

Anger Management Tips

Author: Administrator

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Tips to control your Temper/Anger

If you find that your angry outbursts are negatively affecting your relationships with family, friends, co-workers and even complete strangers, it's probably time to change the way you express your anger. Here are some tips to get your anger under control.

Take a "time out." Count to 10 before reacting or leave the situation altogether.

Do something physically exerting. Physical activity can provide an outlet for your emotions, especially if you're about to erupt. Go for a walk or a run, swim, lift weights or shoot baskets, for example.

Find ways to calm and soothe yourself. Practice deep-breathing exercises, visualize a relaxing scene, or repeat a calming word or phrase to yourself, such as "take it easy." You can also listen to music, paint, journal or do yoga.

Express your anger as soon as possible so that you aren't left stewing. If you can't express your anger in a controlled manner to the person who angered you, try talking to a family member, friend, counselor or another trusted person.

Think carefully before you say anything so that you don't end up saying something you'll regret.

Work with the person who angered you to identify solutions to the situation.

Use "I" statements when describing the problem to avoid criticizing or placing blame. For instance, say "I'm upset you didn't help with the housework this evening," instead of, "You should have helped with the housework." To do otherwise will likely upset the other person and escalate tensions.

Don't hold a grudge. Forgive the other person. It's unrealistic to expect everyone to behave exactly as you want.

Use humor to defuse your anger, such as imagining yourself or the other person in silly situations. Don't use sarcasm, though ? it's just another form of unhealthy expression.

Keep an anger log to identify the kinds of situations that set you off and to monitor your reactions.

You can practice many of these strategies on your own. But if your anger seems out of control, is hurting your relationships or has escalated into violence, you may benefit from seeing a psychotherapist or an anger management professional. Role playing in controlled situations, such as anger management classes, can help you practice your techniques.

KEEP AT IT

It may take some time and intense effort to put these tips into practice when you're facing situations that typically send you into a rage. In the heat of the moment, it can be hard to remember your coping strategies.

You may need to keep something with you that serves as a reminder to step back from the situation and get your anger under control. For instance, you may want to keep a small, smooth stone in your pocket or a scrap of paper with your tips written down. With due diligence, these anger management techniques will come more naturally and you'll no longer need such reminders.