

Trigger - Appraisal- Response

The most basic model at looking at anger might look like this:



We can see that if any one of these three boxes is altered, then the whole sequence of irritability and anger comes to an end.

For example, take Justin, whose trigger was his neighbours playing their music too loud:

Trigger	If that trigger doesn't happen (the neighbours stop playing the music loud) then the irritability and anger don't happen.
Appraisal/ Judgement	Equally even if the trigger does happen (the neighbours play their music loud) he still won't respond with anger if he appraises it as: 'Just them having a bit of fun — the thing to do is live and let live.'
Response	And finally even if the trigger does happen and he appraises it as: 'those awful people again — they need a good sorting out' He will still not display any irritability and anger if he ... <ul style="list-style-type: none">- takes himself off to see his friend in the adjoining road or- puts his own headphones on.

So, the above model yields three possible solutions:

1. Somehow or other have the neighbours not play their music (take away the **trigger**)
2. **Appraise** it in a different light; or
3. **Respond** in some different way.

In this particular example, which would you say is the best solution?

Or what about Amy, who said she completely 'lost it' when she found her twelve-year-old daughter washing her hair in the bath instead of tidying her room:

Trigger

Thursday 10th April. 6.30 p.m. I had been on at my daughter all day long to tidy her room and she kept saying she would do it in a minute, or a bit later. Then, at about half past six I found her sitting in the bath just washing her hair - and deliberately provoking me, saying, 'What are you going to do about that, then?'

Response (what did you do?)

I really let rip. I shouted and screamed at her for - it must have been ten minutes. She went really pale, and looking back at it, I was over the top. But it worked, she did tidy her room later on.

Again, there are three possible options:

1. She could have somehow got her daughter to tidy her room by a different means (remove the trigger).
2. She could have appraised it a different way ('Well, at least she's keeping herself clean').
3. She could have responded in a different way, for example by taking herself off, calming down, and telling her daughter (again) that she expected her room to be tidied after she'd finished her bath.

And what about Omar, who gave a good roasting to the fifth guy who left the bar door open? In that case he could have:

1. Removed the trigger (by moving to a different table after the first couple of times).
2. Appraised it differently ('There are worse things in life than having to push a door closed every twenty minutes').
3. Responded differently, perhaps by asking each person to shut the door.

So, even with a simple three-box analysis some reasonably good solutions present themselves.