

Lobbestael, J., Arntz, A., Cima, M., & Chakhssi, F. (2009). Effects of induced anger in patients with antisocial personality disorder. *Psychological Medicine*, 39, 557-568.

Abstract:

Background. Anger is the main deregulated emotion in patients with antisocial personality disorder (ASPD). The aim of this study was to examine emotional, cognitive and physiological correlates of anger and compare these between ASPD patients with varying degree of psychopathy (PP) and control groups. Method. Assessment of the effect of anger induction on self-reported emotions and schema modes, psychophysiology and implicit reaction-time tasks measuring self-anger and aggressor-swearword associations. Participants (n=147) were patients with DSM-IV antisocial (n=21), borderline (n=45) and cluster C personality disorder (n=46) and non-patient controls (n=35). Results. Groups did not differ in self-reported anger. ASPD patients displayed a decrease in heart rate and systolic blood pressure (SBP) and stronger implicit self-anger associations. ASPD patients scoring low on affective PP reported less negative emotions and displayed a greater decrease in diastolic blood pressure (DBP). Conclusions. ASPD patients did not display a deviant self-reported anger but physiological hyporesponsivity and cognitive hyper-responsivity. This ASPD anger response might reflect a controlled predatory-like fight preparation.