

Anger

Anger is a natural human emotion that everyone experiences sometimes. It can be part of our body's response to feeling mistreated, wronged, hurt or threatened.

However, anger becomes a problem when it:

- Negatively affects **others**
- Negatively impacts your **physical and emotional wellbeing**
- Negatively impacts your **life, schoolwork, relationships**

Common symptoms and effects of anger

- **Outbursts of intense anger, frustration, fury, rage**
- **Physical sensations: racing heart, tensing muscles, quicker breathing, shaking, tearfulness**
- **Getting very angry at small things / feeling out of control**
- **“Lashing out” with aggressive and destructive behaviour**
- **Anger causes problems at home, in relationships, at school**

What causes problems with anger?

Anger can be related to current problems and events in life, such as recent arguments with family, work stress or a break-up.

However, sometimes anger can stem from past experiences. When this is the case, it can be difficult to understand where the anger is coming from. Anger can also be related to other painful emotions that may be more difficult to express, such as sadness, grief, shame, fear, anxiety or confusion.

The Anger Iceberg might help you understand more about yours, or someone else's, anger



What can help?

Get to know your anger

It can be really helpful to learn about your anger and what “triggers” it.

- ⇒ Give your anger a **name**
- ⇒ **Notice** when your anger pops up in day-to-day life
- ⇒ Make your own **Anger Iceberg**
- ⇒ Keep an **anger diary** – Record each time you feel angry. Include what was going on around you, what lead up to it, what thoughts you had.
- ⇒ Use an **anger thermometer** – monitor your anger by rating it from **1-10**

Notice your thought patterns

When someone feels angry, they often think using **negative thought patterns**. Trying to think about things **in a different way** might help.

To do this you can:

- ⇒ Read about **thought patterns** and identify which ones you notice in yourself
- ⇒ Use thought records
- ⇒ Keep a thought/feeling journal – write about all your feelings, not just anger
- ⇒ **Challenge** negative thoughts

Coping Strategies

Coping strategies can help you manage your anger by **calming you down** and **bringing you back to the present moment**.

Strategies include:

- ⇒ Grounding Techniques
- ⇒ **The STOPP Technique**
- ⇒ **Express** your anger in a **safe** way through art, exercise, punching something soft
- ⇒ Make your own **“What I will say to myself”** cards
- ⇒ Relaxation techniques