

Anger Management

Why do we get angry?

People get angry for many reasons. Anger is a normal emotion. How we handle being angry may not be a normal. Anger is a problem when it is used to hurt yourself or others. How do you know when your angry feelings are normal or when they are out of control?

Anger management is a tool to learn how to control your anger in a healthy way. Once you learn anger management, you will be happier and healthier.

Why we need to control our anger

Uncontrolled anger can hurt you in many ways:

- **Your physical health.** People who have difficulty controlling their anger have higher rates of heart disease, high cholesterol, high blood pressure and sleeplessness.
- **Your mental health.** People who have difficulty controlling their anger use more mental space in their heads. This makes it harder to concentrate and enjoy life. It can also lead to depression and anxiety.
- **Your personal relationships.** Anger can get in the way of forming relationships with people. If someone has angry outbursts, it makes it hard for people to trust and speak honestly to them. It can be damaging to children.

Warning signs

Anger does not come on as suddenly as you may think. Pay attention to these physical warning signs in your body before an outburst:

- Stomach is in knots.
- Clenching jaws and hands.
- May breathe faster.
- Heart pounds.
- Feel like you are “seeing red.”
- Headache.
- Wringing hands.
- Trouble concentrating.
- Tense shoulders.

How to get control of your anger

1. Understand your anger. Knowing why you feel anger can help you learn to control it. Some people feel anger when they are embarrassed, hurt or anxious. It can be because that is what they learned as a child or because of other health reasons.

2. Know the warning signs. Once you know what your anger looks like, you can learn to manage it before it gets out of control. Know what causes you to become angry and learn how to manage it. Ask yourself these questions:

- Do you have a hard time compromising?
- Do you have a hard time expressing feelings?
- Do you think you are always right?

3. Learn how to calm down. When you realize you are starting to get angry, try these ways to cool off before things get out of control:

- Stretch or massage areas like shoulders and temples.
- Count to 10 before you say or do anything you might regret. Walk away and don't return until you are calm.
- Take deep breaths.
- Exercise. It's a great way to work out your anger.
- Journal your feelings. Talk to someone about them.

Treatment

If anger is affecting your daily life, talk to your doctor. Therapy and/or anger classes may be helpful.

Where can I go for help?

- Call Safehorizon: 1-800-621-HOPE
- Contact the Indiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-7233