

# Anger — A fact of life

By MARI OSTBYE  
Staff Writer

"It is okay to feel angry. Anger is a normal, healthy emotion that everyone feels from time to time. It is neither good nor bad. It is a fact of life," states Melissa Cox.

On Tuesday, Oct. 31, 2000, Cox came to Penn State Delaware County to teach anger management.

When it comes to anger, Cox knows what she's talking about. She received her undergraduate degree from Neumann College, got her master's degree from West Chester University and she is a certified physicians counselor, currently working on her doctorate. Among many jobs, she has a private practice in Media and she does some counseling on campus a few days a week.

The focus of the anger management session was not just to show the students that anger is a part of our everyday life, but also to recognize anger patterns in our own lives. There were also helpful hints about how best cope, understand and use our anger effectively.

"Anger management is also recognizing the situation, people, places, and physical changes in oneself," said Cox.

"Where do you feel your anger?"

Cox handed out several topics on anger management, one of them being an "Anger Continuum."

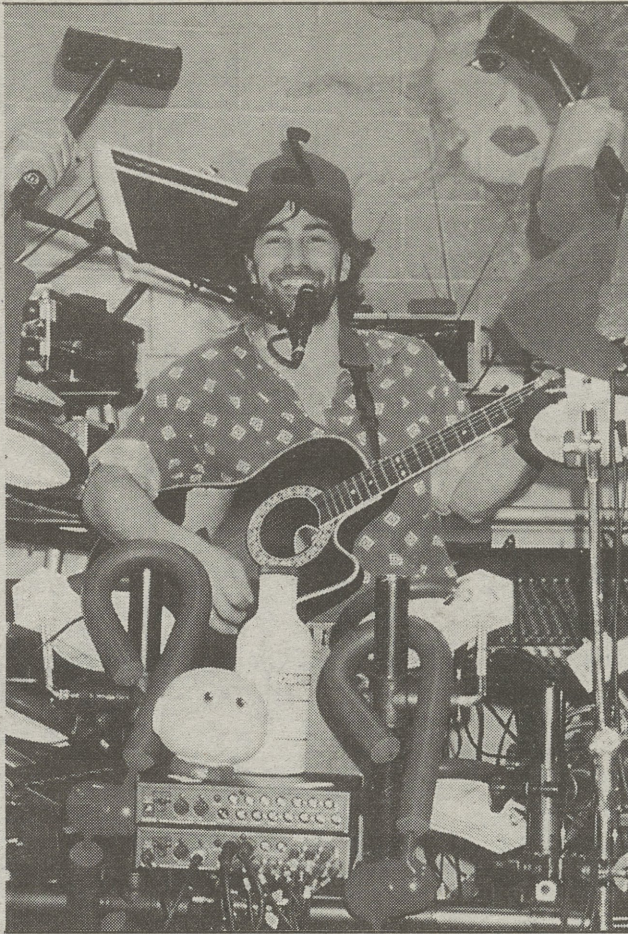
On the far left are those who hold their anger inside. Those who do so are, according to Cox, more likely to see expressing anger as primitive, and a sign of weakness. They are more likely to become depressed, sarcastic, and cold. They are also more likely to keep everything so bottled up that they end up exploding.

On the far right are those who express their anger violently. Again according to Cox, we see this type of behavior in road rage, workplace violence, and school violence.

In the middle of this anger continuum are those who express their anger directly, and in a non-hurtful manner, which is the healthiest way.

The students were encouraged to share their own anger techniques, and some of the examples that were discussed were to talk out loud to oneself using logic and reasoning, breaking stuff, and dealing with anger privately.

Once students learned how to recognize their own anger, Cox shared several constructive ways to handle an anger situation.



Stressed out? Try to do things you enjoy like playing the guitar to keep your temper in check.

Some of her ideas included:

- Crying — letting out the emotion
- writing a letter to the person
- writing an angry journal
- exercising
- positive self-talk
- taking a walk or changing the environment
- artistic release
- And so many more.

They're all of channeling and changing the situation.

(Taking a shower seems to be my personal favorite.)

Cox then wanted the audience to physically show and relieve anger.

The group was told to stand up, and as soon as she gave the signal, they were to stomp, growl, and if necessary smack around her oversized, blow up hands, hammers, swords and boxing gloves to really get their aggression out.

This exercise started out pretty aggressive with students chasing each other, growling at each other and jumping up and down while swinging whatever enormous prop they could get their hands on.

But after about a minute, the so-called aggression became more humorous than anything else.

