

Anger Management Tips: 10 ways to tame your temper

Adapted from <http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/anger-management/MH00102>

Anger is a normal and even healthy emotion, but learning how to deal with it in a positive way is important. However, uncontrolled anger usually makes both you and other people feel bad. If your outbursts, rages or frustrations are negatively affecting relationships with others, consider learning some anger management skills to help change the way you express your anger.

1. **Take a 'timeout.'** Although it may seem cliché, taking a deep breath and counting to 10 before reacting really can defuse your temper.
2. **Get some space.** Leave the room and take a break from the person you're angry with until your frustrations subside a bit.
3. **Once you're calm, talk about your angry feeling.** Express your frustration in a non-confrontational way. Stewing about it can make the situation worse.
4. **Get some exercise.** Physical activity can provide an outlet for your emotions, especially if you're about to erupt. Go for a brisk walk or a run, swim, lift weights or shoot baskets.
5. **Think carefully before you say anything.** Avoid saying something you'll regret later. Try writing down what you want to say to help you stick to the issues and make your point.
6. **Identify solutions to the situation.** Instead of focusing on what made you mad, work with the person who angered you to resolve the issue at hand.
7. **Use 'I' statements when describing the problem.** Avoid criticizing or placing blame, which can make the other person angry or resentful and increase tension. For example, say, "I felt upset when I saw the sink full of dishes." instead of, "You left a mess! It was your turn to clean up after supper."
8. **Don't hold a grudge.** If you can forgive the other person, it will help you both. No one is perfect or exactly how you would like them to be.
9. **Use humor to release tensions.** Lightening up can help diffuse tension. BUT, avoid sarcasm because it can hurt feelings and make things worse.
10. **Practice relaxation skills.** Learning skills to relax and de-stress can also help our stay calm when your temper is starting to flare up. Take deep-breaths, visualize a relaxing scene, or repeat a calming word or phrase – such as "Take it easy." Other proven ways to ease anger include listening to music, writing in a journal and doing yoga.

You can practice many of these anger management strategies on your own. But if your anger seems out of control, is hurting your relationships or makes you feel physically violent or destructive, you may benefit from some help. If your symptoms don't improve, or you have signs or symptoms of anxiety or depression, see a mental health provider for help.