



National Center for PTSD

# Therapist Guide for the AIMS Online Course



VA



U.S. Department  
of Veterans Affairs



## BACKGROUND

Anger and Irritability Management Skills (AIMS) is an online self-help course developed by VA Office of Mental Health and Suicide Prevention to help Veterans struggling with anger and irritability. The eight-module course is based on the SAMHSA anger management protocol that has been used widely within the VA. With the help of real Veteran Mentors, AIMS provides participants with cognitive-behavioral “tools” to manage problematic anger and irritability. This guide is intended to help clinical providers use the online course with Veterans.



**Additional information about the course:**  
<https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/aims/about.asp>



**SAMHSA anger management protocol and participant workbook:**  
<https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Anger-Management-for-Substance-Abuse-and-Mental-Health-Clients-Participant-Workbook/SMA14-4210>



**Awards and recognition for the course:**  
<https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/aims/awards.asp>



Interactive  
Media Award



Digital Health  
Award



HCM  
Excellence  
Award

This Therapist Guide for the AIMS online course was informed by current literature, subject matter expertise from the creators of AIMS, and input from providers using AIMS with Veterans as part of the Tech into Care Community of Practice in VA. Special thanks to Annabel Prins, Margaret-Anne Mackintosh, Pearl McGee-Vincent, & Katherine Juhasz, for their time and effort, and to the National Center for PTSD for funding to support the development of this guide. Additional specific contributors included: Carolyn Greene, Sheree Moskow, Margo Norton, Bianca Oney, Amy Rodrigues, Beverly Sikert-McHugh, Sherry St. Cyr, Sharon Stone, Lacey Taylor, Kristy Watters, & Paula Weatherby.

### Recommended citation for AIMS online course:

Greene, C.J., Reilly, P.M., Niles, B.L., Mackintosh, M.A., Morland, L.A., Watson, P., Prins, A., Lai, W.P. & Weingardt, K.R. (2014). Anger & Irritability Management Skills (Version 1.0). [Web-based self-help course]. Retrieved from <http://www.VeteranTraining.va.gov/aims>

**Note:** There is an AIMS for Anger Management mobile app available on both Android and iOS platforms that is based on the same material and was created to complement the online course. However, the app and course are (as of 2019, when this guide was created) completely separate; each offers different features and the app and the course do not “talk” to each other in any way. For those using the course, the app can be recommended as a mobile resource for tracking anger episodes, practicing breathing exercises, and having quick access to the anger plan.



Questions about the AIMS for Anger Management mobile app or this guide should be directed to [MobileMentalHealth@va.gov](mailto:MobileMentalHealth@va.gov).

Questions about the AIMS online course should be directed to [AngerManagement@va.gov](mailto:AngerManagement@va.gov).



## INITIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Before prescribing AIMS to a Veteran, it is important to determine if the Veteran is a good fit for an online self-help program. Important factors include:

### Clinical considerations

- **Crisis situations** – safety issues must be addressed using VA protocols, or the appropriate protocols for your setting and license, before starting or using AIMS
- **Unstable psychiatric conditions** – consider medical stabilization prior to starting the AIMS course
- **Medical conditions** – AIMS is 508-compliant and should work with most assistive technology programs and devices
- **Concurrent anger management treatments** – check with the treatment team to see if AIMS can complement treatment



### Psychosocial considerations

- **Reading level** – most of the AIMS course content does not exceed a 7th grade reading level
- **Access to computers/tablets** – the AIMS online course (versus the mobile app) is best accessed through a computer or tablet; Veterans can be encouraged to use computers at VA or public libraries, or you may be able to “prescribe” the Veteran a device through your local VA. However, if the Veteran intends to access the course on a public computer, they should be made aware of the fact that information and progress may be saved on the computer if browser cookies are enabled (see Technological considerations section below).
- **Social support** – sharing AIMS content with supportive others may increase course satisfaction and completion rates

