

Learning Process

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As a veteran, you have had to learn, and probably teach, many things throughout your life. Learning to manage your anger is similar to learning other skills: the learning process is the same. The key factors in effective learning and **EFFECTIVE CHANGE** are listed below:

Key Factors in Learning

- Personal programmability
 - We are constantly being influenced.
 - Super Bowl commercials
 - If you don't program yourself someone else will.
- Motivation: desire and willingness to learn/change - why bother?
- Expectations: expectations predict effort and outcome
- Attitude: personal responsibility; actor, not victim; problem-solving
- Effort: real effort
- Commitment
 - Repetition
- Environment
 - People, places, and things supporting change

Answer the following questions and remember your answers. You want to have thought through these questions and have the answers available to motivate you through the hard work of change.

1. Why are you bothering to change? Why bother?
2. On a scale from 0-10, how much effort are you making toward change?
3. On a scale from 0-10, how strongly do you believe you will make the behavior changes you desire?
4. How long do you think it will take you to change?

In the military, training was planned. There were training manuals to guide your planning, if necessary. Effective Learning can be achieved by including the following learning strategies into your Action Plan:

Strategies for Learning

- Regular practice over a sufficient period of time
 - Repetition (rehearsing): learning abc's
 - Duration of practice
 - Frequency of practice
- Proper technique (e.g. one supportive thought vs. "clear your mind")
- Progression
 - Start with simple tasks and move to more difficult
- Process vs. outcome orientation

- Judge yourself on whether you practice rather than on how well you did: if you practice you will improve.
- SMART goals
 - Time required for change
- Rewards
 - I only do ___ after practice
- Imagery – mental rehearsal
- Reminders
- Two Stages of anger mgmt: Begin at 1, progress to 2:
 1. Avoidance
 - Avoidance may be a good first step.
 - Timeout before responding.
 - Maybe changing the time that things are discussed will help: from evening to morning?
 - Permanent change in environment may be a valid solution.
 2. Assertiveness
 - Assertiveness method - DESC: describe behavior, express how it makes you feel, specify behavior you expect, consequences (self-care statement/solution: “if this continues I will have to ___ to take care of myself. Self-care is about how you can take care of the situation without the other person’s cooperation).
- Maintenance/Sustaining
 - Perishable skills