



YOUNG MINDS

Anger Issues

Your guide to dealing
with anger

“In my family no-one shows they are angry... well, apart from my Dad. Everyone just keeps it inside. Sometimes I go up to my bedroom and just want to smash things up.”



We all get angry sometimes

Anger is one of a normal range of emotions that we all experience. Sometimes, though, you can feel angry and not know why.

It's important to be able to deal with anger so you don't lose your temper and make things worse.

This booklet will help you to identify when anger becomes 'too much' and help you find ways to manage it.



What makes us get angry?

Lots of things can make us angry. That's fine, as long as it doesn't get out of control.

Here are a few things that could make you get angry:

- Being embarrassed in front of other people
- Changes in the family like divorce or separation
- Being let down
- Something that feels unfair
- Not being listened to
- Feeling lonely or rejected
- Pressure from school or at home
- Death in the family
- Being bullied
- Being hurt or abused

What happens when anger gets too much?

Anger is an issue if you are:

- Hitting or physically hurting other people
- Shouting at people
- Breaking things
- Losing control
- Winding people up
- Spending time with people who you know will get you into trouble

Or sometimes, people turn their anger on themselves and it can lead to:

- Eating problems
- Feeling low
- Putting ourselves in danger
- Refusing to go to school
- Not talking to anyone
- Harming ourselves
- Abusing alcohol or drugs

Some of these things might make you feel better in the short term or give a sense of 'relief' but they can make trouble for you later and lead to other problems.

Dealing with your anger: spotting the warning signs

The first step in dealing with your anger is to learn to recognise when you're getting angry. Your body is helpful here as there are a number of warning signals as adrenaline rushes through your veins:

- Clenched teeth
- Tense shoulders
- Increased heart rate
- Clenched fists
- Tense muscles
- Tight stomach

When these signs appear, you know you're about to get angry – that's when it's handy to have a coping mechanism. The next time you feel angry, try and take notice of how your body changes, so you will know what to look for in the future.

“My heart was pounding and my hands were sweaty. I couldn’t keep still – I had so much energy. I couldn’t focus on anything. I couldn’t even sleep properly”



Dealing with your anger: coping mechanisms

When anger rises, it's important to find ways of relaxing and taking control of your anger. Everyone relaxes in different ways, but it could be worth trying to explore some of the following to help you:

- Talking to someone to put things in perspective
- Listening to music
- Taking slow, deep breaths
- Going for a walk
- Having a long, hot bath
- Try meditation or yoga
- Playing a high energy sport like football, cycling or running
- Playing a computer game
- Drawing, painting or writing in your diary to let out how you feel

It's worth trying a few out to see which works best for you. Then next time you start to feel angry, you can turn to your trusted way of relaxing.

Avoiding anger

Coping mechanisms can help you manage your anger in the heat of the moment, but the best long-term solution for many anger issues is to try and prevent your anger from bubbling up in the first place.

Like when having a discussion. If you don't agree with someone, try and hear their point of view first, and stay calm when you're responding. Sometimes it can be helpful to leave the conversation if things are getting heated, and to come back when you're able to discuss things more calmly. This can help to avoid conflict by working out a compromise and avoiding anger entirely.

Or, if someone is annoying you such as teasing you at school, try to stay calm and get help by telling someone you trust about what is happening.

Getting help for your anger issues

It can be hard to know why you get angry – often anger issues stem from something that happened a long time ago and now you over-react to all situations, not just the original trigger.

Talking to the person who makes you angry is always best. But sometimes that's not possible.

So try talking to someone you trust like a brother or sister, a parent, a teacher, school counsellor or nurse.

If that doesn't work, talk to your GP. They should be able to refer you to a counsellor or a professional who'll help you manage and deal with your anger.

All these services are confidential too, so you don't have to tell anyone you don't want to.

Who else to talk to

youthaccess.org.uk

Information and advice on counselling services for people aged 12–25. *Visit the website and click 'Find a service'.*

childline.org.uk

The UK's free helpline for children and young people – it's a confidential service and provides telephone counselling for any child with a problem.

Helpline: 0800 1111

Textphone: 0800 400 222

Mon-Fri 9:30am-9:30pm | Sat and Sun: 11am-8pm

themix.org.uk

Offers free support and advice for under 25s through a confidential helpline, online chat and discussion boards.

Helpline: 0808 808 4994

7 days a week 2pm – 11pm



YoungMinds
Suite 11 Baden Place
Crosby Row
London SE1 1YW
Telephone 020 7089 5050

yomenquiries@youngminds.org.uk

youngminds.org.uk



LOTTERY FUNDED

Registered charity number: 1016968

Company limited by guarantee number: 02780643

Thank you to Dr Andrea Gnanadurai and her colleagues at the Child and Family Public Engagement Board, Royal College of Psychiatry for fact checking this booklet.