### Technological considerations

- **Internet connectivity** – AIMS is available on a publicly accessible website; access to the internet is a requirement
- **Hardware requirements** – speakers are recommended, but transcripts and closed captioning are provided for those without these items and for the hearing impaired. Headphones are optional and a microphone is not needed.
- **Software requirements** – we recommend Internet Explorer (9 or higher). The interactivities require plug-in Flash-Player 11.2 or higher.
- **Browser settings** – JavaScript must be enabled in order to properly run the course. Cookies must also be enabled so that the Veteran can save information and progress for each module/session. If using a public computer, deleting Browser Cookies is recommended after each session. To learn how to do this, use the given browser’s search function to look up “How to delete browser cookies” and follow the steps shown.

### Clinician familiarity with anger management (e.g., SAMHSA protocol)

- Provider completion of the AIMS course is recommended before beginning to assign sections of the course to Veterans
- SAMHSA protocol: <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/Anger-Management-for-Substance-Abuse-and-Mental-Health-Clients-A-Cognitive-Behavioral-Therapy-Manual/SMA15-4213> 
- There is an online course in TMS that covers the 12-week group anger management course from the National Center for PTSD, which may also be helpful in learning about anger management: [https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/continuing\\_ed/managing\\_anger\\_tx.asp](https://www.ptsd.va.gov/professional/continuing_ed/managing_anger_tx.asp) 

### Other factors

- Veterans with previous online course experience (e.g., student Veterans) may be especially well suited for AIMS
- An Anger Control Plan is a key tool for Veterans completing AIMS. A good Anger Control Plan includes information on goals, triggers, warning signs, and specific tools. Example Anger Control Plans may be reviewed in the “Resources” section within the course.

## MOTIVATION AND RATIONALE

Motivation for change and treatment rationale is as important for AIMS as for other mental health interventions. Before “assigning” AIMS, it might be helpful to review the following with each Veteran:

### Reason for referral

- Distress
- Negative consequences of anger/irritability
- Role of family and friends in seeking care

### Hopes and values

- Benefits/reasons for changing
- Gaining tools to meet desired life goals

### Requirements for change

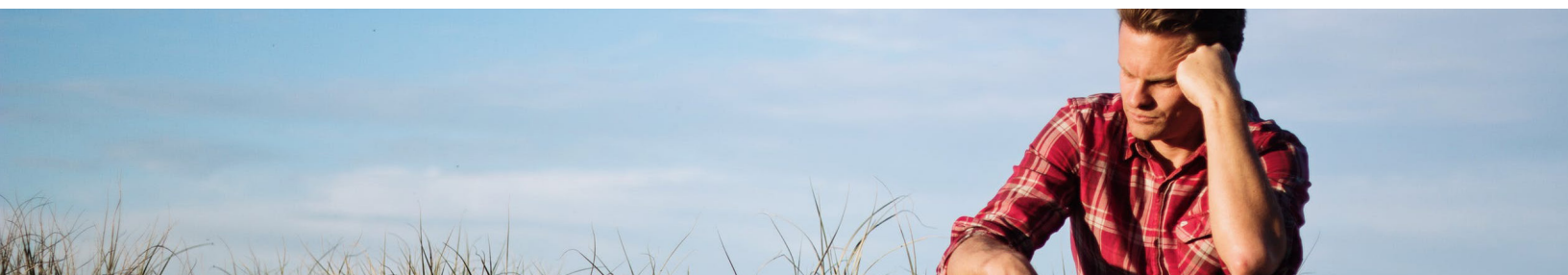
- Engagement with material (e.g., careful and systematic review)
- Practice, practice, practice

### Support for change

- Public commitment: verbal/written documentation of participation
- Enlist support of partners, family, and friends

### Fit with other treatments or interventions

- Concurrent: Determine if AIMS can support co-occurring treatment
- Sequential: Determine if AIMS should precede or follow other treatments. For example, improved anger management (i.e., emotion regulation) may increase the likelihood of participating in trauma-focused treatment.





