

Introduction:

1. Far-Eastern philosophy suggests that it is better not to fight, but to understand your enemy.
 - a. If you understand your enemy's strengths, you could find a way to outwit him/her/it.
 - i. In *'The Art of War'*, Sun Tzu states, "Winning a victory without fighting is the highest excellence".
 - b. If you destroy your enemy, another (possibly a stronger one) will appear.
2. The best revenge is to live well.
 - a. As an example, if someone cuts you off by speeding past you on your right as you exit a highway, think "He'll die young in a motor vehicle accident, or by a heart attack, or by someone else shooting him".
 - i. A 25-year follow-up study at Duke University found those who scored highest on hostility were 5 times more likely to die of heart disease.

Anger Management

By John L. Sexton, Ph.D., ABPP



Get skilled at calming anger through practice:

1. Work on your 'Anger Hierarchy' (AH).
 - a. Write a list of anger-provoking situations. Then, put the list in order with the least anger-provoking situation at the bottom of a page, and the most aggravating situation at the top of the page.
 - b. Climb the 'AH' by imagining the situation at the bottom of your list. Get in touch with your anger. Then relax by using a technique such as Imagery Relaxation, Progressive Muscle Relaxation, Benson's Relaxation Breathing, or some other meditative technique. Allow the relaxation technique to calm you before you move up to the next rung of the ladder.
 - c. The more often you climb the AH calming yourself, the better skill you will have at calming yourself when typically anger-provoking situations arise.
2. Practice Cognitive Restructuring, aka- thinking accurately.
3. Practice 'accurate empathy', such as "What that person did could be fair from his point of view."
4. When angry, ask yourself "Will acting aggressively result in me ultimately getting what I want?"
5. When angry, imagine yourself crouching down, allowing your enemy to be flipped over you. For as in Judo, your enemy's strength is used his disadvantage.



When angry, imagine that you are a palm tree. The hurricane force wind will not snap you in two like it does the mighty oak tree that tries to resist. You can bend to the pressure, like a flexible palm tree, which stands erect when the pressure leaves.