



COPING WITH ANGER

Remember, implementing some of these techniques may be impossible unless you are calm. Learn these skills and put them into place before or after you're angry.

Recognize anger

It is important to identify when you are feeling angry. Sometimes people may act out their anger, such as yelling at their spouse, before even realizing they are angry. Pay attention to your body (breathing, tension, heart rate), your thinking and your actions.

Consider if your anger is masking other feelings

Your anger may also be mixed with other emotions. Anger is sometimes used to avoid other painful feelings that are difficult or uncomfortable to express, such as sadness or hopelessness.

Discuss your feelings

Identify someone from your circle of support that you can discuss your feelings with on a regular basis. This could be a trusted family member, friend, or professional counselor.

Improve clear communication

Try to improve communication with the individual(s) you identify as being connected to feelings of anger. This could include, friends, family members, co-workers and members of your health care team.

Don't wait for anger to buildup

Express your feelings in a healthy way as soon as you recognize the anger. If you wait until your anger is severe, then you are more likely to express it in an unhealthy way.

Release the anger energy

Exercise a little every day. Do yoga or relaxation exercises. Keep a journal. Cry in the shower or pound a pillow. Listen to music that helps to express your angry feelings. Do a physical activity that matches the intensity of your feelings; chop wood, run, go for a hike, go mountain biking. Express your anger in creative ways, such as through painting, writing, or acting.



Change your environment

Take a break; take a walk. Leave the person, place or thing that is increasing your feelings of anger. Even a 5 minute walk can be useful in reducing your feelings.

Build in Quiet Time

When you expect something stressful to happen, give yourself some “quiet time” before and after. Quiet time before allows you to check in and do some planning. Quiet time after allows for emotional release connected to stress.

Challenge your Thinking

When your emotions are high, your thinking can get very exaggerated and overly dramatic. Try replacing these thoughts with more rational, factual ones.

For instance, when you told your friend you were feeling very sick and she told you that there are people worse off than you. If your first thought was: “Nobody cares about how sick I am feeling”.

Challenge your thoughts. “There are many people I know who care about me. I am upset that when I told my friend I was feeling really sick, she told me that there are people worse off than you. That hurt my feelings and it’s understandable that I’m upset about it.”

Do this each time you feel anger getting the best of you, and it’ll help you get a more balanced perspective.

Problem Solve

Our anger and frustration can be caused by very real and inescapable problems in our lives. Anger can be a natural response to needs not being met. **Ask yourself “What do I want to do about it?”** Use your problem solving skills to assess what changes you can make so your needs can be addressed.