

Managing Anger

Getting angry is normal, but when your anger becomes out-of-control rage, there is a problem. Here are some tips to help you 'simmer down.'

1. RELAX! - The 1st step to managing anger is learning to relax. This can be done by deep breathing and relaxing imagery to help calm down angry feelings. To practice relaxing, try the following ideas:

- Breathe deeply from your diaphragm.
- When breathing deeply, calmly tell yourself to 'relax' or 'take it easy.'
- Visualize a time and place in which you were relaxed. If you cannot remember a place use your imagination.
- Non-strenuous, slow exercises such as yoga can help you relax both mentally and physically.

2. Mind Over Matter - When you're angry, your thinking can get exaggerated and overly dramatic. Replacing these thoughts with more reasonable ones can be difficult but here are some ideas:

- Remind yourself that getting angry is not going to fix anything, and could actually make the problem worse.
- Be careful of using words like 'never' or 'always' when talking about yourself or someone else. Most of the time they are inaccurate, plus they tend to make you feel as if you are justified and that your anger is warranted. They also diminish a person's chances of working the problem out.

- Remind yourself that the world is not 'out to get you,' you are just experiencing rough spots.

3. Work Smarter, Not Harder - Not all anger is unhealthy. Many times anger is a natural response to difficulties. That is why it is important to deal with the anger and try to not get angry. To do this, try focusing on handling the problem rather than finding a solution.

- Approach problems with your best intentions and efforts, and make a serious attempt to face them head-on.

4. Say What You Mean, Do What You Say -

Angry people tend to say things they do not mean or will regret later. Here are some tips for better communication:

- During heated discussions, slow down and think about your response before you speak.
- Listen to what people are saying. By hearing what people are saying, you have a better chance of responding in a positive manner.

5. Change Your Surroundings - Sometimes the surroundings which you place yourself in make it hard to manage anger. Here are a few ways to escape from stressful situations:

- Plan some "personal time" for yourself. Walking or reading a book tends to calm people down.
- Identify situations which you become angry and avoid them. For instance if driving in rush hour traffic leaves you in a state of rage and frustration, try leaving before rush hour, finding a less congested or scenic route, or carpooling.

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