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# TAMING THE ANGER BEE

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September 2004 *Tame the Anger Bee before it poisons your health, your job, or your relationships!*

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## The 8 tools of anger control

### Tool 2—Empathy

*Jim, a 42 year old engineer was teaching his 8 year old son how to fly a radio-controlled airplane.*

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Coming in October

Tool # 3: Respond rather than react

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As the airplane was taking off, Jim instructed his son to push the control stick on the radio to the right. He did and the airplane turned right.

This was repeated several more times until the airplane turned full circle toward the son, ready to land. “Push the stick to the right, said Jim. This time, however, the plane turned left. “Push the stick left,” Jim said. Now the plane turned right, as if it suddenly had a mind of its own.

“I’m confused,” said the son. “How do I know which way to push the stick when the plane behaves differently depending on if it is flying away from me or toward me?”

“It’s simple,” said Jim. “Simply imagine you’re *in the plane* and push the stick

accordingly.” This cured the problem.

### What is Empathy?

What a great lesson in empathy — the ability to experience the world from another perspective, often the perspective of another person.

As an anonymous English author wrote: “To empathize is to see with the eyes of another, to hear with the ears of another, and to feel with the heart of another.”

### Why is Empathy Important?

The real world bottom line is that lack of empathy leads to poor communication and a failing to understand others. Lack of empathy leads to all sorts of problems in our world. Nations go to war, people are killed, couples divorce—all for a lack of empathy and understanding.

It is natural to become angry when frustrated or irritated with people who do or say things at variance with our worldview.

To manage anger, it often helps to see our anger as a combination of their behavior and our lack of empathy.

While we cannot control other’s thoughts, feelings or behaviors, we most

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**The AngerCoach™**  
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*Seek first to  
understand,  
then to be  
understood*

Stephen Covey  
Author  
*7 Habits of  
Effective People*

certainly *can increase our empathy skills.*

### Three empathy skills

To control our anger with increased empathy, three basic skills are required: *listening, self-awareness and acceptance.*

#### *Empathetic Listening—A Step Beyond*

Empathetic listening is a type of listening that goes further than ordinary listening. This type of listening uses another person's point of view to see the world as others see it. It provides a higher level of understanding of how others *feel*.

#### *Self-Awareness*

The more you understand your own thoughts and feelings, the more you can understand someone else's. The more open we are to our own feelings, the more skilled we become at reading someone else's feelings, and generally the less angry we feel toward them.

#### *Acceptance*

Acceptance, on the other hand, is the ability to see that others have a right to their "ridiculous" feelings. We must allow people to have feelings without telling them how they should feel. We cannot stop others from having feelings.

Empathetic people understand that feelings are difficult to control. When we accept others as they are, it simply means that we understand that they are doing the best that they can do at the time. Remember, if they could do any better, they probably would.

Acceptance of others' feelings is not

easy when people act differently than we do. We all have difficulty with those who are different. By learning the skill of empathy, we will be better able to understand ourselves and others.

### Five Simple Rules

1. *Pay attention to the feelings that others express.* Watch for both verbal and nonverbal clues. Try to understand the message behind the words and actions.
2. *Place the feelings in other's ahead of your own.* Put aside your own needs and ideas long enough to listen to another's point of view.
3. *Communicate your understanding.* Respond or give answers to the messages you receive to show you understand them.
4. *Do not interrupt.* Let speakers finish what they are saying before you talk.
5. *Ask for more information.* If you still don't understand, ask more questions until you fully understand.

### Free Telephone Chat

Announcing a NEW and FREE monthly one-hour telephone chat session with Dr. Tony — a great opportunity to learn how to apply the 8 tools for anger management in your life. Visit our web site, [www.angercoach.com](http://www.angercoach.com) for details.

### For more information

Join our 10-week Anger Management Classes or our 8-hour Fast-Track program in Southern California. Call 800-984-4414 (714-771-0378).



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