

ANGER: Who controls who?

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Anger is possibly the most difficult emotion for human beings to change. It is almost always based on a sense of one's 'rightness' – and who wants to give that up? Anger is not in itself a problematical emotion. In fact, anger has value when it serves as a motivator to seek change to circumstances we dislike. But it sometimes gets out of hand. It may take over a person's reasoning faculties, leading to rage, hostility and destructive behaviour.

This was Ben's experience. Ben, a self-employed plumber had experienced difficulty managing his anger since he was a child. While this had created some problems at school and at home in his younger years, now that he was married with a young family and facing the inevitable stress of getting a small business off the ground, his angry outbursts were putting his marriage to Nicola at risk. This was the trigger that led him to seek help.

What causes hostile anger?

Anger results from a combination of factors: biological, situational and psychological. We will begin with the most important aspect, then touch on the other two.

You may have noticed that you are more likely to feel angry when frustrated in some way. Frustration is a normal reaction when you fail to get something you want, or get something that you don't want. Probably all human beings are subject to frustration every day of their lives; and, mostly, people take it in their stride.

In Ben's case, though, his frustration was leading to *hostile* anger, which is anger directed at people rather than problems. Hostile anger occurs when a person fails to get what they think they *need* or *must* or *should* have. Such anger is an emotional response to a frustrated *demand* (as opposed to a frustrated *preference*).

If you ask someone with an anger problem what causes their rage, they will usually have a simple answer: 'other people cause my emotional upsets'. But this raises two questions. How can an *external* event create an *internal* reaction? And why is it that one person can be disappointed but calm in the face of a circumstance to which another, such as Ben, reacts with rage? In reality, events and circumstances alone do not cause anger. Anger results from how people *view* what happens to them). Dysfunctional anger typically arises from one's *interpretations* ('inferences') of what is happening and the self-defeating *evaluations* that follow.

Distorted perceptions

We are constantly perceiving what is going on around us and drawing interpretations, or 'inferences'. There are certain ways of inferring that result in distorted, inaccurate views of reality. Here are the most common ones:

- *Mind-reading*: you believe that you know what is going on in another person's mind; for example, you infer that someone thinks badly of you. Ben, for instance, sometimes interpreted his wife's behaviour as showing that she did not respect him (which she denied).
- *Fortune-telling*: you believe your own predictions of the future, e.g. 'If I don't get my partner under control then he/she might leave me'.
- *Overgeneralisation*: you build up something in your mind so that it becomes bigger than it really is, e.g. 'Everything is going wrong in my life'.
- *Filtering*: you see only the negatives 'there's nothing good about my life/this situation/this person/etc.'
- *Emotional reasoning*: you believe that because you *feel* angry this *proves* that someone has done wrong, e.g. 'I *know* that he/she has done something wrong – otherwise I wouldn't be angry!' A common way of thinking for many people with anger problems, Ben engaged in emotional reasoning whenever he per-

ceived that because he was angry with his children, customers or suppliers, this was proof that they were behaving badly.

Self-defeating evaluations

Misinterpretations alone are unlikely to cause any emotional response. The real cause is the *evaluations* that follow from our inferences, where we consciously or subconsciously rate or evaluate those inferences. There are four ways that human beings typically evaluate their experiences that create emotional disturbance and dysfunctional behaviour:

1. *Demanding*. We all have expectations about how we want the world and the people in it to be. Hostile anger results when our preferences are escalated into *demands*. Demanding comes in two flavours: (a) *moralising* about how people 'should' or 'should not' behave; and (b) *musturbation*: believing that the world or one's circumstances 'have' to or 'need' to be a certain way.
2. *Cant-stand-it-it-is*. Demands directed outward typically lead to *low-frustration tolerance* or *discomfort-intolerance* where events and circumstances are viewed as 'unbearable', 'intolerable' or 'un-stand-able'.
3. *Awfulising* refers to evaluating an event or circumstance as the 'worst that could happen'. Anger frequently results from anxiety, and violence often represents an attempt to ward off perceived threats. Such threats may be of two types (1) perceived threats to well-being (discomfort anxiety); and perceived threats to self-image (self-image of 'ego' anxiety).
4. *People rating* refers to the practice of globally evaluating people, for example labelling a person as a 'bitch', 'bastard', or in some other all-encompassing way that makes it easier to be angry with them.

