

# Anger Management

*Imagine a life free from the grip of constantly simmering anger.*

FEELING ANGRY  
IS NORMAL AND  
HEALTHY,  
but exploding with angry  
outbursts is not.

Everyone experiences anger.

We're biologically wired to become angry in response to potential threats. Anger is often triggered by an event or memory. However, we can't respond to every obstacle in life with this emotion. Anger management involves learning the signs of anger and how to manage your reaction positively.

Some people are more likely to become angry than others. Even if they aren't physically violent, they might be irritable, sarcastic, or constantly grumpy. Anger causes physical symptoms too, such as digestive and heart problems, high blood pressure, difficulty sleeping, headaches, and risk of substance abuse.

## ANGER RESPONSES

We answer anger's call by expressing it, suppressing it, or calming it. None of these responses are inherently wrong and should be used at various times. For example, if you never express your anger, you may become passive aggressive. Rather, we can learn to express our anger in assertive, non-aggressive ways. Suppressing our anger is beneficial when we redirect our thoughts and actions toward positive solutions. And calming our anger is a powerful skill to reduce our physiological responses.

## SEEKING HELP

It can be difficult to assess if you need anger management help. Are you feeling constantly irritated, frustrated, anxious, depressed, or out of control? Do you frequently engage in arguments with others, in physical violence, or think about violence? If you answered yes, consider seeking help.

Ask your doctor, mental health professional, or your employee assistance provider (EAP) for a referral. Consider attending a support group or check out other resources available online. Talk to someone who's been through a program to hear about their experience.

## ANGER MANAGEMENT BENEFITS

There are incredible paybacks to learning anger management skills. You can strengthen your communication strategies, learn conflict resolution skills, and foster positive relationships

with family, friends, and coworkers. You might sleep better, digest food properly, and live longer. Anger management also lowers your risk for depression, anxiety, overeating, and substance abuse.

## ACTION STEPS

- ✓ **Identify stressors** – Discover what is triggering your anger, such as work, relationships, or rush hour.
- ✓ **Notice indicators** – Pay attention to any physical, emotional, or behavioral signs you experience when angry.
- ✓ **Examine thinking** – Strive to correct your thinking and operate based on facts and good rationale. Avoid all-or-nothing thinking or jumping to the worst conclusion.
- ✓ **Learn relaxation techniques** – Practice mindfulness and deep breathing to soothe your body and focus your thoughts.
- ✓ **Focus on solutions** – Anger management can help focus your energy on problem solving rather than frustration and hopelessness.

## KEEP IN MIND

Remember, asking for help is never a weakness. For some people, reading tips on anger management is enough support. Others might need to take a class or see a professional to learn and practice new skills.

*What positive steps will you take today toward managing your anger instead of letting it manage you?*