Anger Needs Somewhere to Go



Session 08

A 60-minute adult education session about noticing anger, choosing a safe pause, and addressing the actual issue.

The work today

Identify an early signal, separate the concern from a harmful response, and practice a safe pause or clear request.

Progress is progress

A pause can be progress when it leaves room for a safer next action and the issue still gets attention.

Before you lead

Audience and scope

Adults 18+, approximately 4-10 participants. Facilitators need group skills, competence appropriate to their role, and access to safeguarding and emergency procedures. This is original recovery education, not a validated treatment, diagnosis, crisis service or substitute for individual care.

Preparation outside the hour

Read the guide and notes. Print participant pages 1-8, prepare slides, pens and a clock, and verify local support contacts. Orient new members beforehand. Explain the setting’s privacy limits; group confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Know how to offer private support.

Participation and access

Offer fiction, private writing, drawing, listening or passing. Read prompts aloud and offer a scribe with consent. No personal history, diagnosis, substance details, contact, movement, performance or completed worksheet is required. Adapt for language, disability, energy, caregiving and resources.

Topic-specific preparation

Use low-stakes fiction. Do not pair people with active conflict or rehearse insults, threats, violence or trauma. Know response procedures and how to offer private specialist support.

The 60-minute run sheet

00-05 / Welcome / slides 1-2

Participant page 1. Explain choices and offer a brief optional check-in.

05-13 / Fictional situation / slides 3-4

Participant page 2. Read the example and discuss the stated questions. Avoid a round of personal histories.

13-23 / Teaching and model / slides 5-6

Use pages 2-3 to model the practical issue and early signal. Explain a safe pause, then show Drew’s request.

23-38 / Individual work / slides 7-8

Participant pages 3-5, about five minutes per page. Read prompts and offer private help with consent.

38-50 / Rehearsal / slides 9-10

Page 6 pair or solo practice. Page 7 is a creative alternative within the same block. Two minutes setup, three minutes each role, two minutes revision, two minutes reflection.

50-57 / Actual-week step / slide 11

Revisit page 5. Add timing, access, support and a fallback. No public promise or pledge.

57-60 / Close / slide 12

Offer optional page 8 follow-up and a voluntary takeaway or pass. State actual continuing support and its limits.

Opening words

Suggested script

You can be angry and have a real point. You can also do something in that anger that leaves you with another problem. Today we are working on the space before the next sentence or action. A pause does not mean the issue disappears.

Group agreements

No acting out aggression, directing anger at a group member, breaking objects, shouting practice or demands to forgive. The facilitator interrupts unsafe behavior using setting procedures. Ask before offering advice.

Check-in

Ask: Would working with a fictional example, writing quietly, or listening fit today? Passing is welcome. Do not ask for the worst thing someone has done while angry.

Drew’s schedule change

Original fictional scenario

Drew learns that a work schedule changed after they arranged transport. Drew notices heat in their face and starts drafting a sharp message. The hours and transport problem are real. No threat or emergency is described in this fictional situation.

Questions

What is the practical problem? What signal could Drew notice? What could a pause look like without abandoning responsibilities? What could Drew ask once ready?

Facilitator stance

Anger may relate to a legitimate concern. We cannot assess the workplace or Drew’s health from a short story. Focus on a safe response and an accurate request, without promising a schedule change or employment protection.

Signal, pause, issue

Notice a signal

A body sensation, urge to send, rising volume, or thought can be a cue to check what happens next. People experience anger differently; no body map or public rating is required.

Choose a safe pause

If feasible, stop drafting, put down the phone or take a quiet break. Protect dependent care and other safety duties. A pause should not become a threat, punishment or forced silence of another person.

Return to the issue if safe

Name the specific event, its impact and a request. If direct discussion is unsafe, seek appropriate private support instead. Anger is not always a hidden emotion and does not excuse harm.

A completed example

Drew’s first step

Drew leaves the sharp message unsent and takes a brief quiet pause that fits the work situation. Drew checks the stated schedule and transport details.

A clearer request

The schedule changed after I arranged my ride. Can we review the start time and what options are available? This identifies the issue without an insult or a promise about the result.

If discussion cannot happen now

Drew asks about an appropriate time or person to contact. If obligations or job consequences are unclear, Drew seeks suitable guidance. The group does not interpret employment rights.

Lead the individual pages

Page 3 / The issue and the signal

Name the concern and an early signal without diagnosing. Do not ask for a personal violence history.

Page 4 / A pause that fits

Choose a safe pause that fits actual responsibilities and access. A quiet break or putting down the draft can be enough.

Page 5 / The next clear request

Write an accurate request and suitable time or support route. No forced return to an unsafe conversation.

Support without taking over

Ask permission before suggesting. Keep unresolved needs visible. A resource gap or an unfinished page needs curiosity and appropriate practical support, not a lecture about motivation. Participants may stay with the fictional example.

Practice without a performance

12-minute sequence

Two minutes to choose pair or solo; three minutes each role; two minutes to revise; two minutes to reflect. Partners use fiction. The creative alternative replaces this practice, not extra time.

Speaker role

Use Drew to practice a neutral pause or specific request. Do not simulate yelling or an abusive person.

Listener role

Ask what practical issue you heard and whether the request is clear. No debate about who is right, no provocation.

Solo option

Read a draft quietly, remove an insult or sweeping claim, and state the specific issue.

The message I choose not to send

Same practice block

Write or draw the practical issue and a response that leaves room to address it safely. The activity replaces pair practice.

Example

Issue: the schedule changed after transport was arranged. Next words: Can we review the start time and options?

Reflection

Did the revision keep the real concern? Does the pause protect safety and responsibilities? What needs appropriate support?

Privacy and choice

No one must show the page, read aloud, send a message, revisit a distressing memory or complete the activity. Offer the fictional example, neutral drawing, observation or a pass.

When more support is needed

Threats or immediate danger

Stop ordinary role-play and follow setting safety procedures. Offer appropriate qualified help. Do not mediate active violence or tell someone to confront an unsafe person.

Harm needs attention

A feeling does not excuse threats, intimidation, property damage or harm. If a participant reports harm or fear, respond within role, explain applicable privacy limits and offer private specialist support. Do not investigate publicly.

Scope and care

This is not violence-risk assessment, a court-approved anger program, or crisis treatment. Persistent or hard-to-manage anger and distress may need professional support. Do not change clinical plans or ask someone to relive trauma.

Close and prepare the pilot

Closing words

What could help you notice the moment before the next response? You can pass. A safer next action can matter while the concern still needs attention. Progress is progress. Mile or a Millimeter.

Voluntary feedback

Was the activity understandable? Could you find a realistic next action or question? What felt uncomfortable, inaccessible or unrealistic? Check timing and access. Do not collect sensitive personal stories for marketing or treat feedback as evidence of clinical effectiveness.

Sources and authorship

Broad background sources are listed in Sources-and-Review.md and relevant slide notes. Reviewed October 28, 2026. Original scenarios, scripts and learning sequence by Belle Morey / Progress is Progress LLC. No agency endorsement.

Release status

Author-review pilot. Belle’s review, appropriate professional review, local response and referral checks, and a suitable timing and usefulness pilot should precede commercial release. www.progresscounselingprograms.com.