

How stress of modern life's making more and more of us boil over

Over the past couple of years a lot of anger has been directed towards the banks as a result of the recession. Julian Hall turned his back on a career in the financial services industry to set up his own anger management company called Beating Anger Derby. He spoke to business editor **Robin Johnson** about his change of career and why the world needs to calm down.

THE economic downturn has put us all under pressure in one way or another.

Some people have lost their jobs, which has had an impact on their home life. And those who remain in employment may have found themselves working longer hours or seen their wages frozen.

There are many ways stress can manifest itself but according to Julian Hall, rage is becoming an increasingly common way to let off steam.

To help combat this worrying trend, he has set up his own anger management business, called Beating Anger Derby.

From his new offices in Ashbourne Road, Julian launched his business last month, offering one-to-one and group coaching to help people deal with their anger issues.

"Anger in the workplace is fast becoming an epidemic," he said. "These days people are under pressure more than ever before.

"The demands on businesses and their staff are greater.

"Some people react to this by getting angry. It can be over the most trivial things. This is when they have to realise they have a problem."

Julian, 42, not only aims to help the people who are getting angry but also those who are having the anger directed at them.

Before setting up his business, which is affiliated to the British Association of Anger Management, Julian worked as an area director at the Nationwide Building Society.

He said: "I had the opportunity to leave and wanted to do something completely dif-

ferent that was worthwhile, and anger management coaching seemed to fit the bill."

Julian said that people working in public-facing industries were particularly vulnerable to people's anger.

"The customer has a right to complain and 10 years or so ago they would do so without getting angry so often," he said.

"But today people seem more inclined to fly off the handle. I

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don't know why there has been that change.

"It's probably the case that people may have less consideration for others these days.

"Only the other day I was walking past a public building in Derby and a customer was getting so angry and abusive the police had to be called.

"People who work in call centres in particular have a



CALMING INFLUENCE: Julian Hall has set up an anger management business.

Picture: Laura Page LP150410C-2

very tough job. Working in such an environment is highly pressurised to start with.

"Because things are not happening face-to-face it does not take much for people to start shouting at them down the phone.

"And I know it's a stereotype but traffic wardens still face a lot of abuse. They are just doing their job."

Proof that anger is a growing problem is borne out in a recent survey by the Mental Health Foundation.

It found that 28% of people worry about how angry they sometimes feel and 12% have trouble controlling their own anger. And almost two-thirds agreed that people, in general, were getting angrier.

Julian said: "Anger is becoming an increasing issue in our culture. Too often it is ignored

and not dealt with and the consequences become serious.

"These can range from losing your job to losing a relationship or even your liberty."

But there are a number of ways to keep your temper under control, he said.

"There are six steps you can follow," he said.

"The first is to step back from the situation and look at the bigger picture.

"Is what you are getting angry about going to matter in five minutes time?"

"If it isn't, then it's not worth getting angry about.

"You also have to tell yourself that it's OK to have a different opinion.

"I was in a meeting the other day with someone who I totally disagreed with. But we didn't get into an argument, we didn't

start shouting, we just agreed to disagree.

"Listening is important. In the heat of an argument your listening skills are diminished. While you are busy getting angry, you might miss something important.

"If you find yourself getting angry it's always good to have someone to sound off to. Phone a friend, talk it through with them and get it off your chest.

"It's also useful to keep a journal to help you understand your anger. After an incident where you have got angry, sit down and write about what caused it and what it felt like.

"The final thing to remember is to try not to take things personally. Many people get angry because they tend to take things personally."

According to Julian, the root of a person's anger can go back many years, even to their childhood.

"It could be connected with some sort of trauma," he said.

Julian also has useful tips for people facing the brunt of someone's anger.

He said: "The important thing is not to make eye contact. It gives people the impression that you want conflict.

"It is best not to get drawn in.

"If people are shouting, match them

at the start of your sentence but then bring the tone of your voice down and they should bring theirs down too."

Despite only just launching his business, Julian has already taken on some clients.

He said: "People are referred by doctors and counsellors.

"In extreme cases, people are referred to me by family lawyers.

"In the past I coached people who were not allowed to see their children until their anger was dealt with."

On the whole, Julian be-

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lieves Derby is a fairly calm place but believes that within the walls of some of its offices and public buildings, anger is happening.

He said: "I think Derby is a fairly mellow place, but I do see incidents that make me think that there are a lot of angry people out there.

"I'm now looking forward to helping making the city a calmer place."

SERVICE: Julian Hall.

JULIAN HALL'S SIX STEPS TO CONTROLLING ANGER

- 1. Stop, think and look at the bigger picture. This rule is about time management. Time management is about creating time to think about the consequences between the event and the reaction.
- 2. It's OK to have a different opinion. Opinions are not facts. They are only what you think.
- 3. Listen carefully or L.O.V.E. Learn – in order to

learn, listen. Observe – observe the other person's body language. Verify – clarify information. Empathise – Keep your heart open at all times.

- 4. Use your support network. A support network is a group of people you can call on when you need to talk to someone so your anger doesn't get out of control.
- 5. Keep a journal. Your

journal can be used as and when you need to. Record how you feel about what happened, and your views on a problem. By using your journal it will bring clarity to the situation.

- 6. Don't take anything personally. Nothing others do or say is because of you. What others do and say is a projection of their own reality on to yourself.



Every time I lose my temper, I find it again

www.beatingangerderby.co.uk