

Keeping ANGER in Check

Shawne D. Diaz, MA, LCMHC

Anger is a natural emotion. Everyone gets angry at sometime, whether they show it or not. It is when the anger starts to interfere with your life that it becomes a problem. Here are some questions to ask yourself

If these tips don't work, you may need to seek professional help for group or individual counseling. Counseling can help you to develop an awareness as your anger just begins to start, when it is easier to defuse. It can help you to

develop an awareness of what triggers your anger, so you can avoid those situations or develop a plan to deal with them before they arise. You can also learn effective communication skills through counseling, which may help prevent a situation from arising in the first place. The goal of counseling is not to eliminate anger from your life, but to help you to manage your anger effectively.

Whether you decide to try some of these tips or seek professional help remember, anger is a natural emotion, it is how you manage the anger that makes the difference. 

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Is your anger interfering with your family life?

- Has your partner threatened to leave if “You don't get help with your anger?”
- Have you noticed that your children are afraid of you?
- Is your anger interfering with your job?
- Have you been “spoken to” by your boss because of your anger?
- Are your co-workers starting to stay away from you?
- Are you known as a “hot head?”
- Has your anger gotten you in trouble with the law?

Helpful tips for managing your anger

- Take a time-out. Cool off, then come back and deal with the issue.
- Lower your voice instead of yelling. This will change the mood of the situation and is particularly effective with children, especially if they are used to hearing you yell.
- Change your posture. If standing, sit down and lean back. Not only will you appear less threatening you will feel more relaxed.
- Use “I feel” statements instead of “You” statements, which often sound critical and can cause the other person to become defensive.
- Take a deep breath and count to 10 before speaking.
- Use coping thoughts such as “I can stay calm and relaxed” or “I can't expect people to act the way I want them to” to remind yourself that you are in control, not your anger.

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