

Conflict and Anger

The following self-assessment presents 25 situations in which conflict and anger are likely to arise. After thinking carefully about each situation, rate on a scale of 1-5, the level of volatility of your likely reaction, circling your response. **On this scale, 1 indicates a relatively calm reaction and 5 indicates a major eruption.**

- As you are about to leave home for an important appointment, you spill coffee on your clothing.

1 2 3 4 5

- A car pulls out in front of you, causing you to slam on your brakes, and the other driver gestures at you as if you'd done something wrong.

1 2 3 4 5

- You miss a deadline at work because information to be supplied by someone else arrives late.

1 2 3 4 5

- A waiter or waitress gets your order wrong and you're served a meal you don't want.

1 2 3 4 5

- Friends arrive at your door unexpectedly, assuming that you're ready to entertain them.

1 2 3 4 5

- You must wait an extremely long time at a medical or dental office.

1 2 3 4 5

- You drop a gallon of milk, spilling it all over the floor.

1 2 3 4 5

- You're driving behind a car going ten miles an hour under the legal speed limit and there is no way you can pass.

1 2 3 4 5

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- You get a ticket for parking illegally.

1 2 3 4 5

- Someone makes fun of your new haircut.

1 2 3 4 5

- At work, a recent effort is criticized by your boss in front of several of your colleagues.

1 2 3 4 5

- At the last minute, a friend cancels out of plans you made for the evening.

1 2 3 4 5

- Someone takes credit for work you did.

1 2 3 4 5

- You discover that someone is spreading gossip about you.

1 2 3 4 5

- Someone to whom you're speaking doesn't even pretend to be listening to you.

1 2 3 4 5

- A friend borrows something of yours – car, book, clothing, and returns it damaged, though he or she makes no mention of its condition.

1 2 3 4 5

- Your judgment or intelligence is called into question.

1 2 3 4 5

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- A pen breaks in the pocket of your favorite suit.

1 2 3 4 5

- An expensive item of clothing returns from the cleaners with a large stain on it.

1 2 3 4 5

- Someone at work goes through your desk drawers without your permission.

1 2 3 4 5

- At the very last minute, you are asked to make a presentation at work on a subject with which you are mostly unfamiliar.

1 2 3 4 5

- Your spouse or partner makes a major decision without consulting you.

1 2 3 4 5

- Friends bring their toddler to your home and sit silently as the child wreaks havoc on your belongings.

1 2 3 4 5

- Despite your certainty, you are unable to convince your bank that they have made an error adversely affecting your balance.

1 2 3 4 5

- A friend tells someone else personal information you've revealed in confidence.

1 2 3 4 5

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After answering all of the questions, add the numbers you have circled. Place your total score in the blank below.

If your total score is:

25-50: While there is probably always room for improvement, you remain admirably calm in the face of potentially vexing situations. You have learned that there are other options besides anger as reactions to change and sudden or unpleasant developments.

51-100: If you scored in this range, join the club. This is where majority of the people taking self-assessments will find themselves. Your ability to contain conflict and anger at generally manageable and non-destructive levels still needs work. You opt for anger more than you should.

101-125: You literally are in the process of killing yourself. Volcanic reactions like yours to life's difficult situations do all sorts of harm to your body and health. It is probable that, in the past, you have jeopardized friendships and working relationships, if not lost them altogether.