

Handout 5

Applying the skills of assertiveness to anger.

The Teaching of Jesus in Matthew 18:15 is there for a reason to help us to manage our hurt.

State what has upset you:

- Clearly
- To the person concerned
- Soon (within 24 hours)
- Own the problem: say how you feel
- Ask for what you want
- Find out what the other person is feeling and thinking
- Listen to the other person with 100% of your attention; put reservations on hold
- Move into problem solving mode – with assertiveness

Refrain from:

- Accusations and recriminations; shouting and yelling
- Criticizing the person, rather than their behaviour
- Labelling people or calling them names
- Moaning and groaning to others

If the person you are angry with is not available or if it feels too dangerous to say what has upset you, or it would be unwise at the moment then it can be helpful to express your anger in another way. You could:

- Write about it; let it all out on paper
- Draw a picture to express how you feel
- Play some music that fits with your feelings
- Confide in a friend

Be careful not to use these techniques just for ventilation of your feelings