

ANGER MANAGEMENT



Anger is an emotion that is normal and common for people to experience in everyday life. When anger is expressed in a controlled manner it is healthy for a person to communicate their feelings. When anger takes over and a person loses control, anger can be expressed in a negative and hurtful manner. This is why it is so important to watch for signs of uncontrolled anger and learn to manage this anger so that your feelings are communicated in a healthy appropriate way.

SIGNS OF ANGER

- You say or do things when you get mad that you later feel bad about.
- You hang on to your anger for a long time-you won't or can't let go of it.
- You hit, shove, slap, pinch, or threaten when you get angry.
- It feels to you like you're almost always angry about something.
- Sometimes you can't stop arguing even when you want to.
- Your anger is "all or nothing." You're either furious or calm; you're never just a little angry.
- You always have to get the last word and have to win every battle.
- You've been suspended from school, lost jobs, been arrested, or gotten kicked out of your house because of your anger.
- You often hate yourself and do things to hurt yourself.
- You believe other people are the cause of most of your problems.

RATE & RECORD

When you begin to feel anger building, try to rate your level of anger from one to ten. Your anger will be either more or less intense during different situations. Your own thoughts and perceptions of a situation can cause a level two to increase to a level ten. Take note, maybe even record the instance so you understand that you have different levels of anger during different times of the day.



Once you can begin to recognize the signs of anger, you can start to help yourself by learning to prevent and manage your anger.

OVER

PREVENTING YOUR ANGER

⇒ **Change your environment**

⇒ Schedule personal time for yourself when you know you will be encountering stressful situations. Remove yourself from the situation so you can have time to think about what you are really upset about.

⇒ Find alternatives to your daily routine that are less congested and more soothing. Breaks throughout the day can help you stay focused & relaxed.

⇒ **Cognitive Restructuring - Change the way you think**

⇒ Try to have a positive outlook. Remember that it is not the end of the world and getting angry is not going to fix it anyhow. Utilize “positive self-talk” to help restructure how you are thinking about the problem.

⇒ Remember that getting angry just amplifies the situation and emotions -- logic defeats anger. Give yourself time to think through the best solution to the problem, rather than just reacting.

⇒ **Improve your communication skills**

⇒ Don't let your anger build. Slow down and rethink the first things that come to mind when in heated discussion. Choice of words is very important.

⇒ Attack the problem rather than the person. Listen carefully to what they have to say and try not to fight back.

⇒ Take a few moments and decide the best course of action. Be patient with the other person and avoid put-downs. Compromise may be an amicable option.

⇒ Respect each other and recognize when to quit. When it is over, let it be over.

MANAGING YOUR ANGER

⇒ Use simple relaxation techniques to calm yourself if you feel your anger might get out of control.

⇒ Take slow, deep diaphragmatic breaths. These will help slow down your body's reaction and help you relax.

⇒ Use imagery to relax & escape. Visualize a relaxing experience from either your memory or use your imagination.

⇒ Try exercising or engaging in non-strenuous exercise like yoga.

⇒ Focus on finding a solution(s) to the problem. Avoid taking your anger out on someone. Place that energy into developing a plan that will resolve the situation and put it into action.

⇒ Use humor to dissolve some of your pent up feelings. Reducing your rage through humor can bring a more calm and settling atmosphere, and help you attain a more balanced perspective.

RESOURCES

For professional assistance and direction please refer to these resources located at the Urbana-Champaign campus:

- McKinley Health Center's Mental Health Unit, 333-2705
- McKinley Health Education Unit, 333-2714
- Counseling Center, 333-3704
- Student Conflict Resolution Office, 333-3680

