

HOW DO I DEAL WITH ANGER WITHOUT BLOWING UP?

Understanding My Anger & Learning to Stay in Control

WHAT IS ANGER?

Anger is a normal emotion that everyone feels. It's like a warning signal that tells us something doesn't feel right or fair. Anger itself isn't "bad," but how we handle it can affect us and others.

Anger can be triggered by:

- **Feeling disrespected** (someone making fun of you or ignoring you)
- **Feeling threatened** (physically or emotionally)
- **Experiencing injustice** (being blamed unfairly or treated differently)
- **Feeling powerless** (not having control in a situation)
- **Being frustrated** (when things don't work out as planned)
- **Having your boundaries crossed** (someone taking your things or invading your space)

Understanding your anger is the first step to managing it better!

MY ANGER TRIGGERS

Instructions: Think about times when you've gotten really angry or lost your temper. Try to identify what specific things tend to set off your anger. Fill in as many sections as you can.

PEOPLE TRIGGERS

Who sometimes triggers anger in me? (This doesn't mean they're bad people - just that interactions can be challenging)

1. _____ How they trigger my anger:

2. _____ How they trigger my anger:

3. _____ How they trigger my anger:

SITUATION TRIGGERS

What situations or events sometimes trigger my anger?

1. _____ Why this situation makes me angry:

2. _____ Why this situation makes me angry:

3. _____ Why this situation makes me angry:

THOUGHT TRIGGERS

What thoughts sometimes run through my mind and trigger anger?

1. " _____ " How this thought fuels my anger:

2. " _____ " How this thought fuels my anger:

3. " _____ " How this thought fuels my anger:

PHYSICAL TRIGGERS

What physical states sometimes make me more likely to get angry? (Being tired, hungry, in pain, etc.)

1. _____ How this affects my anger:

2. _____ How this affects my anger:

3. _____ How this affects my anger:

HOW DO I KNOW I'M GETTING ANGRY?

Instructions: How can you tell when your anger is building? Check all the ways your body and mind signal anger, and add your own unique warning signs.

BODY SIGNALS

- Face gets hot or red
- Heart beats faster
- Breathing gets faster/shallower
- Muscles tighten up
- Clenching fists
- Clenching jaw
- Voice gets louder
- Stomach feels tight
- Feeling restless or jumpy
- Tears of frustration
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

MIND SIGNALS

- Thoughts race
- Can't think clearly
- Thinking "That's not fair!"
- Thinking "They always/never..."
- Focusing only on what's wrong
- Imagining revenge
- Feeling like exploding
- Wanting to hurt something
- Can't focus on anything else
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

BEHAVIOR SIGNALS

- Raising voice/yelling
- Arguing back
- Stomping/slamming things
- Pacing or can't sit still
- Getting in someone's face
- Saying hurtful things
- Threatening others
- Becoming very quiet (shutting down)
- Other: _____
- Other: _____

My earliest warning sign - the very FIRST hint that I'm getting angry - is usually:

MY ANGER SCALE

Instructions: Not all anger feels the same. Describe what your anger looks like at different levels.

LEVEL 1: IRRITATED

How I feel: _____

How I act: _____

Example situation: _____

LEVEL 2: FRUSTRATED

How I feel: _____

How I act: _____

Example situation: _____

LEVEL 3: ANGRY

How I feel: _____
How I act: _____
Example situation: _____

LEVEL 4: VERY ANGRY

How I feel: _____
How I act: _____
Example situation: _____

LEVEL 5: RAGE/EXPLODING

How I feel: _____
How I act: _____
Example situation: _____

The level where I start to lose control is: _____

MY ANGER TOOLBOX

Instructions: Different tools work at different anger levels. Check the strategies you want to try and add your own ideas.

