

It's OK to be Angry

It's okay to feel angry. Everyone gets mad from time to time...as long as you don't hurt anyone. Next time you're angry, instead of hitting or calling people names. Follow these five **A..N..G..E..R** steps.

1. **ADMIT** to yourself you're angry. Aaaaaagh!
Notice the tell-tale signs of anger. Are you...
 - Feeling, shut down, numb, depressed, frustrated?
 - Feeling tense in your neck, hands or face?
 - Feeling hot in your ears?
 - Breathing harder? Shouting?
 - Over the next week, notice how you feel when you get angry and add your own signs of anger to this list.

Write down at least two of your anger signs:

2. **NEUTRALIZE YOURSELF!** Get cool. Get calm.
 - Take a deep breath. And another. It's a good way to get rid of hot air.
 - Be aware of the fact that you are angry and that is OK. Now notice how you feel like responding and work at changing any of those responses that will hurt you or someone else.
 - Keep your hands in your pockets. Shaking your fists and waving your hands speeds up your circulation. You can't hit anyone when your hands are in your pockets.
 - Try not to say something you'll regret later.

Write down at least two ways you will "neutralize" yourself the next time you get mad. Be creative!

3. **GET OUT** of the situation. Take time out. Simply tell the other person "I want to take time out." Only you can be in control of how you behave with your angry feelings. We can't control our emotions, but we can control our responses to those emotions.

Do:

- Go for a walk or run.
- Talk to a friend, a parent, a counselor or peer support team member.
- Play the guitar or piano.
- Write in your journal or diary.
- Picture a river that flows down to the sea. Put your angry thoughts on the river and let them float away.
- Practice calming self-talk.

Write down at least one thing you will do to "get out" the next time you get angry.

Don't:

Hang on to angry thoughts or waste time building a case. Don't drink or do drugs.

4. **EXAMINE** your anger. Remind yourself you have a right to be angry, it's how you handle it that's important. Try to find out why you are angry. Ask yourself:
 - Am I really angry at myself or someone else? Am I taking it out on the person closest to me?
 - Am I really feeling something else, like hurt, afraid, sad, embarrassed or insecure?
 - Am I stressed out or tired?
 - Am I letting unresolved anger from past issues get in the way?
5. **RETURN** and get **REAL**. Tell the other person how you **REALLY** feel.
 - "I feel sad when you say things like that."
 - "I feel hurt." "I feel scared I'll lose you."
 - Do not point fingers by using "you" language.
 - Stick to the facts, not put downs or attacks.
 - Don't blame the other person or use name calling.

You are responsible for your anger. You alone choose how you feel and act.

Remember:

Admit you're angry.
Neutralize. Get calm. Get cool.
Get out of the situation.
Examine your anger.
Return and get Real.

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Get out of the situation.

Examine your anger.

Return and Get Real.

Anger is a feeling and feeling just are.

Anger is OK.

Abuse and violence are not OK.

The Anger Rules

It's OK to feel angry *BUT*:

- Don't hurt others
- Don't hurt yourself
- Don't hurt property

Do talk about it.