Research shows that participation in web-based mental health treatments is enhanced with therapist and peer support. Although the optimal frequency and duration of therapist or peer contact is not yet known, participant engagement, satisfaction, and course completion is improved with therapist or peer contact. While an initial face-to-face session might be helpful for showcasing the AIMS course, follow-up visits can be conducted over the phone. Scheduling the follow-up contacts with the Veteran may be especially helpful.

Additional Information: Cucciarre, M.A. & Weingardt, K.R. (2010). *Using technology to support evidence-based behavioral health practices: A clinician's guide*. New York: Routledge.

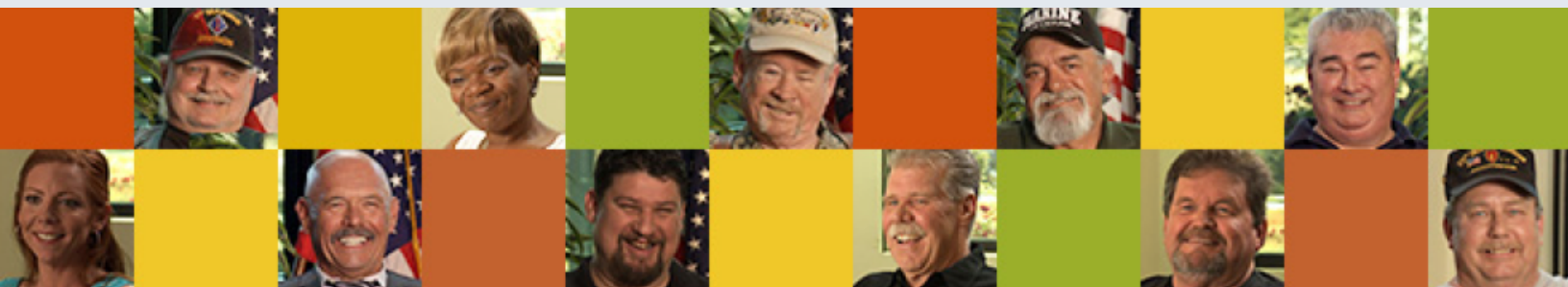
## INTRODUCING AIMS TO VETERANS

The following video provides an overview of the course. Watching the video together with the Veteran is a good way to transition from discussing the Veteran's motivation and rationale for participating to introducing the AIMS course.

**Overview video:** [https://youtu.be/tDn\\_z\\_g3orY](https://youtu.be/tDn_z_g3orY)



One of the greatest strengths of the AIMS course is the inclusion of Veteran Mentors. The AIMS Veteran Mentors vary in age, gender, military experience, and reasons for participating in an anger management course. Taking some time to review the back stories of the Veteran Mentors can enhance credibility and increase motivation for completion.



**Meet the AIMS Veteran Mentors:** <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/aims/Veterans.asp> 

If the Veteran remains interested, navigate to the VA Veteran Training homepage. Here, the Veteran can see that AIMS is one of several online courses for Veterans.

**VA Veteran Training homepage:** <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/> 

## EXPLORING AIMS

Click on the **"Anger Management"** tab, then **"Learn More"** and **"Start the course."** Review the following features of the AIMS **"Getting Started"** homepage:

- **Quote/content area:** Each module starts with a quote. Feedback from focus groups indicate that many Veterans find the quotes compelling and inspirational. The content of each module will be presented in this area once you click the arrow to advance to the next page.



- **Course Menu:** Here the Veteran can see the titles for each module. Although it is possible to view any module at any time, the course is intended to be viewed sequentially, module by module.

- **Learning Log:** Veterans can complete, save, and print their learning logs.


