

## ANGER WARNING SIGNS

There are several physical warning signs your body shows when you're beginning to get angry. Becoming aware of your own physical warning signs will allow you to manage your anger before it gets out of control. Here are a few:

- Knots in your stomach
- Clenching your hands or jaw
- Feeling clammy or flushed
- Heavy breathing
- Headaches
- Pacing or needing to walk around
- "Seeing red"
- Having trouble concentrating
- Heart rate rising
- Tensing your shoulders



## REDIRECT YOUR ANGER

- **Explore a new hobby.** Find something new and fun to do. You can try painting, drawing, or cooking.
- **Exercise.** Take some time out for yourself and get active. Play a sport or go for a run. Studies have shown that exercise is a great way to change your mood.
- **Listen to music or play music.** Put on your favorite music. Or, if you play an instrument, get lost in your own music. You could also learn how to play something new.
- **Write down your thoughts and feelings.** Try writing down your thoughts next time you're angry. After, you can decide what you want to do with it.
- **Practice deep breathing.** Meditation and deep breathing techniques can help with self-control when you're angry. Doing this regularly can reduce the chances of you losing your cool.
- **Vent to someone you trust.** Talking about the situation with someone close to you may help you feel better about the situation.
- **Distract yourself.** Get your mind off of negative feelings. Read a book or go to the movies with friends and have a good time.

## TEST YOURSELF!

Do you think you know everything about managing your anger? Take this quiz and find out.

1. Blaming others for your problems is a sign of an anger problem.  
a. True                      b. False
2. Anger is NOT a normal emotion.  
a. True                      b. False
3. Expressing your anger, even when you're calm, is never okay.  
a. True                      b. False
4. Anger problems can affect your health.  
a. True                      b. False
5. Listening to music can help reduce stress and anger.  
a. True                      b. False

