

Reducing Anger

TAKE DEEP BREATHS

Take 6-8 deep breaths or more. Deep breathing (or belly breathing) sends the signal to your brain that you are not in danger and releases calming chemicals to off set high body activation (fight or flight response).

COUNT BACK

Use counting backwards to reengage the logical thinking part of your brain. It can be 20, 19, 18...down to 11 or from 45 by 3's (45,42,39..etc) or from 100 by 7's (100, 93, 86..etc). The sequence back does not matter as long as it **can not** be done automatically; in other words as long as you have to stop and think!

CALM IMAGE

Use a calm image that you have identified and practiced. It might be a sunny tropical beach, a waterfall, a view of the mountains at dusk, a meadow surrounded by forest or a relaxing activity you enjoy. Use lots of sensory details to make the image stronger. At the beach - the warmth of the sun on your body, the sound of waves and birds, the feel of the water on your feet, a slight breeze that comes and goes across your skin (cooling then warming), the smell of wild flowers, beach grass and the ocean. Your brain thinks in picture images, not just words. A calm image can replace angry or disturbing images, helping you further calm down. You get the picture!

Use these three anger reducers and then you are ready to use constructive self talk in assessing the situation and deciding a coping behavior or social skill that will allow for a positive outcome!