- **Bottom line navigation:**

- **Homepage:** Brings the user back to <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/aims/index.asp>
- **Help:** Information is provided on how to use the course interface and special features
- **Resources:** Veterans can download interactive documents on the following:
  - **Worksheets:**
    - AIMS Learning Log Assignment Worksheet
    - Anger Control Plan Worksheet
    - SAMHSA Anger Management Participant Workbook
    - Printable Learning Log
  - **Tip Sheets:** Most modules will introduce activities and tools for managing anger and irritability. Tip sheets for the various tools are provided. For example, there are tip sheets on *Assertive Communication Tips*, and *Styles of Unhelpful Thinking*. These tip sheets can be printed at any time.
  - **Example Anger Control Plans:** Six example Anger Control Plans are provided with each plan detailing different *goals*, *high-risk triggers*, *warning signs*, and *tools*.

## PROVIDER FAMILIARITY WITH COURSE AND LEVEL OF CLINICIAN SUPPORT

The best way to know the content of each module is to go through the course yourself. When working with a Veteran, you will need to determine the optimal level of clinician support based on Veteran need and preference, as well as provider time and resources. Higher levels of support may be appropriate for anger management groups using AIMS, Veterans preferring face-to-face sessions, Veterans unable to complete the modules on their own, or Veterans not improving on their own. Lower levels of support might be appropriate for Veterans familiar with online learning, or Veterans with mild to moderate anger problems. Even with low levels of support, clinicians will need to review the learning logs and introduce the other resources available for the course. If possible, it may be helpful to have three or four scheduled calls or sessions to determine how well the Veteran is completing the learning logs, using the tools, and putting elements together in an Anger Control Plan.

### Additional key lessons learned from Community of Practice participants using AIMS

- In primary care or other settings with limitations on session length (e.g., 30 minutes) or quantity (e.g., 1 visit), where anger is a presenting concern but not the primary focus of the visit, consider briefly providing a recommendation to access the course for independent study (“prescribe” AIMS), demonstrate where and how to access the course online, and provide the Veteran with fact sheets and promotional materials to take home. Promotional materials are available here: <https://www.veterantraining.va.gov/aims/media.asp>. 
- For an anger management group using the AIMS online course, consider assigning 1-2 modules to be completed prior to each group session. In session discussions can revolve around development and implementation of Veterans’ Anger Control Plans, review of key topics from modules, and provision of peer support.
- In residential programs, consider overlap with other programming. For example, if emotion regulation and relaxation are covered in other groups, the AIMS group can be tailored to emphasize skills unique to anger management (e.g., behavioral techniques like time out and conflict resolution).
- If the Veteran is participating in trauma-focused psychotherapy (e.g., Prolonged Exposure or Cognitive Processing Therapy) and also has a need for anger management, consider AIMS as an adjunct to that Veteran’s care.
- If a Veteran is required to participate in Anger Management for legal reasons, consult with the referring party or your local Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinator to see whether AIMS, in combination with in-office visits or groups, will help meet that requirement. Rules governing what coursework is needed to fulfill anger management requirements in legal settings vary state by state.

We invite all VA providers interested in using AIMS and/or other online programs and mobile mental health applications for Veterans in their clinical practice to join our Community of Practice. For more information, please contact [MobileMentalHealth@va.gov](mailto:MobileMentalHealth@va.gov).



## AIMS TREATMENT COMPONENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Each module of the AIMS course includes the following components:

- 1. Engagement/motivation:** Inspirational quotes and Veteran Mentor stories are included in every module to help with engagement and motivation. In addition, every Anger Control Plan starts with a clear understanding of the Veteran's personal reasons and goals for managing anger and irritability.
- 2. Psychoeducation:** Understanding anger (e.g., myths, habitual responses, triggers, warning signs) and the rationale behind behavioral and cognitive anger management tools is a part of every module.
- 3. Tools:** From self-assessments to self-monitoring to practicing behavioral and cognitive tools, each module includes specific skills or tools for managing anger and irritability.

In general, we **recommend** covering one module per week so that there is a manageable amount of content and time to practice skills.

The tables below provide a review of the essential components of each module. Suggestions for implementation and support are also provided, along with a column for additional considerations. It may be helpful to write in your own considerations as you review the modules on your own.

**Note:** You will see that completing a breathing exercise with the Veteran is recommended at the start of each module. People with anger management problems have difficulty regulating their emotional reactivity, and this often manifests as physiological arousal. It is critical that patients immediately learn at least one reliable tool they can use to de-escalate their anger - especially since they'll be completing most of the course on their own at home, and some of the content can be triggering. We feel strongly that Veterans need to experience the physical change that can occur with the breathing exercise, and that they become comfortable enough doing it that they would be able to do it on their own going forward.



# MODULE 1: GETTING STARTED MANAGING YOUR ANGER

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Inspirational quote (1:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present by having them take a few deep breaths. If it seems appropriate, ask them to share their thoughts about the quote.	What do you like about the quote? What does it make you think about?
<b>Motivational enhancement (1:3)</b>	Discuss motivation for change and consequences of not changing.	This is like the decisional balance sheet in Motivational Interviewing.
<b>Psychoeducation: Deep breathing video demo (1:4)</b>	Ask Veteran what breathing or relaxation techniques he/she may be familiar with.	Explore tools they may have used in the past for managing anger.
<b>Tool: Deep breathing exercise (1:5)</b>	<u>Go through exercise together.</u> Discuss preferences and other breathing tool options – jump to Module 4:9 for male voice (90 sec) and female voice (60 sec).	Consider mobile apps that include a breathing component (e.g., AIMS for Anger Management, PTSD Coach, Mindfulness Coach).
<b>Psychoeducation: Role of cognitions in anger (1:6)</b>	Generate example from Veteran’s experience – common interpretations in trigger situations.	Try to capture Veteran’s own words. Consider going through last episode of anger to identify cognitions.
<b>Motivational Enhancement: Veteran Mentor story (1:7)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor who might be a good fit for the Veteran (e.g., male/female, older/younger) and review together.	
<b>Tool: Self-assessment (1:8)</b>	Go through the assessment together and discuss the functional impairment associated with anger.	
<b>Tool: Anger meter (1:9)</b>	Complete exercise with Veteran; explain the importance of using anchors (1 to 10), with 10 reflecting negative consequence. Generate a few Veteran-specific vignettes for practice with intensity rating.	Make sure to note that the anger meter starts at 1, not 0. Some activation or arousal is required.
<b>Psychoeducation: Learning log (1:10)</b>	Review preference for completion with Veteran (online/printed). Show the Veteran how the learning logs map onto the modules. Use <i>Learning Log Assignment Worksheet</i> .	
<b>Engagement: Commit to practicing breathing and monitoring anger with meter (1:11)</b>	Create plan – how to monitor level of anger (online/paper) and when to practice breathing.	Consider mentioning the AIMS for Anger Management app - this may facilitate in-the-moment tracking and easier access to the breathing exercise.



