

STUDY GUIDE

RESOLVING RAGE by Rick Adam GRADES 5-12

www.rickadam.info

THE PROGRAM

In **Resolving Rage**, performer Rick Adam bonds with his audience by relating his own personal experiences of growing up as the overweight son of an alcoholic father in a factory town in Rhode Island. Through original songs, contemporary music, storytelling, and other theatrical techniques, Rick delivers specific tools for dealing with peer pressure, releasing frustrations, and managing anger.

PERFORMANCE FOCUS

- *Conflict Resolution
- *Solving Problems Creatively
- *Anger Management
- *Celebrating Differences
- *Mapping Personal Goals
- *Making Healthy Choices
- *Building Self-Esteem
- *Positive Self-Imaging
- *Peer Counseling
- *Resolving Rage

PRE-SHOW CLASSROOM DISCUSSION

LIVING FREE GROUND RULES

Have the class read these ground rules aloud daily. Write on the board and have an open class discussion on what they mean and how to use them at school, home, and in your daily life in the world.

1. I don't hurt myself, and I don't hurt others.
2. I take care of myself, so I can help take care of others.
3. I use everything for my learning and growth.

VIOLENCE

It's the act of purposefully hurting someone. And it's a major issue facing today's young adults. One in 12 high school students is threatened or injured with a weapon each year. If you're between the ages of 12 and 24, you face the highest risk of being the victim of violence.

RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS OF VIOLENCE IN OTHERS

If you see these immediate warning signs, violence is a serious possibility:

1. Loss of temper on a daily basis.
2. Frequent physical fighting.
3. Significant vandalism or property damage.
4. Increase in use of drugs and alcohol.
5. Increase in risk taking behavior.
6. Detailed plans to commit acts of violence.
7. Announcing threats or plans for hurting others.
8. Enjoying hurting animals.
9. Carrying a weapon.

REASONS FOR VIOLENCE

What causes someone to punch, kick, stab, or fire a gun at someone else or even himself or herself? There is no simple answer to the question. But people often commit violence because of one or more of the following.

1. **EXPRESSION.** Some people use violence to release feelings of anger or frustration.
2. **MANIPULATION.** Violence is used as a way to control others or get something they want.
3. **VIOLENCE IS A LEARNED BEHAVIOR.** Like all learned behaviors, it can be changed. This isn't easy, however. Since there is no single cause of violence there is no simple solution. The best you can do is learn to recognize the warning signs of violence and to get help when you see them in your friends or yourself.

WHAT YOU CAN DO IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW SHOWS WARNING SIGNS OF VIOLENCE

Above all, be safe. Don't spend time alone with people who show warning signs.

Tell someone you trust and respect about your concerns and ask for help. This could be a family member, guidance counselor, teacher, school psychologist, coach, clergy, school resource officer or friend.

If you are worried about being a victim of violence, get someone in authority to protect you. Do not resort to violence or use a weapon to protect yourself.

The key to really preventing violent behavior is asking an experienced professional for help.

DEALING WITH ANGER

It's normal to feel angry or frustrated when you've been let down or betrayed. But anger and frustration don't justify violent action. Always stay cool.

Here are some ways to deal with anger without resorting to violence.

1. Learn to talk about your feelings.
2. Express yourself calmly. Express negative feelings without losing your temper or fighting.
3. Listen to others. Listen carefully and respond without getting upset if you can really see the other person's point of view.
4. Negotiate. Work out your problems with someone else by looking at alternative solutions and compromises.

ARE YOU AT RISK FOR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR?

If you recognize any of the warning signs of violent behavior in yourself, get help.

Admitting you have a concern about hurting others is the first step. The second is to talk to a trusted adult such as a school counselor or psychologist, teacher, family member, friend or clergy. They can get in touch with a licensed mental health professional who cares and can help.

CONTROLLING YOUR OWN RISK FOR VIOLENT BEHAVIOR

When you are angry you probably feel:

1. Muscle tension.
2. Accelerated heartbeat.
3. A "knot" or "butterflies" in your stomach.
4. Changes in your breathing.
5. Trembling.
6. Goose bumps.
7. Flushed in the face.

You can reduce the rush of adrenaline that's responsible for your heart beating faster, your voice sounding louder and your fists clenching if you:

1. Take a few slow deep breaths.
2. Imagine yourself at the beach or anywhere that makes you feel calm and peaceful.

3. Try other thoughts or actions that have helped you relax in the past.

Keep telling yourself:

1. "Calm down."
2. "I don't need to prove myself."
3. "I'm not going to let him or her get to me."

Stop. Consider the consequences. Think before you act. Try to find positive or neutral explanations for what that person did that provoked you. Only you have the power to control your own violent behavior. Don't let anger control you.

SELF-VIOLENCE

Some people who have trouble dealing with their own feelings don't react by lashing out at others. Instead they direct violence toward themselves. The most final and devastating expression of this kind is suicide.

The two most important steps in prevention are recognizing warning signs and getting help. Warning signs of potential self-violence include:

1. Previous suicide attempts.
2. Significant alcohol or drug use.
3. Threatening or communicating thoughts of suicide, death, dying, or the afterlife.
4. Sudden increase in moodiness, withdrawal, or isolation.
5. Major change in eating or sleeping habits.
6. Feelings of hopelessness, guilt, or worthlessness.
7. Poor control over behavior.
8. Impulsive, aggressive behavior.
9. Drop in quality of school performance or interest.
10. Lack of interest in usual activity.
11. Getting into trouble with authority figures.
12. Perfectionism.
13. Giving away important possessions.
14. Hinting at not being around in the future or saying goodbye.

These warning signs are especially noteworthy in the context of:

1. A recent death or suicide of a friend or family member.
2. A recent breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend, or conflict with parents.
3. News reports of other suicides by young people in the same school or community.

Often, suicidal thinking comes from a wish to end deep psychological pain. Death seems like the only way out. But it isn't.

If a friend mentions suicide, take it seriously. Never keep their talk of suicide a secret even if they ask you to. Remember you risk losing that person forever.

Take a stand against violence.

Disclaimer

Information contained in this study guide should not be used as a substitute for professional health and mental health care or consultation. Individuals who believe they may need or benefit from care should consult a psychologist, school psychologist, or other licensed health/mental health professional.

PHONE NUMBERS AND HOTLINES

1. National Institute on Drug Abuse: 800-662-4357 or www.phoenixhouse.org
2. National Council on Alcohol and Drug Use: 800-NCA-CALL
3. E.D.A.P. Eating Disorders Awareness & Prevention 800-931-2237 or www.edap.org
4. Child Help USA - Child Abuse Hotline: 800-422-4453 or www.childhelpusa.org
5. National Runaway Switchboard : 800-621-4000 or www.nrscrisisline.org
6. Cocaine Help Line : 800-262-2463 or www.phoenixhouse.org