## **Did You Know?** A bimonthly column from:

Dr. Valerie Dripchak, PhD/LCSW Student Assistance Counselor Room# 236 Telephone# 236-9817

## Do you know someone whose anger is out of control?

We all know that anger is a natural and healthy human emotion. However, when anger gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to problems. One out of five Americans has an anger management problem.

What does this mean? It means that the issue is not the anger; the issue is the *mismanagement of anger* which can cause problems in our relationships, at our jobs and in school.

People tend to express anger in one of three ways: suppressing, expressing and calming. *Suppressing anger* occurs when you hold in your anger, stop thinking about it and focus on something else. Although this response is appropriate in some cases, generally speaking, unexpressed anger can cause other problems. These issues may include becoming critical about things, constantly putting other people down and becoming hostile. *Expressing anger* in an assertive (not aggressive) way is a healthy outlet. It means that you are able to make clear what your needs are and how to get them met without hurting others. *Calming anger* means not just controlling your outward behavior, but also controlling your internal responses. These include a series of exercises that will help you "let go" of the intense emotional response.

Here are some questions that you can ask yourself the next time that you are angry.

- **1.** What happened to make me angry?
- **2.** Who am I angry at?
- **3.** How did I show my anger?
- **4.** Was I in control of my anger or was my anger in control of me? If you are not in control of your anger or want better control of your anger, there are ways that we can learn to do this. If you would like more information about this issue, you may contact *your student assistance* counselor. Please remember that the services are free and confidential.