## MODULE 2: UNDERSTANDING YOUR ANGER

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Inspirational quote (2:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Tool: Learning log check-in (2:2)</b>	Review use of anger meter and breathing technique. Identify/discuss obstacles to utilization.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran Mentor video clips (2:3)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor stories to watch together.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Fact or Fiction (2:4)</b>	Discuss myths endorsed by the Veteran – where did the Veteran learn these myths? Home? Military? See also 2:17.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Anger (2:5, 6, 7, 8, 9)</b>	Assign to read on own if reading is not a problem.	
<b>Tool: Veteran anger triggers (2:10)</b>	Select people, places and situations that are anger triggers. Use <i>Common Anger Trigger</i> Tip Sheet with Veteran.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Warning signs (2:11)</b>	On own.	
<b>Tool: Veteran warning signs (2:12)</b>	Select physical, behavioral, emotional, and cognitive warning signs with Veteran and add additional ones. Use <i>Common Warning Signs</i> Tip Sheet.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Short- and long-term consequences (2:13, 14)</b>	On own.	
<b>Tool: Identify negative consequences of anger (2:15)</b>	Select negative health, relationship, work, and/or legal consequences of anger and add additional ones. Use <i>Possible Negative Consequences</i> Tip Sheet.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran stories (2:16)</b>	Select Veteran story/stories based on fit with Veteran.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Influences on anger habits (2:17)</b>	Discuss (and note) role of family, military training, and culture in Veteran's anger and irritability.	Explore recent events as well as historical (e.g., gun violence). Recognize cultural differences in expressions of anger and firearm ownership. See how experiences can impact motivation for change.
<b>Psychoeducation: Triggers, warning signs, and consequences (2:18, 19)</b>	Print and review above mentioned tip sheets.	
<b>Engagement: Tracking anger episodes, warnings and using meter (2:20)</b>	Review assignment and Learning Log with Veteran.	

## MODULE 3: BREAKING THE AGGRESSION CYCLE

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Quote (3:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Tool: Learning log check-in (3:2)</b>	Review anger experiences (triggers, warning signs), use of anger meter, and breathing technique.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran Mentor video clips (anger triggers and warning signs) (3:3)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor story/stories to watch.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Anger to aggression, aggression cycle (3:4, 5, 6)</b>	On own or read together.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Aggression cycle (3:7)</b>	Identify/discuss Veteran experience with aggression cycle.	If no recent example, use example from past that follows aggression cycle.
<b>Motivational Enhancement: Veteran stories of anger experience (3:8)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor story that fits Veteran.	
<b>Psychoeducation on Anger Control Plan (3:9, 10)</b>	Select the Anger Control Plan that best fits with your Veteran (see six example Anger Control Plans in Resources section).	Importance of breaking down anger/irritability experience into specific components: goals/values, triggers, warning signs, and tools.
<b>Tool: Anger Control Plan (3:11)</b>	Review motivation for change, importance of tracking, and working with others (e.g., therapist).	
<b>Tool: Anger Control Plan (3:12)</b>	Print and review Anger Control Plan Worksheet with Veteran.	
<b>Summary and Review (3:13)</b>	On own.	
<b>Tool: Tracking anger experiences noting triggers, warning signs and using anger meter (3:14)</b>	Review assignment and Learning Log with Veteran (Worksheet).	



## MODULE 4: BEHAVIORAL TOOLS TO MANAGE YOUR ANGER

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Quote (4:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Tool: Learning log check-in (4:2)</b>	Review anger experiences (triggers, warning signs), use of anger meter, anger management technique, and Anger Control Plan.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran Mentor video clips (understanding anger triggers and warning signs) (4:3)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor story/stories to watch (e.g., watching TV trigger, phone trigger), discuss techniques.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Physical and cognitive reactions (4:4)</b>	On own or read together – hold cognitive tools for next time.	Could review <i>Common Anger Warning Signs</i> Tip Sheet
<b>Psychoeducation: Why behavioral tools work (4:5, 6, 7)</b>	On own.	
<b>Tool: Time out (4:8)</b>	Go through tabs for demonstration from Veteran Mentor (Frank or Katie) and try it out. Develop plan for formal or informal time-out.	Make sure to recognize importance of <b>self-imposed</b> time out. Also emphasize importance of returning to subject when calmer.
<b>Tool: Deep breathing (4:9)</b>	Go through tabs for demonstration of Veteran Mentor (male or female voice), try it out, and how to use it.	
<b>Tool: Muscle relaxation (4:10)</b>	Go through tabs for demonstration from Veteran Mentor. Identify exercises that might be contraindicated (e.g., PMR with certain muscle groups). Select duration for trying PMR and go through exercise.	Identify muscle groups most impacted by anger (e.g., shoulders, head, face, jaw) and practice tensing and relaxing those muscles. Goal is to notice difference between tension and relaxation.
<b>Motivational Enhancement: Veteran Mentor and behavioral tools (4:11)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor based on Veteran characteristics.	
<b>Tool: Practice selecting tool for Scott (4:12)</b>	Complete together.	
<b>Psychoeducation Summary (4:13)</b>	On own or read together .	
<b>Tool: Tracking anger experiences (triggers, warning signs, using anger meter, using behavioral tools) (4:14)</b>	Review assignment and Learning Log with Veteran (what behavioral tools will he/she try? Public commitment).	

