

## Dealing with Anger

**Introduction:** What is anger? What does it look like to you? Is it a mother being annoyed that she has asked her child three times now to clean her room? Is it the driver on the interstate that blares their horn with impatience while zooming by? Is it the toddler having a temper tantrum because they had the *Stretch Armstrong* toy first? Emotions can either appear generally the same or they can change their appearance as the situation changes. Anger is an emotion that can be described using other words such as mad, upset, temper tantrum, irritated, impatient, rage, hatred, resentment, etc.

Anger is an emotion that we often hear as being the “reason” for many of our actions and behaviors. All too often we hear: “I only did it (fill in the blank) because I was mad at the time” or “You made me mad so you made me behave that way and say those things.”

Although there is another obvious problem of action ownership within the statements above, we are going to focus on the emotion of anger, warning signs, and management skills. Anger has ruled and ruined many lives just by being so strong, misunderstood, and neglected. Anger grows strength by being unresolved and/or buried. Anger remains misunderstood for many reasons some of which could include lack of communication, dishonesty, chemical imbalance, underlying issues, addiction, etc. Anger remains neglected when we put focus on others or other things rather than the emotional, its causes, and how to deal.

How do you behave when you are getting annoyed? Could you call your annoyance anger?

Are there people, situations, or things that you can pinpoint as items that trigger your angry emotion? Have you given those attention while thinking of your personal boundaries? Have others around you noticed when you're angry or that you're angry often? Has someone tried to talk to you about it and if so, how did you react? These are some questions we want to keep in mind while going through this lesson together.

Within this lesson, we will be talking about anger, quick ways of coping with anger, possible symptoms, questions about your personal anger, on a ranking scale write situations that make you angry, how you usually react, a new plan for dealing with your anger, and some tips/suggestions. In filling out the packet and participating through discussion, we hope you are able to do some critical thinking that may help yourself, those closest to you, and others within the group!

## Dealing with Anger

These anger management worksheets will help you to identify your anger triggers and find more effective ways to deal with anger.

### *What is anger?*

**Anger** is an emotion; it's a signal that we think we are being treated unfairly.

**Feelings** are neither right nor wrong. *It is okay* to feel angry.

**Actions** can be right or wrong. *It is not okay* to hurt ourselves, others, or property when we feel angry.

### *So how can we deal with anger and act in healthy ways?*

1. Recognize anger- know when you are angry and what makes you angry.
2. Practice positive responses- practice, practice, practice until your new positive responses become good habits.

### **Quick list of ways to cope with anger:**

Walk away, exercise, talk with someone who you are not angry with, distract yourself, count 10 deep breaths, write about it, come back and deal with it after you are calm

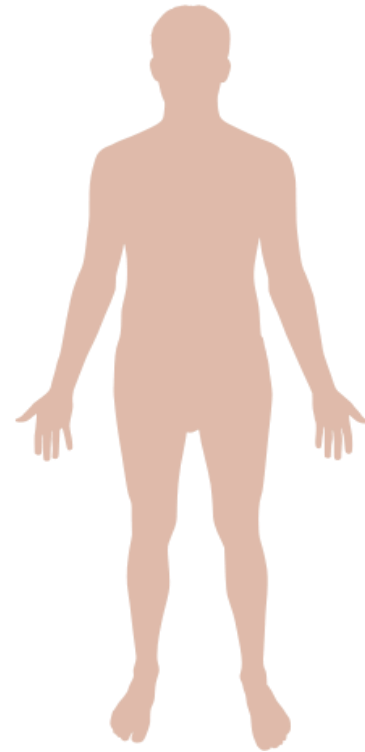
**What are some additional coping activities you could do to help you calm while being angry? While thinking of coping activities, let's keep in mind how quick we get angry therefore we want to brainstorm activities that are low budget/free, accessible, and healthy. By using those three guidelines, we are helping make sure our coping activities can be employed anywhere as anger has not limits or boundaries. At the end of this lesson, there are example lists of ideas of positive reactions to everyday stresses and positive self-talk for managing anger.**

## Symptoms of Anger

**How do you know when you are angry?** All of us have symptoms of anger, which are physical and mental signs that tell us and possibly others that we are angry. Are there any signs you can add to the list?

