Understanding Triggers Worksheet

Summary

Anger commonly manifests as a cover up for other emotions. Connecting a trigger to an underlying issue or problem is the next step in the journey to improved anger management.

Instructions

Record 5 instances when you felt angry within the last week. Next to each, critically think about whether or not your anger could have been a secondary emotion to one of the emotions listed (or not) below. We’ve filled out the first line as an example.

- Sadness
- Fear
- Embarrassment
- Insecurity
- Violation of personal rights
- Shame
- Helplessness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instance</th>
<th>Possible Underlying Emotion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I insulted my professor after she corrected me in front of the entire class.</td>
<td>Embarrassment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Next, copy the emotions you listed below into the middle of the circle below. Think about a time in your life when you felt those emotions most extreme for each and record it one of the smaller circles. If you listed an emotion more than once, try to think of multiple life events that you remember feeling the emotion strongly.
Each time you struggle understanding why something made you angry, repeat this exercise to understand the root cause of your emotions.