Demanding may be the key type of evaluative thinking, with the other three types deriving from it. For example, we only think something is 'awful' or 'unbearable' because we demand that it not happen; or we evaluate ourselves as 'failures' only because we demand that we always succeed and never fail at anything important.

Ben, unfortunately, had grown up with a tendency to view the world around him – and himself – in terms of rigid demands. He was highly moralistic, with et ideas about how people should behave. Although he often felt guilty for letting his anger get out of control (as he put it, 'I let myself down') he nevertheless believed that his problems were mainly the result of other people not behaving as they 'should'. When he then evaluated their actions as intolerable to him, he further fuelled his rage by defining the others as 'bad', 'stupid' and the like.

Core beliefs

Underlying our surface thinking or 'automatic thoughts' are a set of assumptions and rules about the world: 'core beliefs' that have their origin in childhood learning and are almost always held subconsciously. The inferences we draw and how we evaluate them are determined by our particular underlying beliefs. Here are some typical core beliefs that tend to be associated with anger:

1. Others must never do anything to devalue me.
2. I should be able to have the things I want, and live my life as I choose.
3. Other people must never behave in ways that frustrate or deprive me, or upset the stability of my life.
4. The only way to get people to change their behaviour is to get angry with them.
5. People should always behave in a correct and right fashion.
6. People who behave badly are bad people - and they deserve blame and punishment.
7. To be a real, genuine human being you must always let your feelings show.
8. Anger is evil and destructive.

Ben held core beliefs similar to 1, 3, 4 & 5. Number 3 provides a vivid illustration of the way in which underlying core beliefs determine what one thinks in specific situations. Holding this belief made Ben hypersensitive to anything that might be a threat to his comfort or stability, and thus more likely to, first, *misinterpret* the behaviour of others and then to *evaluate* the threat as 'awful' or 'unbearable'.

The ABC model

The way in which thinking creates anger can be illustrated with the well-known 'ABC' model developed by Psychologist Albert Ellis. Following is an example, drawn from Ben's experience.

A Activating event (experience, event or situation that started things off):

Children playing noisily, could not hear television programme.

B Beliefs (self-talk that led from 'A' to 'C'):

Underlying core beliefs:

1. I can't stand to feel frustrated.
2. Others should never do things that frustrate or upset me, and when they do, I must get them under control.

Thoughts specific to the situation (but arising out of the core beliefs):

1. I can't stand their noise.
2. They shouldn't be so noisy when I am trying to relax.
3. I have to make them behave.

C Consequence (reaction to the 'A'):

Physiological signs: Got very tense.

Emotions: Felt angry.

Behaviours: Went into lounge, shouted at children and called them abusive names.

Other causes

Although anger results primarily from thinking processes, *physiological causes* (such as tension, agitation, or ill-humour) can aggravate the emotion. If a person lacks coping skills in areas such as assertiveness, communication or problem-solving, they may tend to fall back on anger to manage what life throws at them. An effective approach to anger management will take all factors into account.

How to take charge of your anger

Anger results from a combination of factors: biological, situational and psychological. Change in any of these areas can be used to reduce problematical anger, but the most useful focus of change seems to be the psychological area – in particular, modification of the thinking that creates specific episodes of anger.

Do you wish to replace hostile dysfunctional anger (directed at people) with moderate, functional anger (directed at solving problems)? This would involve raising your tolerance for frustration, through a programme like the following:

1. First, assess the problem and identify the causes that are applicable to you.
2. Introducing yourself to some new ways of viewing anger.
3. Develop some important coping techniques to help you manage both your emotions and your life problems: rethinking, controlling physical symptoms and effective communication with other people.
4. Practice of these skills via planned, graduated exposure to regulated doses of stressors that challenge but do not overwhelm your coping abilities.

Assess your anger and its causes

There are four steps for this early stage: (1) identify your motivation for change; (2) identify your personal anger patterns (your internal signs of anger and the external triggers) so you will be able to recognise anger at an early stage before it gets out of hand; and (3) identify the functions that anger may serve for you so you can deal with any factors that may hinder you from changing.

