

Anger Management Tips

About Anger

While anger is a normal emotion, it must be managed carefully so it doesn't turn into a destructive outburst or a negative pattern in our work and life. Often when we're angry, it's because things didn't go the way we expected, causing us inconvenience. At other times, anger is more about a build-up of frustrations and tension. Short fuse or long fuse - anger can be managed.

The Good

- Anger is a signal that something frustrating, threatening, or 'unfair' is happening.
- Anger also gives us energy to address issues and disappointments.
- Expressing anger constructively can be an important part of resolving conflict.
- Feeling angry can help us feel more in control and in charge of a situation.

The Bad

- We are more likely to act on impulse when angry as it is harder to think clearly.
- It can feel better to be angry than anxious or hurt, and so anger can hide our real feelings.
- Anger can be used to build a particular type of reputation to get what we want.
- When it builds out of control and we feel we can't release it in a healthy way.

The Ugly

- When we take our anger out on others around us or it turns into aggression or violence.

5 Invisible Signs of Anger

1. Muscle tension- Are you clenching your jaw or squeezing your hand into a fist?
2. Adrenaline- Do you feel on edge or more full of energy?
3. Frustration- Are you starting to feel irritated or annoyed?
4. Angry thoughts- Are angry or hostile thoughts dominating your focus? Are you plotting a negative response?
5. Bottling up - Have you been frustrated for some time, but you are trying to keep a lid on it?

5 Visible Signs of Anger

1. Talking differently- Are you starting to be short with others, swearing more, aggressive tones?
2. Behaving differently- Are you slamming things down, rushing, emphasising with hand gestures, ignoring others?
3. Not listening- Are you thinking about what's making you angry and not paying attention to things around you?
4. Less tolerant- Are you over-reacting to small things? Blaming someone else?
5. Wound up- Are you so tense you're more often reaching for a smoke? A beer? More often hitting the gym?

5 Strategies to Prevent Anger Build Up

1. Learn to notice your own early signs of anger.
2. Stop what you're doing and take a moment to think.
3. Try and put your finger on why you are angry – is it a big or small thing?
4. If it is a problem, you can do something constructive about - take action or talk about it.
5. If you can't change it - try to cool down with some exercise, or TV, or other activity. Don't dwell on it.

5 Strategies to Reduce Anger Blow Up

1. Breathe: If you find yourself feeling quite angry, start with a few deep breaths.



2. Time out: Move yourself away from whatever is making you angry until you have calmed yourself down.
3. Use a strategy that works for you, e.g.: count backwards from 10, tell yourself to 'cool it down', do another task.
4. Ask for space: Say you'll talk about it when you've gathered your thoughts (those around you usually won't mind).
5. Say it - Don't Act it: When you're angry it's harder to think and act straight, so say you're angry rather than act it out.

What's your Anger Pattern?

What type of anger pattern is bothering you? Some patterns of anger are more problematic than others, and two patterns in particular are associated with increased risk of heart disease and cancer. Is your pattern of anger in the **GREEN** (healthy), **ORANGE** (stressful) or **RED** (problematic).

Experiencing anger is normal, so if you have either a short or long fuse AND you manage your frustration well - you're on the right track. However, if you have a short fuse, tend to explode or burry your anger, and struggle to let go of your anger, you are in the orange and red categories. There is a high likelihood that your anger causes you some relationship and/or work issues and could be damaging your credibility.

Anger can come from many sources - stress, pain, disappointments, hurt, alcohol or other drug use, unhappiness and from patterns of coping over time. Aggression and violence are never helpful outlets. Seek help to develop different coping skills and prevent anger becoming problematic and causing you any long-term stress.