LEVEL 1-2 TOOLS (When you're just starting to feel angry)

BREATHING TECHNIQUES

- Take 5 deep belly breaths
- 4-7-8 breathing (inhale for 4, hold for 7, exhale for 8)
- Blow out anger like blowing out a candle
- Other: _____

THOUGHT SHIFTERS

- Ask: "How important will this be tomorrow?"
- Think: "This feeling will pass"
- Remind myself: "I can handle this without losing control"
- Name what I'm feeling: "I'm feeling angry because..."
- Other: _____

QUICK PHYSICAL RELEASES

- Stretch arms overhead
- Roll shoulders or neck
- Take a short walk
- Get a drink of cold water
- Other: _____

LEVEL 3 TOOLS (When anger is building stronger)

REMOVAL STRATEGIES

- Ask for a time-out: "I need a minute to calm down"
- Step away from the situation
- Go to a designated "cool down" spot
- Count to 10 (or 20, or 50...)
- Other: _____

DISTRACTION TECHNIQUES

- Count backward from 100 by 7s
- Name 5 things I can see, 4 I can touch, 3 I can hear, 2 I can smell, 1 I can taste
- Think of items in a category (animals, cities, foods, etc.)
- Squeeze a stress ball or fidget
- Other: _____

COMMUNICATION METHODS

- Use "I feel" statements instead of accusations
- Write down what I want to say before saying it
- Focus on the current issue, not past problems
- Ask for help: "I'm getting angry and need help calming down"
- Other: _____

LEVEL 4-5 TOOLS (When you're about to blow up)

INTENSE ENERGY RELEASE (Safe ways to release anger)

- Do jumping jacks or push-ups
- Run, bike, or another physical activity
- Punch or scream into a pillow
- Tear up paper that you're allowed to destroy
- Other: _____

COOL DOWN TECHNIQUES

- Splash cold water on face
- Hold an ice cube
- Use cold pack on back of neck
- Listen to calming music
- Other: _____

SUPPORT STRATEGIES

- Call or text a trusted person
- Use a practiced phrase to ask for help
- Remove yourself completely from the situation
- Use a practiced grounding technique
- Other: _____

MY TOP 5 ANGER TOOLS

1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____
-

WHAT TO DO AFTER AN ANGER EPISODE

Instructions: After your anger cools down, it's important to repair and learn from the experience.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What triggered my anger?

- What warning signs did I notice (or miss)?

- What tools did I try?

- What worked or didn't work?

- What would I do differently next time?

MAKING THINGS RIGHT

If your anger affected others, consider these steps:

A good apology includes:

- Taking responsibility for your actions (not justifying or blaming)
- Acknowledging how your behavior affected the other person
- Stating what you'll do differently next time
- Asking what you can do to make it better

My apology script:

Other ways to repair relationships:

- [] Offer to fix anything that was broken or damaged

- Give the person space if they need it
 - Follow through on promises to change behavior
 - Show appreciation for their patience
 - Other: _____
-

MY ANGER PREVENTION PLAN

Instructions: The best way to manage anger is to prevent it from building up. Check the strategies you'll commit to practicing:

PHYSICAL PREVENTION

- Getting enough sleep (hours I need: _____)
- Eating regular meals
- Regular exercise or physical activity
- Limiting caffeine and sugar
- Taking prescribed medications
- Practicing relaxation regularly (not just when angry)
- Other: _____

EMOTIONAL PREVENTION

- Talking about feelings before they build up
- Journaling or creative expression
- Building in daily stress relief
- Learning to recognize and name emotions
- Practicing gratitude or positive focus
- Taking breaks when needed
- Other: _____

SITUATIONAL PREVENTION

- Planning ahead for triggering situations
- Setting healthy boundaries with others
- Having realistic expectations
- Breaking large tasks into smaller steps
- Building in extra time for stressful activities
- Having exit strategies for tough situations
- Other: _____

The ONE prevention strategy I want to focus on this week is:

MY ANGER SUCCESS STORY

Instructions: Think about a time when you handled anger well. Writing about our successes helps train our brain to repeat them!

The situation that made me angry was:

I noticed I was getting angry because:

What I did that helped me stay in control:

What I learned from this experience:

SHARING MY PLAN (OPTIONAL)

Instructions: Sometimes it helps to share your anger management plan with people you trust. They can help support you and remind you of your strategies when needed.

People I might share this plan with:

1.

2.

3.

What I want them to know about my anger triggers and how they can help:

REMEMBER:

- Everyone feels angry sometimes - it's a normal human emotion
- Anger itself isn't bad, it's what you do with it that matters
- You can feel angry AND still make good choices

- Managing anger gets easier with practice
- Your anger does not define who you are
- Getting support for anger management is a sign of strength, not weakness

"Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response." - Viktor Frankl

MY COMMITMENT

I, _____, am committed to recognizing my anger triggers and practicing my calm-down strategies. I understand that this takes practice and I won't be perfect. I will give myself credit for trying and learning.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Notes from my counselor/group leader:
