**Anger Management**

Anger management is a term used to describe the skills you need to recognize that you, or someone else, is becoming angry and take appropriate action to deal with the situation in a positive way.

**Anger management does not mean internalizing or suppressing anger.**

Anger is a perfectly normal human emotion and, when dealt with appropriately, can even be considered a healthy emotion.  We all feel angry from time to time, yet this feeling can lead us to say or do things that we later regret. Anger can reduce our inhibitions and make us act inappropriately.

**Anger management concerns recognizing the triggers for anger as early as possible and expressing these feelings and frustrations in a cool, calm and collected way.**

**We often have learnt-behaviors as to how to deal with strong emotions, so anger management is about unlearning ineffective coping mechanisms and re-learning more positive ways to deal with the problems and frustrations associated with anger.**

There are many anger management techniques that you can learn and practice by yourself or teach to others. However if you, or someone you know, experiences a lot of regular anger or very strong anger (rage) then seeking help, usually in the form of a counsellor, can be more effective.

You should seek professional help if anger is having a long-term negative impact on your relationships, is making you unhappy, or is resulting in any dangerous or violent behavior.

Do You Need Professional Help with Anger?

If you answer yes to any of these questions then you may need professional help to manage your anger.

* Your behavior has led to any sort of criminal or civil wrongdoing.
* You are violent towards your partner, children or other people.
* You threaten violence to people or property.
* You have outbursts of rage which involve deliberately breaking things.
* You have constant arguments with people close to you, your spouse/partner, parents, children, colleagues or friends.
* You feel angry frequently but internalise the emotion.
* You think that you may need professional help with your anger.

See our page: [**Anger Management Therapy**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/anger-management-therapy.html) to find out what to expect if visiting a professional anger management therapist.

**Anger Management: Self-Help Techniques**

It is important to recognise when you feel angry or experience feelings that may lead to anger.

You should not try to suppress your anger but instead try to understand it and act in a positive way to alleviate negative aspects of your anger.

**Take Regular Exercise and Keep Fit**

The hormones that we release when we are angry - mainly cortisol and adrenaline - are similar to those produced when we are stressed to help us to escape from danger. The release of these hormones is an evolutionary trait, useful if you are trying to run away from a mammoth but maybe less important in modern life where, for most of us, such life-threatening situations do not occur regularly.

When you exercise regularly your body learns how to regulate your adrenaline and cortisol levels more effectively.  People who are physically fit have more optimum levels of endorphins; endorphins are hormones that make you feel good and therefore less likely to feel angry.

See our page [**The Importance of Exercise**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/exercise.html) for more information.

**Sleep**

Sleep is an important part of life and good quality sleep can help combat many physical, mental and emotional problems, including anger.

When we sleep, the body and mind rest and rebuild damaged cells and neural pathways.  We all know that people often feel better after a good night’s sleep.  The optimum level of good quality sleep is about 7 hours a night, however everybody is different and you may need more or less than this.

See our pages [**What is Sleep?**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/sleep.html) and [**The Importance of Sleep**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/importance-of-sleep.html) for much more about sleep.

**Plan ‘Difficult’ Conversations**

If you are worried about having a conversation that may leave you feeling angry then try to take control of the situation.  Make notes beforehand, planning what you want to say in a calm and assertive way.  You are less likely to get side-tracked during your conversation if you can refer to your notes.

See our pages [**Assertiveness**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/assertiveness.html) and [**Communicating in Difficult Situations**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/communication-difficult-situations.html).

**Solutions Are More Important Than Problems**

It can be helpful to identify what made you angry in the first place. However, it is more important to focus on a way to resolve problems so that they don’t arise again in the future.

See our [**Problem Solving**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/problem-solving.html) pages for some effective ways to help you solve problems.

**Express Yourself**

Wait until you have calmed down from your anger and then express yourself in a calm and collected way. You need to be assertive without being aggressive.

See our pages: [**Improving Communication**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/improving-communication.html)**|**[**Assertiveness**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/assertiveness.html) and [**Effective Speaking**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/effective-speaking.html).

**Don't Hold Grudges**

We all need to accept that everybody is different and that we cannot control the feelings, beliefs or behaviours of others.

Try to be realistic and accept that people are the way they are, not how we would like them to be.  Being resentful or holding a grudge against somebody will increase your anger and make it more difficult to control. You cannot change how other people behave or think but you can change how you deal with others but working on a positive attitude.

See our page: [**Emotional Intelligence**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/general/emotional-intelligence.html)

**Pick Your Time**

Avoid conversations that may make you angry when you are feeling tired, distracted or stressed.  We are more likely to feel and behave in an angry way when there are other worries on our minds.

See our pages: [**What is Stress?**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/stress.html) and [**Relaxation Techniques**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/relax.html)

**Humour**

It is easy to use inappropriate sarcasm when angry; resist the temptation to do this and instead work on introducing some good humour into potentially difficult conversations.  If you can introduce some humour then resentment will be reduced and your mood lifted.

See our page: [**Developing a Sense of Humour**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/developing-humour.html) for more information on how you may achieve this.

The simple act of laughing can go along way to reduce anger, especially over the longer term. See our page on [**Laughter Therapy**](http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/therapeutic-laughter.html) for more information. Be aware that although laughing can help you feel better you need to make sure there is no danger of misinterpretation.

**Breathe Slowly and Relax**

**Try to reverse the physical symptoms of anger by practising some simple breathing exercises.**

**Breathing exercises can help you to relax and slow your heart rate to more normal levels.**

When you start to feel tense and angry, try to isolate yourself for 15 minutes and concentrate on relaxing and calm, steady breathing:

* Inhale and exhale deeply 3 or 4 times in a row.
* Count slowly to four as you inhale.
* Count slowly to eight as you exhale.
* Focus on feeling the air move in and out of your lungs.
* Concentrate and feel your ribs slowly rise and fall as you repeat the exercise.

Stop and revert to normal breathing if you start to feel dizzy at any time.

http://www.skillsyouneed.com/ps/anger-management.html