Check out your motivation for change

Do you really want to modify your anger? Do you see your anger as inappropriate? If you don't view the problem as inside yourself and believe that you need to change, then you need to deal with this before the procedures that follow will work. It is important that you come to the following conclusions:

1. My current experience of anger is not in my interests.
2. The cause of my anger is within myself, not outside.
3. If I do the work, change is within my power.

If you are already willing to change, it will still be useful to articulate why this is in your interests. List your reasons. This information will give you something to fall back on when the process of change becomes uncomfortable and you are tempted to give up.

Consider where your anger started

It is sometimes useful to understand where your learning may have come from. Ask yourself questions like the following:

- ‘How did my father / mother / siblings behave, and how did I know they were angry? Was there any violence or verbal/passive aggression?’
- ‘What messages did I get from my parents about the expression of anger - OK or not OK? How did I know it was OK or not OK?’

Don’t, though, fall into the trap of spending too much time on your past. The focus of your attention needs to be on the factors that *currently* cause your anger:

Identify the current causes

Become aware of the *activating events* that trigger your angry episodes, and the *consequences* (how you feel and behave). The purpose is for you to learn to recognise these signs at an early stage when anger is coming on, so that you can take action before your brain shuts down. A useful way to identify these signs is to keep a diary of A’s & C’s for a few weeks. Here is an example, from Ben’s experience, of such a diary:

A Activating event	C Consequence
Children noisy, couldn't hear TV programme	Got tense. Felt angry. Shouted at them and abused them.
Partner arguing about money.	Mad 7/10. Stormed off in car.

‘A’s (*Activating events*) – the persons, situations, and states that trigger anger – might include such things as perceived rejection or rule-breaking by others, arguments, alcohol use, feeling anxious (you may react to your own internal emotional states as well as to external events). You can also use the information from your diary to check out what might be the gains you get from becoming angry (e.g. it seems to release tension or frustration, or help you ‘control’ other people, and the like).

To identify the ‘C’s (the physical sensations and emotional state you experience, and how you behave) look for:

- *body signals*: you become tense and aroused, anxious, your stomach-aches, you sweat or feel unusually cold, your breathing speeds up, head aches, back aches, and so on.
- *Behaviours*: you become mean, blame others, use sarcasm or forced humour, feel depressed, withdraw, act over-nice and try to please, go quiet, become verbally or physically violent, your eating or sleeping patterns change, etc.

When you have become used to recording the ‘A’s and ‘C’s, extend the diary to include the ‘B’s – the thoughts that are activated by the ‘A’s. Remember: ‘A’ does not cause ‘C’. Events and circumstances that occur activate your thinking – the thinking then creates your emotional and behavioural reaction

A Activating event	B Beliefs / Thoughts	C Consequence
Children noisy, couldn't hear TV programme	I can't stand their noise.. They shouldn't be so noisy when I'm trying to relax. I have to make them behave.	Got tense. Felt angry. Shouted at them and abused them.
Partner arguing about money.	She shouldn't tell me what to do. She's a demanding bitch.	Mad 7/10. Stormed off in car.

How do you view anger?

Before you proceed to the next stage of your self-help programme, it may be helpful to examine a few aspects of anger so that you see what to aim for and keep your own problem with anger in perspective.

First, it is important to see that there is a difference between what you *feel* (the emotion of anger) and what you *do* (the aggressive verbal and physical actions directed at people or property); and you can *feel* angry without needing to *act* on it.

Second, anger in itself is not 'evil'. It can be destructive or constructive. Accordingly, identify and deal with any secondary disturbance about having an anger problem, especially guilt. Guilt only perpetuates anger: if you engage in guilty self-downing – 'Because I have this anger problem I am a rotten, useless bitch/bastard' – what message are you giving yourself about your ability to change? See anger in practical terms – that is, in terms of its consequences – rather than view it as a 'moral' issue; and accept yourself, while rejecting your angry *behaviour*.

