



Family Centre Information Package

Anger



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WHAT IS ANGER?

Anger is an emotional response to situations we perceive as being threatening or out of our control. It arouses powerful feelings and behaviours that help us to express negative emotions, to defend ourselves when we are attacked, or motivate us to solve a problem.

SIGNS

Everyone experiences and expresses anger differently. Some common signs of anger include:

- Clenching your hands or jaw
- Hands shaking or trembling
- Sweating
- Headaches
- Difficulty concentrating
- Rapid heartbeat and/or breathing
- Feeling hot or cold
- Muscle tension
- Tantrums (in young children)
- Silence
- Sulking
- Staring, angry facial expression
- Verbal expressions, such as yelling or cursing

IS ANGER ALWAYS A PROBLEM?

Anger is a normal emotion experienced by people of all ages. Everyone feels angry from time to time. Anger is our natural “warning bell” that something is wrong. This “warning bell” can be good for us—it can move us to make positive changes in our lives or correct an injustice. Anger becomes a problem itself when it becomes destructive. As author Jim Butcher writes in his novel, *White Night*:

- *Anger is just anger. It isn't good. It isn't bad. It just is. What you do with it is what matters. It's like anything else. You can use it to build or to destroy. You just have to make the choice.*

HOW DO I KNOW IF ANGER IS A PROBLEM FOR ME?

Anger becomes a problem when:

- You are frustrated or angry a lot of the time.
- You find it difficult to calm down once you've become angry.
- You get angry about small, everyday things.
- Your temper causes problems at work, school, or in your relationships.
- Your anger has led to physical violence (against yourself or others) or gotten you in trouble with the law.

- Your anger prevents you from doing things you enjoy.
- You have withdrawn socially to avoid getting angry or because you get angry whenever you are out.
- You have turned to unhealthy coping mechanisms (e.g. alcohol/drug abuse, self-harm, over/under-eating, etc.) to deal with your anger.
- You act out your anger in ways that you find frightening or out of control.



FACTS

- Men are not “angrier” than women – women get mad just as often as men do, but men and women experience anger in different ways. Also, it is a myth that women and girls “should not” get angry. Anger is universal!
- Anger is not hereditary – how we express anger is *learned*. That means we can learn different ways to deal with our anger!
- Feeling angry is not the same as being aggressive.
- Everyone shows anger differently and gets angry about different things.
- There is no “cure” for anger. It is normal to get angry sometimes! However, it is important to learn healthy ways of dealing with anger.
- “Letting it rip” or “exploding” with anger is **not** helpful—it actually increases anger and aggression and makes the situation worse.
- Communicating your feelings in an assertive way (being respectful of yourself and others) is the best way to release anger.
- Ignoring anger will not make it go away—it is important to acknowledge how a situation makes you feel and to come up with ideas to solve the problem.

FAMILY CENTRE SERVICES

Family Centre offers [BRAVE](#) an eight-week, on-site program designed to help adults learn new and effective ways to manage anger, frustration, stress and other intense emotions. Participants engage in fun and interactive activities that promote learning and connecting with others, while also working towards achieving emotional balance in their lives. This program is designed to help participants identify past patterns of emotion in order to learn and practice new skills and to promote change.

Family Centre also offers individual and family counselling services (ages 7+). If you are interested in scheduling a counselling session, please call Family Centre (403) 320-4232 extension 240, to speak to an intake counsellor.

Family Centre offers the Kin Family Resource Library. Visitors to the library have access to books, videos, DVDs, and magazines that cover a variety of topics, including anger. There is no cost for

accessing the library; all that is required is a Family Centre library card, which is available at reception. To search and reserve available resources click [here](#).

HOW TO HELP YOURSELF

There are several different activities that have been found to be helpful with dealing with anger. Try using one of the following activities to reduce anger and keep from “blowing up”. If you think you may have an anger problem, please use these activities only as a short-term response to anger, and not as a substitute for professional therapy.

