PURPOSE OF GROUP: to explore how self-talk impacts anger
   to identify triggers to anger
   to increase anger management skills

MATERIALS NEEDED: pens/pencils for each group member
   print p. 4-5 of guide; have enough copies for each group member

1. -Facilitator opens group by introducing topic, **self-talk** (and how it impacts anger).
   -Self-talk is essentially the constant dialogue we have running through our head!

-Unfortunately, our self-talk is often negative, whether it is about ourselves, other people, or situations we’re in. The following are examples of negative self-talk:
   -**About ourselves:** “I can’t do this!”; “I’m so stupid!”
   -**About others:** “She’s doing this to me on purpose!”; “He’s such a jerk!”
   -**About a situation:** “This is always happening to me!”
   *You can ask group members, “Do you struggle with negative self-talk? Why do you think that is?”

-It’s important to become more aware of our negative self-talk because it impacts our emotions & behaviors. For example, **it can escalate our anger.**
   -**Example:** Mike’s classmate is throwing paper airplanes, which have hit Mike twice. Mike thinks, “He’s doing this on purpose! He’s trying to embarrass me. If it happens again, I will fight him!”
   *You can ask group members, “How does negative self-talk affect your anger?”
2. Our negative self-talk is often about ourselves because we tend to blame, criticize, doubt, & judge ourselves.
   - We are our own worst enemy!

- Our harsh inner dialogue about ourselves can escalate our anger, but positive self-talk can cool us down! See the following example & take note of the difference between the negative self-talk & the positive self-talk:
  - **Scenario**: James is writing a paper, and he’s getting flustered because he’s not a good writer
  - **Negative self-talk**: “I can’t do this! I’m no good. I’m about to explode!”
  - **Positive self-talk**: “Breathe- you got this! Take your time & you’ll be fine. Take a break if you need to”

3. Our negative self-talk also contains a lot of distortions. Distortions can further escalate our anger. The following are examples:
   - **“Should” Statements**: “She should have been here by now!”; “I shouldn’t make mistakes”
   - **Black & White Thinking**: “He is completely useless!”; “I’m such a failure”
   - **Jumping to Conclusions**: “This is not going to work!”; “He did that on purpose!”
   *You can ask group members, “Can you think of other cognitive distortions that might contribute to anger?*

4. Group members will now participate in an activity in which they will further explore their self-talk.
   * Give them handout, “**Self-Talk & Anger**” (on p. 4 of this guide). Read the example & ask them to complete the handout
   * You can also give them the handout on p. 5, “**Examples of Positive Self-Talk**”
   * Allow them to share when they’re done

4a. After the activity, you can ask group members the following questions:
   - Look at the scenarios you wrote down. Do you think positive self-talk would have made
a difference in how you handled those situations? Why or why not?
-How else might positive self-talk help you? (i.e. it will help self-esteem, increase motivation, decrease anxiety, etc.)

5. Facilitator can conclude group by going over **more ways to manage anger**.
-Consider creating an anger journal. Log daily triggers/situations/thoughts when angry.
  This would allow you to **identify patterns** that contribute to your anger
  a. Awareness is key! You can’t work on your anger until you’re aware of what’s contributing to it
-Use relaxation techniques (i.e. breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation exercises, etc.)
-Allow yourself “time-outs”
  a. **Examples**: Pause & walk away from argument if you’re too heated; take a break if you’re working on something that is making you frustrated
-Get your anger out in a safe, effective way- art, poetry, music, physical activity, etc.
*You can ask group members, “What are some other ways you can manage your anger?”*
## Self-Talk & Anger

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Negative Self-Talk</th>
<th>Reaction/Consequence(s)</th>
<th>Positive Self-Talk To Use Instead</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Example:</strong> I was writing a paper, and I was getting flustered because I’m not a good writer.</td>
<td>I can’t do this! I’m no good. I’m about to explode!</td>
<td>I was too frustrated &amp; angry to focus. I only worked on the paper for 20 more minutes and turned in subpar work.</td>
<td>Breathe - you got this! Take your time &amp; you’ll be fine. Take a break if you need to.</td>
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</tbody>
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1. 

2. 

3. 
Examples of Positive Self-Talk (for anger)

“I can handle this”

“I’m going to let this go. It’s not worth it”

“I’m in control”

“It’s okay to make mistakes”

“Breathe & relax”

“Keep calm & carry on”

“It’s okay that I’m feeling angry. It’s how I handle it that counts”