Finally, it is helpful to see anger as having three different forms – passive, aggressive, and constructive:

1. *Passive* anger is hostility that is people expressed indirectly, often by omission rather than commission. Going silent, withdrawing, impatience, being late, 'forgetting' to do things, or denying sex or physical affection may be the expression of passive anger. It can lead to physical illness, relationship difficulties, and blocks a person from seeking constructive change in the things to which they react.
2. *Aggressive* hostility can create similar problems, but may also involve violence (both verbal and physical, against people and things) and sometimes dangerous risk taking (as, for example, when a person is enraged while driving).
3. *Constructive* anger is very different to the other types. It involves moderate emotions such as irritation, annoyance, dissatisfaction, displeasure and disappointment. These are still angry feelings – but will not cause people to lose their heads. Most importantly, constructive anger is directed against unwanted events and circumstances – not against people. It leads to problem-solving rather than people-harming.

Rethink your anger

The most important skill you will need to keep anger under control is to identify and change the self-defeating beliefs that create and maintain it.

Rational Self-Analysis

Extend the 'A-B-C' diary you kept earlier to include 'D' – disputing self-defeating beliefs, 'E' – developing a new emotional and behavioural goal, and 'F' – further action you will take to reinforce the new ways of thinking developed with the analysis. There is an example of a completed analysis at the end of this article.

The *daily thought record* is an alternative to the rational self-analysis format that achieves a similar purpose in a more succinct format, and is often useful if you need to identify and change irrational thinking on a regular basis:

A Activating event	B Beliefs / thoughts	C Consequence	D Disputation / rational response	E New Effect	F Further action
Children noisy, couldn't hear TV	I can't stand their noise. They shouldn't be so noisy when I'm trying to relax.	Got tense. Felt angry 8/10. Shouted at them and abused them.	I don't like their noise, but I can stand it. It's not fatal! I'd prefer them not to be so noisy, but that's how kids are – and there's no 'Law of the universe' says they should be different.	Felt annoyed but calmer	Practice relaxation technique. Apologise to kids.
Partner arguing about money.	She shouldn't tell me what to do. She's a demanding bitch.	Mad 7/10. Stormed off in car.	Why shouldn't she have an opinion on how the money is spent. She's not demanding – she's just worried about how we are going to make ends meet.	Felt concerned.	Read rational card. Negotiate a time to talk.

Whichever approach is used, self-analysis with anger problems will usually involve:

- Challenging demands directed at other people or the world, especially the idea that other people or the world ‘must’ conform to one’s expectations; or the ‘need’ to punish others or control their behaviour;
- Developing the concept of accepting people, even when their behaviour is rejected.
- Increasing frustration-tolerance by challenging catastrophising. One way to do this is with the ‘Catastrophe Scale’ (to be described shortly).

How to dispute

At the end of this article there is a list of beliefs typically involved with angry reactions, along with rational alternatives. Before you substitute a new rational alternative, though, it is important to effectively dispute and deal with the old belief. Effective disputation involves the use of three key strategies:

1. *Pragmatic* disputation - ‘How does this belief affect me?’ This dispute focuses on how *functional* or *helpful* it is to hold a particular belief. When you can clearly see that a self-defeating belief leads to negative emotional and behavioural consequences for you, you will be more motivated to change it.
2. *Empirical* disputation - ‘What is the evidence for and against this belief?’ The goal of empirical disputation is to see whether a belief is consistent with reality, or whether it is contradicted by the evidence.
3. *Logical* disputation - ‘How does it follow?’ Here you examine whether your belief logically follows from the facts, asking questions like: ‘How does it follow that because I would *like* the children to keep quiet that therefore they absolutely *must*?’ or ‘How does this thing that is *uncomfortable* become something I *can’t stand*?’

Motivating yourself: the ‘Benefits Calculation’

Given that anger is such a difficult emotion to change, how can you increase your motivation to change? A useful way to do this is with the ‘Benefits Calculation’. To complete a calculation:

1. List all the advantages and disadvantages of continuing to behave in the old angry way;
2. Do the same with the new replacement behaviour you wish to consolidate;
3. Decide how much value or benefit each item has to you, negatively or positively, then add up the pro’s and con’s.