## MODULE 5: COGNITIVE TOOLS TO MANAGE YOUR ANGER

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Quote (5:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Tool: Learning log check-in (5:2)</b>	Review anger experiences (triggers, warning signs), use of anger meter, anger management techniques, and use of behavioral tools.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran Mentor video clips (how thoughts affect feelings) (5:3)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor story/stories to watch. Highly recommend watching "Katie."	
<b>Psychoeducation: Role of cognitions and cognitive techniques (disputing thoughts, thought stopping, and self-talk) (5:4, 5, 6, 7)</b>	Generate personal examples of unhelpful thoughts from recent events.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Common cognitive distortions (5:8)</b>	Help Veteran to identify favorite (or habitual) ways of interpreting situations that give rise to unhelpful thoughts. Use <i>Styles of Unhelpful Thinking</i> Tip Sheet.	
<b>Tool: ABCD cognitive restructuring tool (5:9, 10, 11, 12)</b>	Go through ABCD with recent example, generate additional (idiographic) alternative thoughts.	Use Veteran's own words – what is he/she saying to themselves? Help generate alternative thoughts (e.g., what might they say to someone else).
<b>Tool: Thought stopping/ thought replacement tool and self-talk (5:13, 14, 15)</b>	Instead of challenging thoughts, replace thoughts with personally relevant phrases – generate replacement thoughts/phrases. Use <i>Thought Stopping and Self-Talk</i> Tip Sheet.	
<b>Engagement: Veteran Mentor (5:16)</b>	Select for Veteran experience.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Summary (5:17, 18)</b>		



## MODULE 6: CONFLICTS AND COMMUNICATION

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Quote (6:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Tool: Learning log check-in (6:2)</b>	Review anger experiences (triggers, warning signs), use of anger meter, anger management techniques, and use of behavioral AND cognitive tools.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran Mentor video clips (difficult interactions) (6:3)</b>	Select Veteran Mentor story/stories to watch.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Assertiveness (6:4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)</b>	Veteran's experience with different styles of communication (examples) and features of assertive communication. Use <i>Assertive Communication</i> Tip Sheet.	Assertive communication and conflict resolution are both covered in the <i>Assertive Communication</i> Tip Sheet.
<b>Psychoeducation: Conflict resolution (6:11)</b>	Review Veteran experiences with successful and unsuccessful conflict resolution. Use <i>Assertive Communication</i> Tip Sheet.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran stories (6:12)</b>	Watch video clip of when, why and how conflict resolution tool can be used.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Conflict resolution exercise (6:13, 14)</b>	On own.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Summary (6:15, 16)</b>	On own.	
<b>Motivational enhancement: Veteran story (6:17)</b>	Recognizing relationship between fear and anger.	