Physical Signs	Mental Signs	Other Signs
Fast heartbeat	Problems concentrating	Yelling
Sweating	Confusion	Swearing
Shaking	Memory problems	Withdrawing from others
Clenched jaws	Thoughts of doing harm	Throwing things
Clenched fists	Angry thoughts	Pacing
Fast breathing	Irritability	Stomping around
Headaches	Short tempered (easily angered)	
Stomach aches		
Upset stomach		
Tight chest		
Tense muscles		
Frowning, scowling		
Red face		

Use the diagram to show where you experience anger by shading/coloring or circling the area or writing words.



**Questions about your Anger:**

How do you know when you are angry?

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Where in your body do you feel anger? List your physical signs of being angry.

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What is the first sign of anger you notice? List your early warning signs that tell you when you are starting to become angry.

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What makes you angry? List all the things you can think of... all the way from small annoyances to big problems.

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While using your list from the last page, write the things that make you angry on the scale below, according to how angry they usually make you feel. Be sure to add any that you might have forgotten.

<b>How Angry?</b>	<b>What’s the situation/setting/event?</b>
<b>100</b> as angry as possible	
95	
90	
85	
80	
75	
70	
65	
60	
55	
50 Moderately angry	
45	
40	
35	
30	
25	
20	
15	
10	
5	
<b>0</b> not angry at all	

**How you handle Anger**

How do you usually react when you feel angry?

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Think about the last time you reacted in an unhealthy or negative way to anger. What happened right before you got angry?

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How did you react?

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How did you feel after you reacted?

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What could you have done instead?

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What could happen if you were to react in a more positive way?

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While it could be hard to flashback to those times, the details of before, during, and after the situation could help you put your anger and reactions into a clearer perspective. In return, this could help you find more positive ways to help manage your anger and other emotions.

**A Plan for Dealing with Anger**

Make a plan. Write down one of the situations from your anger scale. Choose one that causes you to feel a little angry. Describe how you would like to react in the future to this situation.

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Now, choose a situation near the top of your anger scale. Describe how you would like to react to react to a situation like this.

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What negative behavior do you most want to avoid when you experience anger?

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What will you do instead?

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What will you do when you experience your early warning signs?

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How will you handle situations what you feel you are at the top of the anger scale?

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**Practice positive reactions to everyday stresses**

*Walk away instead of reacting in anger. It's okay to stomp your feet if you need to!*

*Exercise. This helps get rid of physical energy that is built up by anger.*

*Talk to someone who you are not feeling angry with. Phone a friend, relative, or professional. Tell them about what happened and how you are feeling.*

*Distract yourself. Do something you enjoy, like reading, TV, music, games, going to the store, cooking a meal... and take your mind off the anger. Come back and deal with it when you are feeling calmer.*

*Count 10 breaths. The reasons for counting your breaths are: 1) to calm and relax you by breathing more deeply and 2) to pause for a few moments instead of reacting automatically.*

*Write about it. Get your feelings and thoughts out on paper instead of confronting the source of your anger right away.*

*Deal with it when you feel calm. Get away from the situation and come back later. You will react more positively.*

The more practice you get at reacting in positive ways, waiting until the anger goes down a little before responding, and learning new habits, the more easily you will be able to manage anger.

This lesson was retrieved from [https://www.innerhealthstudio.com/support-files/anger\\_management\\_worksheets.pdf](https://www.innerhealthstudio.com/support-files/anger_management_worksheets.pdf)

**Positive self-talk for managing anger:**

*I can handle this.*

*This isn't my problem.*

*I don't need to take this personally.*

*I don't have to respond right now.*

*Everything is going to be okay.*

*Having feelings doesn't mean I'm weak.*

*I'm not responsible for what others do.*

*I'd rather be happy than right.*

*Breathe, how important is it?*

*I can take a break at any time.*

*This isn't a big deal.*

*I don't need to fix this.*

By Michelle Farris, LMFT- retrieved from <https://www.counselingrecovery.com/anger-management-san-jose>