You can either draw four boxes, or use four separate sheets of paper:

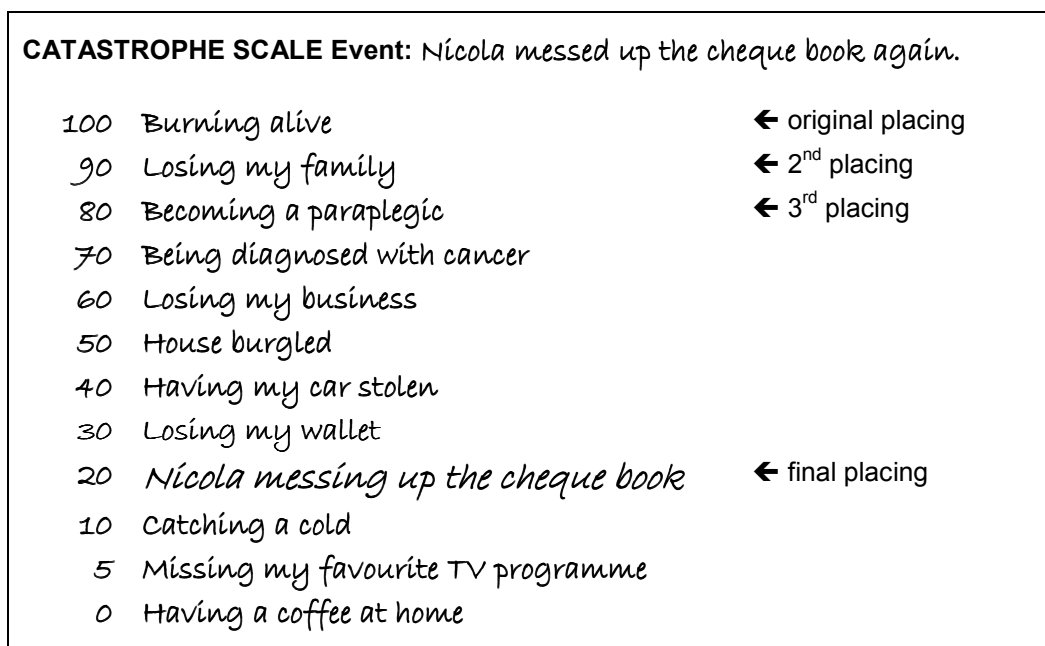
	Keep getting enraged	◀ MY OPTIONS ▶	Learn to control my anger	
Advantages	I feel superior	4	People will like me more	7
	They usually go quiet	5	Less shouting in the house.	7
	They are more careful around me	4	I won't lose the family	10
		<u>+ 13</u>		<u>+ 24</u>
Disadvantages	People dislike me.	7	Will be hard to control the urge to shout	5
	Afterwards, I don't like myself	8	It will take more time to fix problems	3
	They are only careful for while, then they go back to the old ways	6	I will miss the high I get	
		<u>- 21</u>		<u>- 12</u>
	Overall total:	- 8	Overall total:	+ 12

Note that advantages to the first option will often represent disadvantages to the second option, and vice-versa (this may seem like doubling up, but it actually aids clarification).

How to combat awfulising

A useful way to get awfulising into perspective is to complete a ‘Catastrophe Scale’, as follows:

1. On a sheet of paper draw a line down the left side. Put 100% at the top, 0% at the bottom, and 10% intervals in between. Have the client insert the event to which you are reacting at the applicable level.
2. At each level, write in something you think could legitimately be rated at that level. You might, for example, put 0% - 'Having a quiet cup of coffee at home', 20% - 'Losing my purse', 40% - being burgled, 80% - being diagnosed with cancer, 100% - being burned alive, and so on. Progressively alter the position of your 'activating event' on the scale, in relation to the other items, until you sense it is in perspective. Here is an example:



Keep the chart and add to it from time to time. Whenever you are upset about something, ascertain what 'badness-rating' you are giving it and pencil it on your chart, then see how it compares to the items already there. Soon, you will realise you have been exaggerating the badness involved, and move the item down the list until it is in perspective.

