame
- ▶ K. Depression
- ▶ L. Hopelessness and despair

# LONG TERM EFFECTS OF ANGER

- ▶ The long-term physical effects of uncontrolled anger include increased anxiety, high blood pressure and headache
- ▶ Anger causes problems
- ▶ Anger puts your physical wellbeing at risk
- ▶ Anger issues can further complicate pre-existing health conditions
- ▶ Anger causes others to feel put off, upset, intimidated, afraid, unloved, demeaned, “victimized” and all around negative about self and you
- ▶ Anger may risk pushing others away from you for good

# VICTIMOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY AND PSYCHOLOGY

- ▶ Victim mentality is an acquired (learned) personality trait in which a person tends to regard him/herself as a victim of negative actions of others, and to think, speak and act as if that were the case - even in the absence of clear evidence. It depends on habitual thought processes and attributions
- ▶ What victim mentality, neuroticism and psychoticism have in common is a relatively high frequency of negative emotional states such as anger, sadness, and fear.
- ▶ These three traits are also partially independent: for example a given individual may have a high degree of victim mentality and a low degree of neuroticism, in which case a clinical psychologist is unlikely to regard her/him as needing treatment. Conversely, a given individual may have a high degree of neuroticism and a low degree of victim mentality.
- ▶ Humans judge others constantly and the psychological criteria for judging others may be partially ingrained negative and rigid indicating some degree of grandiosity. Blaming provides a way of devaluing others with end result of blamer feeling superior

# VICTIMOLOGY, SOCIOLOGY, PSYCHOLOGY CONTINUED

- ▶ Off-loading blame means putting the other person down by emphasizing his/her flaws
- ▶ Victims of manipulation and abuse frequently feel responsible for causing negative feelings in the manipulator/abuser towards the and the resultant anxiety in themselves. This self-blame becomes a major feature of victim status
- ▶ The victim gets trapped into a self-image of victimization
- ▶ The psychological profile of victimization is:

# PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE OF VICTIMIZATION

- ▶ INCLUDES:
- ▶ Helplessness
- ▶ Passivity
- ▶ Learned hopelessness
- ▶ Soul trauma
- ▶ Self hatred
- ▶ “Don’t know who I am” mentality
- ▶ Hostage mentality
- ▶ Huge responsibility taking for everything
- ▶ Taking on pseudo-personality of blamer/angry person/abuser
- ▶ Use of drugs/alcohol/sex/self mutilization, etc.
- ▶ Life long fears and more



# LAUGHTER IS A GOOD ANTIDOTE AND ADDITION TO ANGER MANAGEMENT

- ▶ You know the saying “laughter is contagious?” The same holds true for other emotions. But laughter is a forgotten resource for anger management facilitators and programs that needs to be used as a tool for positive change.
- ▶ Facts on laughter will be shown on the video at this time