Perhaps that was the whole point.

Towards the end of the session it was not hard to recognize a pattern in how to manage anger:

1. Become aware of your anger, how it feels and why you feel this way
2. Assess the situation, look at yourself and others involved
3. Decide what to do. Do you express

## Tips on Communicating Anger

1. Use "I" statements; "I'm angry with you," not "You make me angry." This is less defensive.
2. Make statements that describe the situation, don't evaluate. This is more non-directive, and also less defensive.
3. Statements should not be general, the more specific the better. Refer to specific situations or behaviors.
4. Base your statements on observations, not your interpretations of what you think happened.
5. Consider both the giver and the receiver when communicating anger. Feedback can be destructive when only your needs are met.
6. Direct your statements only towards behaviors that can be changed, not shortcomings.
7. Don't wait before confronting. "Well, three weeks ago you ..." aren't too affective.
8. Ask for feedback, make sure your communication is clear and that the receiver understands you.

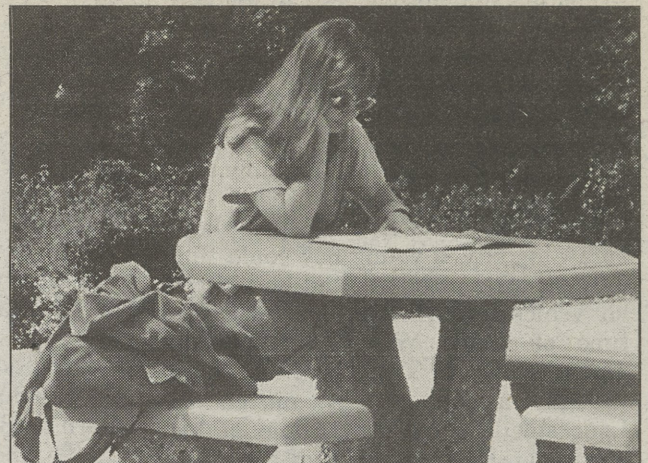
## Tips on Receiving Anger

1. Listen non-defensively, and don't attack the person trying to communicate with you verbally or non verbally, just because your feelings may be hurt.
2. Express your understanding of the situation and the person trying to tell you he/she is hurt.
3. Give feedback in a clear and sensitive way, both to the situation that caused this "anger attack" and the person communicating his/her feelings.
4. State a preference of time, place and style of communication so feelings can be shared and conflicts can be resolved.

Source: Melissa Cox, M.S. CAC



Try some volleyball to work out some of that aggression. Hitting the ball around is a lot more healthy than hurting yourself or others.



A little quiet contemplation could be just the thing you need to relax and let those destructive feelings go.

your anger, or do you remove yourself from the situation, and remove your angry thoughts.

4. Did it work? How did it affect you? How did it affect others? Are you still angry?

Cox repeatedly said being angry is OK.

We all have the right to have angry feelings, and the right to express them in ways that shows respect to others and ourselves.

Then, Cox left the students with a little food for thought: "Forgiving someone helps take away their control over us".

# Don't be bugged: Try the drunk Beetle

By AIMEE STONE  
Editor-in-Chief

Ever wonder what it would be like to drive drunk, legally? On Friday, Nov. 17, you'll have your chance.

Beginning at 10 a.m. "The Safety Bug" will be on campus for eight hours.

The Safety Bug is a 1999 VW Beetle that has been equipped to simulate impairment of .10 blood alcohol content.

The custom engineering on the

Beetle demonstrates the loss of control one would experience if driving a car while drunk.

"I think it's a great idea," said English major Christina Stitt, "after all the deaths this campus has seen because of drunk driving it would be good for sober students to witness what actually happens when they drink and drive."

Only licensed drivers will be able to experience the Safety Bug from behind the wheel.

But friends can pile in the back

seat and realize just how helpless they can be when they let their friends drive drunk.

The simulations the Beetle will offer are: delayed braking and drifting from side to side.

But remember, the car is drunk, not the driver.

The driver can try everything in their power to stop the vehicle, but it will be futile.

It is important for the student body to participate in this wonderful demonstration. With experience like

this, students can understand why, in Pennsylvania alone, more than 500 people are killed a year in drunk driving accidents.

The Beetle will be stationed in one of the parking lots marked off with cones. Students are required to wear seat belts at all times, despite the fact that the Beetle will automatically shut off if it reaches 34 mph.

The Beetle was created for the Pennsylvania Driving Under the Influence Association and Students Against Destructive Decisions.