

Sample Excerpt From The Confessing Anger Report...

This report focuses on emotional journaling. It's a technique that will allow you to confess – to yourself – what is in your heart but not necessarily in your mind. Journaling puts you in touch with emotions – like anger – that you have intentionally tucked away because they make you feel uncomfortable and you don't want to have to deal with them. Problem is, these emotions build up over time and eventually come back to haunt you. By not dealing with today's irritations, you carry them forward into tomorrow. You end up doing the very thing you've been trying so hard not to do – you get mad.

Confession

Behavioral medicine (the science that connects mind and body) advised that excessive inhibition of emotions, especially strong emotions like anger, is unhealthy. That's right – holding back emotions can actually make you sick. It makes sense if you think about it. Holding back on emotions is unnatural for humans. As babies, we begin life by crying whenever we're uncomfortable – hungry, thirsty, lonely, or in pain. But then life gets a hold of us and teaches us to do just the opposite – to keep our feelings to ourselves and, in effect, cry inside. Our bodies want to let go, but our minds tell us to hold back. So, we end up in a state of emotional paralysis, which plays itself out in a variety of emotional and physical ailments. Some of these ailments include:

- High blood pressure
- Insomnia
- Headaches
- Bruxism (grinding your teeth)
- TMJ (pain and or locking in the jaw joint)
- Back spasms
- Impaired immune function
- Depression
- Panic attacks

Will confessing your negative feelings on a regular basis result in a decrease in your need for medical services or how often you end up being absent from work because of illness? Current science suggests that the answer to that question is yes.

Confession Benefits

If you're still somewhat unsure whether you really need this confession exercise in order to control your anger in the days, months and years ahead, the following will fill you in on the types of people who need to (and will benefit from) keeping an anger journal. If you see yourself in any of these categories, you can benefit from the experience.

- **Men in general**

There tend to be two types of men:

- Those who all too readily express their emotions as they experience them
- Those who deny their feelings and act cool.

The latter group far outnumbers the former, interestingly even when it involves getting angry. For every man who loses his cool in public, there are nine more who keep their feelings under control – to the point where they don't even realize that they're angry.

- **Women who cry a lot**

Women who engage in more emotional crying are more likely to suppress angry feelings than those who don't cry. Crying because you're slicing onions or because you have an allergy doesn't count.

- **People who are prone to guilt**

Guilt is a real barrier to emotional expression. For example, one study many years ago found that women who felt guilty about expressing anger toward their parents had higher blood pressure than women who weren't sorry about their outrageous behavior. Many women discover early in life that it's easier to bottle up anger than it is to get rid of guilt.

- **People who are too empathetic**

Normally empathy (being in sync with another person's emotions) is a good thing. But when you have too much empathy, it can cause you to hide your true emotions so that you don't hurt someone else's feelings.

- **People who are hostile**

Hostility is an attitude that all too often lead to anger. The combination of hostility and anger-suppression tendencies can be lethal when it comes to things like blood pressure and all the health problems that go along with that.

- **People who lack charisma**

If you're charismatic, you have that personal magnetism that allows you to easily attract and influence others. You don't need to keep an anger journal because everyone already knows how you feel about things – good or bad.

But for the less charismatic, emotions are not as easily expressed. Here are some indicators of lacking charisma:

- A subdued laugh
- A neutral facial expression
- A desire to remain unnoticed in a crowd

- **Introverts**

An introvert is a private person, someone who tends to be shy and timid. His emotions are not available for public scrutiny. He tends to be serious and cautious about life, and he plays by the rules imposed by society – usually without complaint. Introverts are the proverbial nice guys and gals who tend to say things that are fine when they're really not. Introverts are self-contained personalities, so emotional journaling should come easily to them.

- **People who have suffered a lot of trauma**

The more that human beings suffer unusual, intense, traumatic experiences – such as child abuse, rape, death of a child, loss of a spouse – the more likely they are to spend a lot of energy defending themselves from future hurts. One way to do this is to ignore your feelings about what goes on in your day-to-day life, going about your business, smiling, and reassuring everyone that you are "okay" no matter what. Journaling is a process by which you can heal from within by both acknowledging and grieving over the damage the trauma caused in your life.

- **People who are chronically ill**

People who live with chronic, progressive, and disabling illness – such as multiple sclerosis, arthritis, fibromyalgia, diabetes, asthma

– experience a whole host of negative emotions in their never-ending struggle to remain alive. Bottling up emotions like anger and sadness only serves to heighten their struggle to maintain some quality of life.

- **Young people**

As people grow older, they tend to be more open with their feelings. Maybe it's because at their age they believe they have less to lose by being honest about how they feel about life. Or maybe somewhere along life's way they achieved a measure of wisdom about how to deal with emotions in a healthy way. Either way, they have a distinct advantage over their younger counterparts.

Telling Your Story

Keeping an anger journal is not the same as keeping an anger diary. A diary helps you measure how angry you are. An anger journal does much more. The journal requires you to put your feelings into words, saying what you felt and why you felt it, rather than just noting that you were angry.

Making your confession, in this case about anger and other unpleasant emotions, is about telling a story – your story. How you construct that story, however, makes the difference between whether or not this exercise is a therapeutic one. Following are some important rules you should keep in mind when working on your anger journal.

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