Manage the physical causes

While changing anger-causing beliefs is the priority, it will also help to reduce any tension and ill-humour that may exacerbate your anger by working on the symptoms themselves. Depending on what your assessment showed, strategies that you might pursue include:

- Relaxation training and stress management (see Froggatt, 1997).
- Anxiety management (see Froggatt 2003b).
- Moderation of alcohol use (and no alcohol at all when angry or upset). You will also benefit from reducing their caffeine intake if you drink more than five cups a day.

Physiological strategies are 'palliative' – that is, they ease the symptoms without addressing the causes – but are a useful adjunct to the your self-help armoury.

Develop additional skills as needed

Some people will need additional skills training in how to use anger adaptively rather than destructively. The idea is to learn how to minimise the dysfunctional aspects of anger, and instead engage in problem-solving behaviour.

Time out

'Time-out' is useful in the early stages of therapy, before you have learned to deal with the underlying cause of your anger. Prepares the scene by explaining to your partner what you will do and arrange their co-operation. Whenever you identify the early stages of anger, follow these steps:

1. Share with your partner that you are feeling angry, and say you are going to take time-out.
2. Leave the situation for about one hour. Avoid drinking or driving while angry, instead, do something physical (brisk walk, run, gardening, etc.), and/or do a *self-analysis* to deal with self-defeating thinking.
3. When the hour is up, return and check in with your partner and offer to talk about what happened.

Communication and assertiveness training

The aim is to change things you dislike without using anger. This involves (1) effective communication of feelings; and (2) asking for you want and saying 'no' to what you don't want. Suggestions for assertiveness are detailed in Froggatt, 1997 & 2003a.

Problem-solving training

Learn how to use task-oriented, problem-solving strategies. You will then be able to deal with problems straight away rather than bottling up your feelings. A problem-solving model is described in detail in Froggatt, 1997 & 2003a.

Practice your coping skill with controlled exposure

The final step is to apply what you have learned. What follows is a process for doing this in a graduated fashion.

Step 1: Develop a hierarchy

Start by listing anger situations you are likely to meet in real life (you have probably already done this with your 'A-C' diary). Rate the level of anger you would associate with each situation, then order the list into a 'hierarchy' according to the anger rating for each item. Here is an example of a hierarchy developed by Ben:

Anger level:	Exposure Task:
10	Talk with Nicola about our finances.
9	Video my favourite programme, then watch it while the kids are playing.
8	Go shopping with Nicola.
7	Ask Nicola's opinion on the Christian party.
6	Watch TV news.
5	Go into the lounge when I know all the kids' toys will be everywhere on the floor.
4	Talk to the guy at work who supports that new Christian political party.

Step 2: Exposure via imagery

Progressively using each hierarchy scene, expose yourself to manageable doses of the anger triggers, by vividly imagining yourself in the situation involved. Use techniques such as *Rational-Emotive Imagery* (Maultsby & Ellis, 1974; Froggatt, 1997) and *Rational Self-Analysis* (Froggatt, 1997 & 2003a) to identify and dispute the thoughts that create the anger you feel while carrying out the imagery exercise. As well, use any other coping techniques relevant to you, e.g. deep-muscle relaxation, in order to reduce any tension or other physical symptoms that may exacerbate your anger.

Step 3: Exposure in real-life situations

When you are ready, move on to real life exposure:

- Deliberately (in a planned way) confront the listed situations that would normally trigger anger.
- While engaging in the exposure, inhibit your usual response (eg. argumentativeness, defensiveness, demanding of others, etc.) and instead use the new strategies you have learned.

The purpose of exposure is to give you practice at increasing your frustration-tolerance and coping in a non-hostile way with a variety of situations, where the practice is under your control (see Froggatt 2002 for more information on the technique of controlled exposure).

Finishing your programme

Your formal self-help programme comes to an end when you are satisfied that the targets you set have been achieved to a level where you are likely to be able to maintain them in the long term. Ensure that you prepare yourself to cope with setbacks and know what to do when your angry reactions return, as they most likely will. From here on it is a matter of 'management, not cure'. If you are prepared to dust off your coping skills from time to time throughout your life, then you can look forward to a lifetime where you control your anger, not it control you.

Appendix I: A sample of anger-creating irrational beliefs

Hostile Anger Beliefs

Others must never do anything to devalue me.

I should be able to have the things I want, and live my life as I choose.

