



## Anger Management

Volume 05

ARIZONA

### Hi Wildcats,

In the fifth installment of the *Mental Training* email series, we will discuss managing your anger. Anger can be expressed for a variety of reasons and can be directed toward a variety of sources. It is important to know that anger is the most commonly expressed emotion, especially in America. Notice: how much easier it is to tell people you are angry than it is to tell them you are hurt or scared? As a result, many people will often express anger when they are really feeling something else. Unfortunately, there is a misconception that anger is a strength where other emotions are perceived as a weakness. Rather, all emotions have healthy and unhealthy aspects to them. It is what you do with them that matters most.

### Benefits:

To begin, let's talk about the benefits of anger in sport. They are:

#### Benefits of Anger

**SOCIAL:** Acting angry generally gets a quick response (though not always the one you want)

**PHYSICAL:** Acting angry leads to a biological release of chemicals that can energize your body

**MOTIVATIONAL:** Acting angry can pump you or your teammates up

Therefore, it is OK to get angry as long as it serves a purpose without hurting others. For example, if getting angry helps a linebacker blitz the quarterback, it is good. However, more often than not anger leads to a negative outcome. For example, if that same linebacker gets so angry that he jumps off-sides or commits a personal foul, it is not going to help the team win. Further, he could become so angry that he gets into a fight resulting in an injury or ejection from the game.

### Dysfunctional Anger:

So, what is the main source of dysfunctional anger? The answer: Demandingness. You can make unproductive demands on yourself, others, and about the way the world is supposed to be. Below are examples of common unhelpful demands and some alternative ways of thinking:

#### Unhelpful Demands that Lead to Anger

#### Healthy Alternative Beliefs

Self .....	"I should never make mistakes"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Mistakes are part of the game. If the sport could be mastered, someone would have done it by now."</li> <li>• "Even Michael Jordan missed over 11,400 shots and Babe Ruth struck out 1,330 times."</li> </ul>
	"If I fail as an athlete, than I am a total failure"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Though participating in sport is an important part of my life, it doesn't define me as a whole person. It is what I love to do but not who I am."</li> </ul>

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## Unhelpful Demands that Lead to Anger

## Healthy Alternative Beliefs

..... Others .....	“They should treat me with respect”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Though I want them to treat me with respect, it doesn’t mean they have to.”</li> <li>“Getting angry about their insults only gives them what they want.”</li> </ul>
..... The World .....	“I hate it when others make mistakes that impact my life”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Getting angry about their mistakes doesn’t undo them.”</li> <li>“I can accept that they are human like me. Their mistakes are obstacles that I choose to not prevent me from achieving my goal.”</li> <li>“My anger doesn’t only punish them, it also punishes me.”</li> </ul>
..... The World .....	“The (sport) world should be a fair and just place”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“It would be nice if the world was fair but there are many examples showing how it isn’t.”</li> <li>“When I demand the world to be fair and it doesn’t oblige, my anger doesn’t change the world to be more fair.”</li> <li>“I never once saw a ref change a call after being yelled at.”</li> </ul>
..... The World .....	“I want what I want when I want it and I can’t stand being denied”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>“Who doesn’t? But, I can tolerate discomfort. This is just another form of manageable pain.”</li> </ul>

## The Outcome:

Another way of managing your anger is to stop and think about the outcome of your anger. For example, think about how much time you might spend repairing the situation after your angry outburst. If you are angry about a teammate’s mistake and yell at them, how long will it take for you to regain their trust or make apologies? Additionally, it is important to consider that getting angry does NOT lead to others respecting you. Generally, they will either hate you or fear you. Neither emotion will lead to positive team chemistry. Often, cleaning up your mess after acting angry takes much longer and is more a pain than the effort to control your anger. Other outcomes to think about are the penalties you may receive for acting angry such as suspensions from the team or having to do early morning workouts on the Stairmaster. Ask yourself: Is getting angry worth the costs?

If you would like assistance in managing your anger; if you would like to meet and discuss other benefits of sport and clinical psychology; or if you are feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, stressed out, frustrated, worried, sad, or lacking confidence, please contact Angie at 621-8805 or ask your athletic trainer to schedule an appointment. *I look forward to working with you.*

**Best Wishes,**  
**Scott Goldman, Ph.D.**  
*Sport and Clinical Psychologist  
for Student-Athletes*

To schedule an appointment, call **621-8805, 621-3334**, or ask your athletic trainer for assistance.

# BEAR DOWN