



Read the inside first

What to do if someone else is angry

Don't ignore someone's anger. If someone looks and sounds angry, then they want you to know that something is not right for them. Be open to listening to what they have to say, and try to find out what is making the person feel that way.

Remember that it may have nothing to do with you. They might have other things going on which doesn't mean they can do what they like to you, but at least it will alert you to what is really going on. Don't forget that we all feel angry at times and may just need to talk things through but be careful about giving your own advice or opinions in case they are not welcome.

If someone who is angry is being violent or abusive, make sure that your own safety is not threatened. You may need to call on the support of others, such as friends or adults, to help you handle the angry person and calm them down.

Don't forget these can help too

In the website, there are some great tips and information about:

- How to handle conflict.
- Problems - How to spot them. How to solve them.
- Chill out and relax.
- Get a handle on being assertive

This information was developed and written by young people as part of the Headroom Project.

For more information check out our website at:
<http://www.headroom.net.au>

For more copies of this pamphlet or info about the Headroom Project contact:

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ANGER

What is it?

How to deal with it.

Understanding anger

Anger is a normal emotion experienced by everyone. You may become angry after a fight with a friend, if someone teases you or if things aren't going your way. Anger can make you feel hot, shaky, make your mouth become dry and make it hard to hear what is being said to you. As the saying goes... you see RED!

Everyone experiences anger in different ways. Anger can sometimes be fuelled by emotions like confusion, rejection, fear, impatience, humiliation, worry and helplessness. Some people experience anger as the urge to lash out and hurt something or someone. Others become withdrawn and bottle their anger up – although it's still obvious that they are angry about something.

Anger is not always a bad thing and can work positively for you and others. It can motivate people to change the things in their world that they don't like such as social injustice, pollution and cruelty to animals.

While feeling angry is a natural reaction to situations that hurt or upset us, it is important that anger is expressed in a way that is not harmful to yourself or others. Letting your anger build up or exploding when you are angry can have a negative effect on your mental and physical health.

When you're angry, try these...

Take time out – cool off first

When you feel really angry, take a couple of deep breaths before responding to the person or situation that made you upset. Taking this time will clear your head and help you avoid saying or doing things that may be harmful or that you will regret later. Better still, postpone the argument until you have calmed down and can communicate your feelings better to resolve the issue. Sometimes the other party wants to sort it out NOW, so be clear that you're not running away.

Figure out what's making you angry

We are hardly ever just angry – there is always something else going on. Often people get angry when they are hurt, upset, disappointed, left out or frustrated but what usually happens is people only let their anger show. So after you have cooled off ask yourself "What is really going on here"?

Recognise when you are angry and try to work out why you are feeling this way. Is it one thing or are there lots of things making you angry? Are you angry with yourself, with others or about a situation? What part are you playing in the situation? Try to work out how you can change the situation that has made you angry. Using problem solving skills and being able to deal with conflict can help you improve your situation.

Write a journal or a letter

When you feel angry, have a go at writing or drawing your thoughts on paper. Write down everything that you feel and why you feel it. This is a good way of relieving your anger and working out ways of tackling situations that upset you. Maybe write it as a journal entry or as a letter to the person you are angry with, but will never send. This is especially good if you are the sort of person who stores their anger, because it is important to release it productively before it becomes overwhelming.

Get some perspective

When something upsets you, you may exaggerate the effect it has on your life and your feelings. Be realistic about how bad things really are. A good check is to ask yourself, "In one month's time, how much will this matter?" or "Is this the worst thing that can ever happen to me?"

Avoid anger triggers

Look out for those certain situations or people who get you angry. Where possible, try to avoid being in these situations and spend a minimal amount of time around those people.

It is also good to manage your anger by...

Remembering to relax

We can all benefit from learning to take time out and relaxing. Practice relaxing in ways that help you to calm down and release anger and stress.

Find a creative outlet that suits you

Whether it is writing, drawing, making music, dancing or skating, find a hobby you enjoy. Doing the things you enjoy will help you relax and can help relieve built-up anger.

What to do if you feel out of control

If you feel that you cannot control your anger and things are getting out of hand, then it is a good idea to get some support to come up with solutions to problems and conflicts. You might want to talk to a friend, your parents, your doctor or a counsellor about what is going on and to discuss ways of dealing with your anger.

If you do go off your head when you are angry, then you have to take responsibility for any damage you cause to people or property. This might mean apologising for your actions and paying for repairs to property. If you don't do this then you are likely to lose friends and the respect of others.

If your anger levels are always extreme, try learning some more techniques or try an anger-management course to better understand how to keep your anger under control and express it safely for all concerned.