



WELLNESS WORKSHEET 90

Hostility Quiz and Log

Current research indicates that there are three aspects of hostility that are particularly harmful to health: cynicism (a mistrusting attitude regarding other people's motives), anger (an emotional response to other people's "unacceptable" behavior), and aggression (behaviors in response to negative emotions such as anger and irritation). To get an idea of how hostile you are, check any of the following statements that are true for you.

- _____ 1. I often get annoyed at checkout cashiers or the people in front of me when I'm waiting in line.
- _____ 2. I usually keep an eye on the people I work or live with to make sure they do what they should.
- _____ 3. I often wonder how homeless people can have so little respect for themselves.
- _____ 4. I believe that most people will take advantage of you if you let them.
- _____ 5. The habits of friends or family members often annoy me.
- _____ 6. When I'm stuck in traffic, I often start breathing faster and my heart pounds.
- _____ 7. When I'm annoyed with people, I really want to let them know it.
- _____ 8. If someone does me wrong, I want to get even.
- _____ 9. I'd like to have the last word in any argument.
- _____ 10. At least once a week, I have the urge to yell at or even hit someone.

Five or more "true" statements suggest that you're excessively hostile and should consider taking steps to mellow out.

If you are a hothead, try keeping a log of your hostile responses to people and situations (see over). Familiarize yourself with the patterns of thinking that lead to hostile feelings, and try to head them off before they develop into full-blown anger. If you feel your anger starting to build, ask yourself the following questions:

1. *Is this really important enough to get angry about?* For example, is having to wait an extra 5 minutes for a late bus so important that you should stew about it for the entire 15-minute ride?
2. *Am I really justified in getting angry?* Is the person in front of you really driving slowly, or are you trying to speed?
3. *Is getting angry going to make any real difference in this situation?* Will yelling and slamming the door really help your friend find the concert tickets he misplaced?

If you answer "yes" to all three questions, then you should calmly but assertively ask for what you want. A "no" to any question means that you should try to defuse your anger. Reason with yourself, distract your mind with another activity, or try one of the techniques for meditation or deep breathing described in Chapter 2 in your text. See Chapter 3 for additional anger management tips.

(over)

Hostility Journal

Date _____

Time	Location	What happened?	What were you thinking?	What were you feeling?	What did you do?