I can't stand it when people get in my way.

Other people should never behave in ways that frustrate or deprive me, or upset the stability of my existence.

If the world were a better place I wouldn't need to get upset.

If I didn't get mad then things would never change.

People should always behave in a correct and right fashion.

People who behave badly are bad people - and they deserve blame and punishment.

People only do things to frustrate me.

I wouldn't be human if I didn't lose my cool.

Anger is evil and destructive.

Constructive Anger Alternatives

The actions of others can't 'devalue' me. I don't magically change because of what others say or do

It's OK to want things my way (and to try and achieve it), but there is no law of the universe that says I *should* or *must* get what I want how I want it.

It's disappointing when people get in my way, but I can stand it - especially if I avoid demanding and catastrophising.

I'd prefer it if people didn't do things I dislike. But, in real life, they sometimes do! Anyway, it's not their actions that frustrate me - it's my own demanding thoughts.

Unfortunately, the world is not a better place. But I can avoid getting upset about this fact by changing the way I view it.

Getting mad disables me. I'm more likely to change things by keeping my head and being assertive rather than aggressive.

In real life, people don't always behave correctly. No amount of demanding is going to make this reality go away. Anyway, who decides what's right?

People are not what they do. Behaving badly doesn't make someone a bad person - it just shows they are a person who sometimes behaves badly.

Am I god, that I can see into the inner recesses of other's minds and discern their motivations?

Just because something is human doesn't make it desirable. Anyway, to be reasonable and understand someone else's viewpoint is also human.

Anger is neither good nor bad - it's just an emotion. I can choose to express it constructively rather than destructively.

Appendix II: Rational self-analysis - an example

What follows is an example of a completed rational self-analysis. Note that it is usually most effective to proceed with an analysis in the following order: A, C, B, E, D, F:

- A **Activating event** (what started things off):
Children playing noisily, could not hear television programme.
- B **Beliefs** (what I told myself about the 'A'):
Thoughts specific to the situation:
1. I can't stand their noise.
 4. They shouldn't be so noisy when I am trying to relax.
 5. I have to make them behave.
- Underlying core beliefs:*
6. I can't stand to feel frustrated.
 7. Others should never do things that frustrate or upset me; when they do, I must get them under control.
- C **Consequence** (how I felt and/or behaved):
Emotions: felt angry.
Behaviours: went into lounge, shouted at children and called them abusive names.
- E **New Effect** (how I would prefer to feel/behave):
I would prefer to feel annoyed rather than hostile; and calmly explain that I like to relax after work, and ask them to play more quietly.
- D **Disputation and new beliefs** (that will help me achieve the new Effect I want):
1. I don't like their noise, but I can stand it - it hasn't killed me yet.
 2. I would *prefer* them to play quietly when I am trying to relax, but what Law of the Universe says that they 'should'?
 3. It would be *helpful* to train them to behave, but I don't absolutely 'have' to.
 4. I dislike frustration, but I have always stood it!
 8. I would prefer others to not do things I dislike, but where is it written that they 'must' not? And, anyway, others don't frustrate me - I frustrate myself with what I think about their behaviour.
- F **Further action** (what I will do to avoid the same dysfunctional thinking and reactions in future):
1. Re-read the article on managing anger my counsellor gave me.
 2. Talk with my anger management group about better ways to communicate when people do things I dislike.
 3. Use 'time-out' for the next few months to practice increasing my tolerance for the kid's noise.
 9. Do a self-analysis when I take time-out, to chip away at my demanding rules.

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Useful resources on the internet

Introduction to Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy - <http://www.rational.org.nz/prof/docs/intro-rebt.htm>

Homework assignments in psychotherapy - <http://www.cyberpsych.com/homework.html>

New Zealand Centre for Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy - <http://www.rational.org.nz>

Raymond Novaco's page - <http://www.seweb.uci.edu/faculty/novaco/>

Did you find this article helpful? You may wish to read the book from which it has been adapted:

Taking Control: Manage stress to get the most out of life

By **Wayne Froggatt** (HarperCollins, Auckland, 2006)

For more extracts from the book, and information on how to obtain it, look on the internet at:
<http://www.rational.org.nz>

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