

Dealing with Anger

*“For every minute you remain angry, you give up sixty seconds of a peaceful mind”
– Ralph Waldo Emerson*



What is anger?

Anger is an emotional state that varies in intensity; from mild annoyance to intense fury, rage or hostility. It is accompanied by physical and biological changes, such as an increase in heart rate and blood pressure.

Feeling angry is not bad; however, how it is expressed can be. Expressing your angry feelings in an assertive, non-aggressive manner is the healthiest way, for example, making your needs known, how to have your needs met, or making someone aware that your personal boundaries are being violated. When it gets out of control and turns destructive, it can lead to problems—at work, home, relationships and your overall quality of life.

Causes of Anger:

- Being tired or overwhelmed
- Unexpressed or unmet needs
- Low self-esteem
- Stress
- Traumatic events (current or memories of the event)
- Felling out of control, such as traffic jams, not obtaining a desired job

When anger becomes a problem:

- Do you find yourself frequently fighting with others?
- Do you have physical altercations?
- Do you avoid others because you know that an argument or fight will occur with them?
- Do you feel that you are losing control and becoming aggressive, throwing items, punching walls, hitting others (or wanting to hit others)?
- Do you use anger to get attention?
- Do you use anger to get your way?

If you said “YES” to any of the above: You may have a problem with managing your anger.

Tips for Managing Your Anger

1. Take a time out
2. Get some exercise
3. Think before you speak and think about the consequences
4. Identify possible solutions
5. Practice relaxation techniques
6. Recognize stress and find ways to prevent it
7. Use distance/delay your reaction
8. Consider counseling to get to the root of the anger
9. You can choose NOT to react in anger
10. Use a diary or journal

Anger is often the secondary emotion and that means that anger almost always follows another emotion such as—frustration, disappointment, sadness, rejection, jealousy, bitterness or fear. Very often, “anger” masks the true feelings and protects the person from feeling vulnerable.

**Remember – you don’t have to attend every argument that comes your way.

Helpful websites:

Stress Group (<http://www.stressgroup.com/home.html>)

Self-improvement Advice (<http://www.self-improvement-advice.org/>)

Inner Health Studio (<http://www.innerhealthstudio.com/>)

**To talk with a Bucks Counselor, call 215.968.8189 or email
counseling@bucks.edu to schedule an appointment.**

It’s FREE and confidential.