- [Anger Management Relaxation Techniques](#)
- Humour—try to avoid using negative sarcasm and instead opt for some good-natured humour
- Exercise—try walking, swimming, yoga, etc.
- Take a “timeout”—remove yourself from the situation, count to 10, and breathe
- Listen to your favourite music
- [BRAVE Coping Plan](#)

RESOURCES

LOCAL RESOURCES

- Lethbridge Family Services Counselling 403-327-5724
 - 1107 2A Avenue N., Lethbridge, AB T1H 0E6
 - LFS provides counselling services to individuals who are experiencing difficulties in their lives, including anger. Subsidies may be available.
- Canadian Mental Health Association (Lethbridge) 403-329-4775
 - 426 6 Street S., Lethbridge, AB T1J 2C9
 - The local office of CMHA provides crisis intervention, education and training in mental health issues, and peer support and self-help programs.
- Community Mental Health (Alberta Health Services) 403-381-5260
 - 200 5 Avenue S., Lethbridge, AB, T1J 4L1 (Provincial Building)
 - Customer focussed services include crisis intervention and stabilization, prevention, community support, intervention services.
- Associates Counselling Services 403-381-6000
 - 239 12B Street N., Lethbridge, AB, T1H 2K8
 - Associates is an association of independent professionals and offers a wide range of counselling services, including family and child/youth counselling. Subsidies may be available.
- Crossroads Counselling Centre 403-327-7080
 - 202 – 542 7 St. S, Lethbridge, AB, T1J 2H1
 - Crossroads offers counselling to individuals, couples, and families for a variety of concerns. Subsidies may be available.

WEBSITES

- Canadian Mental Health Association: <http://lethbridge.cmha.ca/> (local) or <http://www.cmha.ca/> (national)
- Help Guide: <http://helpguide.org>
- American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org/>
- Get Self-Help: <http://getselfhelp.co.uk/anger.htm>
- Mind – For Better Mental Health: <http://www.mind.org.uk>
- Kim’s Counseling Corner—Activities for Kids: <http://www.kimscounselingcorner.com>

VIDEO

- *Anger Management* (2003): A timid businessman (Adam Sandler) is wrongfully sentenced to anger management, where he butts heads with his unpredictable therapist (Jack Nicholson). Rated 14.
- *Punch Drunk Love* (2002): A romantic comedy about a shy and lonely man who has been ridiculed by his sisters his whole life. His repressed anger occasionally escapes in bouts of rage. Rated 14A
- *12 Angry Men* (1957): A jury of 12 men deliberate the evidence of a murder trial, along with their own prejudices about the accused and each other. Not Rated
- *Scent of a Woman* (1992): A prep school student in need of money takes a job assisting a blind man with anger issues. Rated 14
- *The Lion King* (1994): A lion cub is tricked by his uncle into thinking he caused his father’s death. Uncle Scar has been nurturing anger toward his brother and his family for many years. Rated for Family.
- *Mindfulness—Brain- Hand Model*: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vESKrzvgA40>
- *Just Breathe*—Mindful Schools-explanation of anger from kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RVA2N6tX2cg&feature=youtu.be>

BOOKS

- *When Sophie Gets Angry—Really, Really Angry* by Molly Bang: When Sophie is forced to share her stuffed animal, she gets very angry and runs into the woods. After climbing a large tree, Sophie calms down and is able to return peacefully to her family. Available in the Kin Family Resource Library.
- *Sometimes I Like to Fight, But I Don’t Do it Much Anymore* by Lawrence Shapiro: Douglas, a young boy who struggles with anger, learns new skills and techniques for anger management. This book also provides further detail on the different skills Douglas learns, so that readers can learn new skills, too. Available in the Kin Family Resource Library.