## MODULE 7: YOUR ANGER CONTROL PLAN

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Quote (7:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Tool: Learning log check-in (7:2)</b>	Review anger experiences (triggers, warning signs), use of anger meter, use of behavioral, cognitive AND communication tools.	
<b>Engagement: Veteran stories (7:3)</b>	Review examples of how Veteran Mentors use tools in their toolbox.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Personalized Anger Control Plan (7:5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11)</b>	Importance of individualized Anger Control Plans. Identify social supports in Veteran's world that may be able to help. Use <i>Anger Control Plan Worksheet</i> . Contribute additional thoughts about Scott's goals, triggers, warning signs, and possible tools. If not previously introduced, show additional examples of Anger Control Plans.	If additional experience is needed completing Anger Control Plan, consider completing a hypothetical one for one of the Veteran Mentors.
<b>Tool: Anger Control Plan (7:12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17)</b>	Complete together based on Learning log assignments. Review previous and additional goals/motivations for change, triggers, warning signs, behavioral and cognitive tools (note conflict resolution option housed within cognitive tools).	If appropriate, include assertiveness skills. Use <i>Assertive Communication Tip Sheet</i> .
<b>Engagement: Veteran story (7:18)</b>	Veteran Mentor (Katie) recognizing importance of practice. Use <i>Practice Tips Tip Sheet</i> .	



## MODULE 8: MAKING IT WORK

Components (module #:slide #)	Support Suggestions	Additional Considerations
<b>Engagement: Quote (8:1)</b>	Bring Veteran into the present with a few deep breaths and encourage them to share thoughts about the quote if appropriate.	
<b>Engagement: Veteran stories on how anger and irritability management works (8:2)</b>	Have Veteran select phrase(s) that capture(s) him or her.	
<b>Engagement: Veteran stories (8:3)</b>	Review examples of how Veteran Mentors use tools in their toolbox.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Considerations for success (8:4, 5, 6, 7)</b>	On own or read together: how to keep skills sharp, how to stay motivated, visualize success, preventing and dealing with relapse.	
<b>Psychoeducation: Building a support system (8:8)</b>	Use of sport metaphor for coach, star players, and "back benchers."	Generate list of support people in Veteran's world.
<b>Psychoeducation: Resources (8:9)</b>	Click through potentially helpful resources (e.g., financial resources, relationship issues).	Review as needed/consider referrals.
<b>Engagement: Video of Dr. Reilly and link to course survey (8:10)</b>		If possible, create certificate of completion to reinforce participation and progress.

**Final Note:** This guide focused on the clinical integration of the AIMS online course. If you have questions about topics that were not covered, such as security/privacy issues when using mobile apps or online courses, please feel free to email us. We have additional resources, including handouts and videos, that answer many of the Frequently Asked Questions of clinical integration of technology that are not specific to the AIMS online course. We also offer a monthly lecture series related to this topic that is open to the public and a monthly Community of Practice call for those within VA.

[MobileMentalHealth@va.gov](mailto:MobileMentalHealth@va.gov)





# EXAMPLE AIMS LEARNING LOG

■ **Menu:** Select this icon when you want to go back to the main menu of the Learning Log. From there, you will be able to select other module Learning Log Assignments and the Anger Control Plan.

■ **Close:** Select this icon to close the page. Be sure to save your work before you close the page!

- **Save:** Select this icon to save your completed work in your Learning Log. The data you save in this course is NOT saved or stored permanently. It is saved to your browser cookies temporarily, and can be erased easily. To safeguard your work, you should print or save a copy on your computer so it is available for future reference. When you have finished a session on a public computer or have completed the course, it is a good idea to delete the browser cookies and the files you saved temporarily. To learn how to delete cookies, use your browser's search function to look up "How to delete browser cookies" and follow the steps shown.
- **Print:** Select this icon to print the page you are currently viewing. This is the best way to keep a copy of your completed work for future reference. It is especially useful if you are taking this course on a public computer. It is possible that the computer you are using has the ability to save a file as a PDF. You can see if this option is available by opening the computer printer selection menu.

*Please feel free to print this page to give to Veterans who are starting to use the course.*

**Note:** For the Anger Control Plan, another option is to complete and store this using the AIMS for Anger Management app, available at the App Store and Google Play.



Questions about the AIMS online course should be directed to **[AngerManagement@va.gov](mailto:AngerManagement@va.gov)**.

Questions about the AIMS for Anger Management mobile app or this guide should be directed to **[MobileMentalHealth@va.gov](mailto:MobileMentalHealth@va.gov)**.



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