

Anger Management

What is anger?

Anger is a natural emotion. It is often a response to feeling threatened, mistreated, or blocked from reaching a goal. Anger can be healthy when it gives energy to correct wrongs. But anger that is out of control can be dangerous for you and for others.

When you get angry, your blood pressure and heart rate increase. Your body releases "fight or flight" hormones that can make you feel shaky and out of control. Anger that is out of control can cause problems with relationships, health, work, and the law.

What is anger management?

Managing anger does not mean that you never feel angry or that you hold in your anger and never express it. Learning to manage anger means:

- Knowing what triggers your anger
- Being aware that you are getting angry
- Finding healthy ways to deal with your anger

Healthy ways to deal with anger include:

- **Take a time out.** Take time to cool down. Take 15 minutes or more to go for a walk or into another room.
- **Distract yourself.** Do something physical like walking, jogging, or bicycling. Listen to music and sing along. Find something funny to think about. Sometimes thinking of something silly when you are angry is just enough to break the anger and help you to think more calmly about the problem.
- **Practice relaxation techniques.**
 - Take several deep, slow breaths.
 - Relax all of your muscles one group at a time--for example, start with your forehead and scalp muscles, then the jaws, the neck, and so on.
 - Imagine a comforting or pleasant scene.
 - **Delay your responses.** Count to 10, or to 50. Use self talk, such as, "I do not have to let this bother me. This will pass. It's not a big deal."
 - **Express what you feel in words.** Use "I" statements, such as "I feel that..." rather than sounding like you are blaming the other person. Practice saying what you need in a calm and respectful way--for example, "That is not OK with me." Don't shout or curse.
 - **Talk about it.** Talking with a trusted friend, family member, healthcare provider, or counselor about life stresses can help you calm down.

Seeing a mental health therapist or taking an anger management class can be helpful.

Developed by RelayHealth.

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