


Chapter 3

Addressing the Need for Anger Management in Young People: Using Positive Psychology Interventions

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ABSTRACT

Anger in young people is on the increase worldwide and effective anger treatment services are in demand. However, the lack of research on the construct of anger and little evidence-based practice makes it difficult to ascertain the best service for these angry young people. Moreover, there is a lack of extensive evidence and qualitative research in the combination of psychoeducation and positive psychology interventions in anger management programmes for young people. Therefore, this chapter will summarise a phenomenological study of an existing psychoeducational anger management programme in the UK and discuss its findings. This chapter will present anger and positive psychology in the context of developing an effective anger management programme and provide a simple anger management strategy to use as a foundation for developing anger management programmes in schools.

INTRODUCTION

In an ever-increasing society of angry individuals across the globe, and limited evidence-based practice available (Glancy & Saini, 2005), it is unclear to determine what anger management programme (AMP) would best treat all angry people

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(Glancy, & Saini, 2005). Furthermore, there has been relatively little evidence and qualitative research in the combination of psychoeducation and positive psychology interventions (PPIs) in AMPs.

More importantly, the need for suitable AMPs to improve relational interactions with each other is required (Thomas, 2001) as aggressive anger is occurring more frequently within our homes, workplaces and schools (Kassinove & Sukhodolsky, 1995). A prevalent problem of aggressive behaviour among young people within schools is on the increase (Campano & Munakata, 2004) therefore, research on discovering the best solution to preventing angry learners is imperative. For that reason, the central theme for this chapter is to address the need for suitable anger management treatments and discuss a phenomenological study on the experience and impact of Tristone Coaching's - Children's Healthy Anger Management Programme (CHAMP) in four adolescent males.

CHAMP is an existing psychoeducational AMP that consists of PPIs and has been facilitated within schools in the United Kingdom (UK) for the past three years. The programme ran for six one-hour sessions weekly and focused on teaching the participants strategies, emotional regulation and assertive communication skills that would enable them to use their anger positively and improve their self-esteem. Each session contained both psychoeducational element and a PPI relevant to that specific session. A phenomenological approach was used to examine the lived experience of the participants from a rural school in the UK and explore their interpretations of its effects on their anger. These interpretations will contribute to the solutions in developing a suitable AMP later in the chapter.

Firstly, in order to determine adequate AMPs, it is essential to develop a different perspective to anger and see its positive benefits rather than try to eliminate it. In other words, to understand what anger is, why it is needed and what treatments are effective in managing it. Therefore, this chapter will also define the concept of anger, present positive psychology, define psychoeducation and end with practical suggestions of anger management strategies for parents, teachers, counsellors and facilitators in service delivery.

ANGER IN PERSPECTIVE

There are many layers to the construct of anger (Spielberger, 1999), as well as many ways an individual can express their anger - for instance; verbally, physically, self-sabotage and suppressing. Therefore, it is difficult to define or distinguish its core characteristic and its benefit. Nevertheless, according to researchers, anger is neither healthy or unhealthy (Kashdan, Goodman, Mallard, & Dewart, 2015), it is a primary emotion (Ekman, 1992) and how it is expressed determines whether it is healthy or

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