Family Centre - email: info@famcentre.ca - phone: (403) 320 4232
Suite 225, 200 – 4 Avenue S., Lethbridge Centre, Lethbridge, AB T1J 4C9

- *The Feeling Good Handbook* by David Burns: Readers will learn how to use cognitive therapy to deal with personal and interpersonal problems, including anger.
- *The Dance of Anger: A Woman's Guide to Changing the Pattern of Intimate Relationships* by Harriet Lerner: Readers will learn new skills for managing anger that will help them in interpersonal relationships.
- *Anger: The Misunderstood Emotion* by Carol Tavris: This book debunks several common myths about anger. Readers will learn research-based information about anger, as well as strategies for managing anger in a healthy way. This book is very well written and has a lot of great anecdotes.
- *Getting Control of Your Anger* by Robert Allan: This book provides general information on anger, tackles anger myths, and teaches readers anger management skills based on the author's "three-step plan". Available in the Kin Family Resource Library.

For more books on anger, please visit the Kin Family Resource Library at Family Centre. Additional books can also be found using the following sites:

- <http://www.thehelpfulcounselor.com/10-great-books-that-can-help-an-angry-child/>
- <http://kidlutions.blogspot.ca/2012/03/books-that-help-kids-deal-with-anger.html>
- <http://amazon.com/anger-management-for-teens>

OTHER

- Access Mental Health 403-943-1500
 - Assists community members in accessing appropriate, non-emergency, services for mental health and addiction issues
- AHS Mental Health Help Line 1-877-303-2642
 - Provides confidential crisis intervention, mental health information, and referrals when necessary
- Distress Line 403-327-7905
 - Crisis intervention. Listeners are available 24 hours a day
- Kids Help Phone 1-800-668-6868
 - Provides confidential, bilingual telephone and web counselling to children and young adults (up to age 25) experiencing problems or concerns
- Inspirational Quotes about Anger
 - *Holding on to anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one who gets burned.* - Buddha
 - *Anger is an acid that can do more harm to the vessel in which it is stored than to anything on which it is poured.* - Mark Twain

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- *Anybody can become angry - that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy. - Aristotle*
- *It is impossible for you to be angry and laugh at the same time. Anger and laughter are mutually exclusive and you have the power to choose either. - Wayne Dyer*
- *Get mad, then get over it. – Colin Powell*

REFERENCES

- <http://helpguide.org/>
- <http://www.pbs.org/thisemotionallife/topic/anger/what-anger>
- American Psychological Association: <http://www.apa.org/topics/anger/index.aspx>
- Quotes from www.brainyquote.com

Client's Coping Plan

A coping plan is something we can turn to when we are experiencing an intense feeling, such as (but not limited to) sad, angry, frustrated, and anxious. We might not be sure of what we can do or how to even manage these intense feelings, all we might know is that we feel overwhelmed by them and may have an urge to do something to release them. A coping plan is a list of ways that we can release these feelings, it includes activities that have a specific meaning to us, can bring us joy, help us relax, or make us laugh, hopefully making it easier to return to our concerns at a later date.

It can be difficult to think of these activities when we are in the moment so here is a list of a few possible activities. Put a check mark next to the ones that you already do or would like to give a try.

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meditate | <input type="checkbox"/> Eat well & drink some water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use progressive relaxation | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a nap |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Practice deep breathing | <input type="checkbox"/> Listen to music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time appreciating nature (e.g. watch the clouds, listen to the birds) | <input type="checkbox"/> Write a song or poem |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Garden | <input type="checkbox"/> Sing a song |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use a mindfulness activity (e.g. 5,4,3,2,1 exercise) | <input type="checkbox"/> Draw and/or paint |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engage my senses (e.g. smell something pleasant, splash water on my face, touch something soft or soothing) | <input type="checkbox"/> Make a craft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engage my spiritual side:
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Watch a favorite movie or TV show |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go to my safe place:
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Read a book/magazine/paper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use a gratitude journal | <input type="checkbox"/> Play a game |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Write a positive letter to myself | <input type="checkbox"/> Spend time with an animal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use positive self-talk (e.g. "I am okay"):
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Laugh out loud |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day dream or visualize something relaxing:
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean (e.g. house, car) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stretch | <input type="checkbox"/> Take a long bath or shower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise (e.g. 5 jumping jacks, dance, yoga):
_____ | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a friend:
_____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Go for a (short or long) walk or run | <input type="checkbox"/> Talk to a family member:
_____ |
- Where my coping plan will be kept so I can access it easily: _____