

Anger

Anger is "an emotional state that varies in intensity from mild irritation to intense fury and rage," Like other emotions, it is accompanied by physiological and biological changes; when you get angry, your heart rate and blood pressure go up, as do the levels of your energy hormones, adrenaline, and noradrenaline.

Anger is a completely normal, usually healthy, human emotion. However, when it gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to problems—problems at work, in your personal relationships, and in the overall quality of your life. It can make you feel as though you are at the mercy of an unpredictable and powerful emotion.

Anger can be caused by both external and internal events. You could be angry with a specific person (such as a colleague) or event (a traffic jam, a cancelled flight), or your anger could be caused by worrying or brooding about your personal problems. Memories of traumatic or enraging events can also trigger angry feelings.

Expressing Anger

The instinctive, natural way to express anger is to respond aggressively. Anger is a natural, adaptive response to threats; it inspires powerful, often aggressive, feelings and behaviours, which allow us to fight and to defend ourselves when we feel attacked. A certain amount of anger, therefore, is necessary to our survival.

On the other hand, we cannot physically lash out at every person or object that irritates or annoys us; laws, social norms, and common sense place limits on how far our anger can take us.

The **Anger management activity** worksheet uses child-friendly language to describe anger and normalise the emotion. The activities are designed to help you think about how you behave differently when you are angry, learn about your triggers, and then come up some alternate ways of behaving when you are mad.

The **Anger Iceberg** represents the idea that, although anger is displayed outwardly, other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface. These other feelings—such as sadness, fear, or guilt—might cause a person to feel vulnerable, or they may not have the skills to manage them effectively.

By exploring what is beneath the surface, you can gain insight into your anger, such as other possible treatment avenues. For example, a child who realises their anger is fuelled by jealousy may benefit from communication skills, whereas a child who realises their anger is caused by stress will benefit from developing self-care habits.

The **Cycle of Anger** grows from irrational thoughts, and leads to a difficult-to-break cycle of growing frustration. The diagram shows anger as beginning with a trigger, which leads to negative thoughts, emotions, physical symptoms, and a behavioural response.

Resources:

What is Anger?

Anger Iceberg

Anger Management Skills

Anger Management Skills Cards

The Cycle of Anger

Warning Signs

Introduction to Anger Management

Anger Thermometer

Anger Diary

Understanding my own behaviour

Tools to help me tell others how I feel

What causes anger issues?

<https://www.healthline.com/health/anger-issues#causes>

Parents' Guide to supporting your child with anger

<https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/a-z-guide/anger>