Answers: 1. a; 2. b; 3. b; 4. a; 5. a

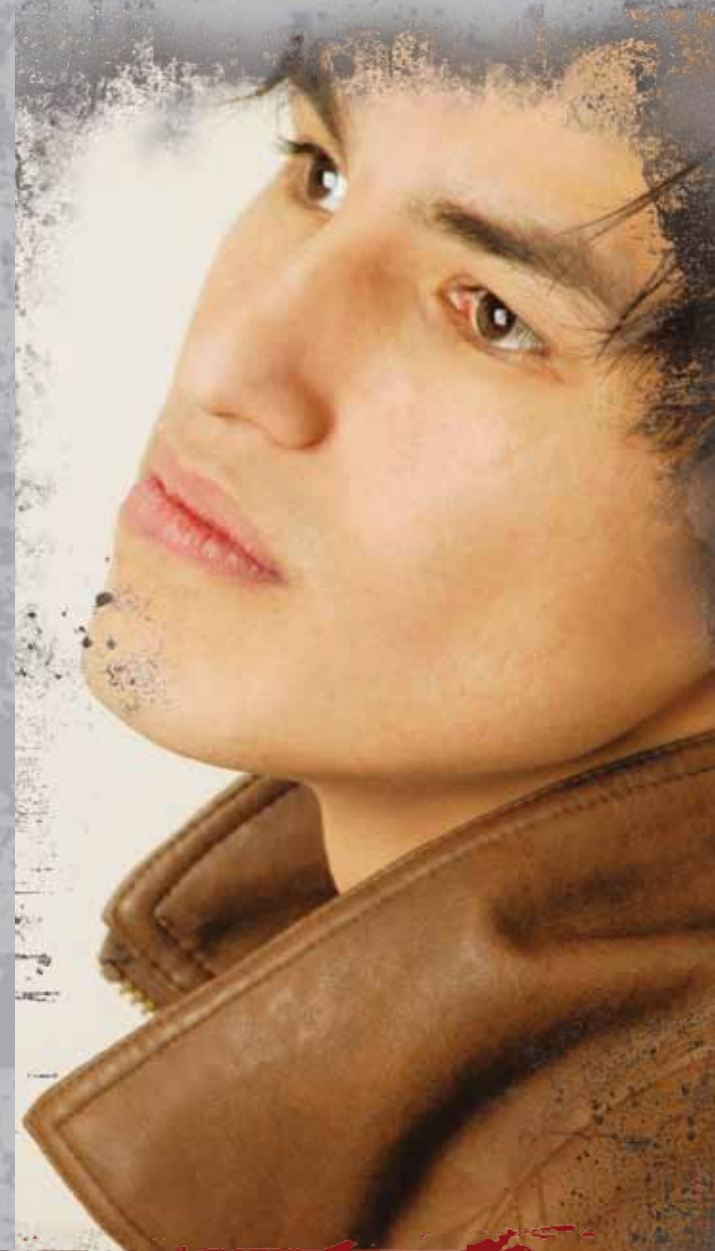


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# ANGER MANAGEMENT



## KEEPING YOUR COOL

## WHAT IS ANGER?

Let's face it, everyone gets mad. Anger is a normal emotion and it can stem from feelings of frustration, hurt, annoyance or disappointment. Adolescence can be extremely stressful, and the hormonal changes teens experience make them more vulnerable to emotional mishaps.

## SIGNS YOU MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM

Getting angry may be normal, but letting it control you is not. Getting frustrated and being angry doesn't always indicate an anger problem, but when your anger becomes a pattern you may need to get help. Does any of these sound like you?

- You often get in heated arguments with your family, friends and acquaintances.
- You get angry often when things don't go your way.
- You often hold in your frustration and anger.
- You often blame others for problems.
- You respond to anger by yelling, throwing things, using abusive language or physically hurting someone.

If you're guilty of any of these things, you may have an anger problem. Sometimes people have outbursts, but if these behaviors continue for a long period of time, it can be very unhealthy.

## WHY ANGER MANAGEMENT IS IMPORTANT

Expressing your anger in the wrong way can ruin relationships with family and friends, impair your judgment, get in the way of success and give you a bad reputation.

Out of control anger effects:

- **Physical Health** – Stress is very bad for your health. Out of control anger puts you at higher risks for heart disease, diabetes and high blood pressure.
- **Mental Health** – Anger uses a lot of your mental energy. It clouds your thinking, it makes it harder for you to concentrate and enjoy life. Anger can lead to depression and other mental health problems, including suicide.
- **Relationships** – Lashing out at friends and family can cause lasting scars. Intense anger makes it harder for others to trust you. Others may not feel comfortable speaking honestly to you because they are never sure what is going to set you off.

## WASTED TALENT

### Carson's Story

Everyone knew that Carson was destined to be successful. He was smart, athletic and was very outgoing. The 17-year-old high school junior was one of the highest ranked baseball players in the state and already had scholarship offers from several colleges.



In addition to keeping up with his school work and baseball practice, Carson was dealing with some issues at home. After a year of constant arguing, his parents decided to divorce. This didn't settle well with him. Almost immediately after his parents decided to split up, there was a change in Carson. He seemed angry at everything; he began constantly arguing with his parents and teachers, and he would snap at his closest friends for the smallest things.

Carson's reputation went from the nice guy to the "hot head" that no one really wanted to be around. The final straw came when Carson had an out of control outburst at one of his baseball games. He disagreed with one of the umpire's calls and got so angry he swung at him with his bat. He was kicked off the team and soon after the incident, colleges started rescinding his scholarship offers. Carson ruined his chances of playing for the college of his dreams.

## SELF-DISCIPLINE

### Getting Yourself under Control

- **Give yourself a timeout** – Before overreacting, take a few deep breathes and count to 10. If necessary, take a break from the person or situation until you've calmed down and are no longer frustrated. This will lower the chances of you lashing out at them.
- **Express your anger** – Once you're calm and thinking clearly, express what's frustrating you. You can be assertive but do not be confrontational. This way, you can express how you feel without hurting others.
- **Think before you speak** – Many times, in the heat of the moment, you say things you'll regret later. Take time to gather your thoughts before saying anything.
- **Identify possible solutions** – Instead of blaming others and focusing on what upset you, focus on the main issue at hand. Anger never fixes anything. It usually makes situations worse.
- **Use "I" statements** – Avoid criticizing or placing blame on others, which usually makes the situation more tense. Try using "I" statements when trying to resolve the problem. This allows you to be more respectful when trying to resolve an issue. For example, try saying, "I'm upset that you didn't invite me to the party this weekend," instead of, "You're a bad friend and never include me in your plans."
- **Don't hold grudges** – Forgiveness isn't always easy, but if you allow negative feelings to overtake positive feelings, you'll find yourself constantly in a bad mood and people will get the wrong impression of who you are. But if you can forgive someone you're angry with, you might both learn from the situation. You can't expect everyone to behave exactly as you want at all times.
- **Use humor** – This is a great way to lighten up a situation. Be sure not to use sarcasm, though, because that could make the situation worse.

