

Managing anger

The first thing to understand about anger is that the anger itself is not the problem. We are built to get angry when we are threatened and anger is part of our survival system. Anger gives us energy to defend ourselves, to fight for justice and a better world and to stand up to oppression and tyranny.

The problem lies in the behaviour that we exhibit when we are angry. Anger management may be an issue for you if you behave too angrily, can't behave angrily or you are the victim of someone's angry behaviour.

This booklet is designed to give you more insight into the behaviours associated with anger and advice on how to manage these behaviours.

Same day appointments

Monday to Friday

Access through **iPoint**

Workshops and support groups

See website for details

hud.ac.uk/wellbeing-disability-services



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Angry behaviour

Angry feelings may cause us to shout or become violent, to sulk, to seek revenge, to break off relationships, to use sarcasm or be verbally cruel, to retreat into resentful silence, to physically hurt ourselves or damage objects. It is the anti-social behaviour that is the problem, not the feeling which prompts it.

Too much angry behaviour?

What to do about it

- Do not ignore your angry feelings, but do take responsibility for your behaviour. Other people may make you feel angry, but only you choose to behave as you do.
- Recognise that you already can and do keep control up to a point and that you can extend this control.
- If your angry behaviour is associated with alcohol or drugs, moderate your intake, or stop altogether, before you really hurt others or yourself.
- Teasing, joking at the expense of another or 'winding someone up' are all types of angry behaviour. Work out why you're feeling so aggressive towards the person you're treating this way.
- Count to 10 before you lose it. Use that little pause to think of the consequences of your behaviour.
- Find safe ways to express your anger, such as talking, pummelling a cushion or pacing up and down.
- Give yourself a cool-down period. Say that you're too worked up to continue with a conversation and you will come back to it later.

Never use a text message or an email to say what you wouldn't say to someone's face. **Rude, aggressive texts and emails are abusive and bullying.** If you've got an issue with someone tell them about it face to face.

Not behaving angrily enough

For some, the problem is not failing to keep their temper but not even being able to protest when they feel they are getting a raw deal.

What to do about it

- Be honest with yourself—admit to feeling angry and practice positive ways of expressing your feelings.
- Recognise that no-one is going to be grateful or love you better because you swallow your anger; **they just won't know that you're angry.**
- Beware the accumulation of unspoken grievances, which will build up inside and boil over one day.
- Watch out for hidden angry behaviour—talking about someone behind their back, teasing, joking. Would it be fairer and more honest to speak directly to the person you're annoyed with?
- Don't get carried away—the point is not to exchange too little for too much angry behaviour, but to find a happy medium.

Coping with another person's angry behaviour

There's a good chance that you are looking at this leaflet because you are on the receiving end of someone else's over-the-top angry behaviour. This other could be a partner, a teenager, a boss, a colleague, a neighbour.

It's not pleasant to be on the receiving end of angry behaviour and you may well wish to find out all you can and do anything within your power to put a stop to it. But the truth is, this is not your problem and you cannot resolve it. The owner of the angry behaviour has the problem and only they can resolve it.

Try not to let yourself be bullied. Walk away, put the phone down, delete the text without responding to it. If you are on the receiving end of physically violent behaviour, get help urgently.