

# Anger Management Steps

Remember that anger is a normal feeling. It consists of feeling, thinking, and behaving. There is a difference between feeling angry, which is okay, and behavior—such as stuffing, withdrawing, blaming, triangling, or exploding—which may not be okay. These anger styles are usually not effective in helping you solve the problem that made you angry or in helping you get along with people and get what you want.

You can't control the feelings you get, but you can control your behavior. You may need to look at your thinking, or self-talk, and see if it is positive or negative. You may need to change your thinking to help you change behavior. You are responsible for your behavior when you are angry. No matter what might influence someone to use violent or aggressive behavior, it is still his or her responsibility to choose nonviolent and helpful ways to express anger. Each person is accountable for his or her behavior. You always have the choice to express your anger in a helpful or harmful way.

Some teens rush right from feeling to behaving. They get mad and hit someone, or put someone down, or yell. So teenagers need to learn how to put thinking between their feelings of being angry and their behavior.

The **anger management steps** are a plan to help you put thinking between feeling angry and your behavior.

- 1. Recognize that you're angry.**
- 2. Accept your anger.**
- 3. Practice relaxation.**
- 4. Decide if it's a problem you can't change or a problem you can change.**
- 5. Think about helpful and harmful ways to express the anger.**
- 6. Evaluate the consequences.**
- 7. Choose a best way.**
- 8. Problem-solve or express your anger in a helpful way.**

Remember the principle of chunking it down. You will probably not be able to change your behavior right away. Behavioral change often comes slowly and inconsistently. Remember to set small, concrete goals if you want to change how you handle anger. For instance, a first goal can be to look at how you deal with anger. Do you stuff, withdraw, blame, triangle someone else in, explode, or problem-solve? Each time you notice how you deal with anger, think if you should have done it differently. If you didn't problem-solve, what could you have done to problem-solve? Could you have used your anger to give you the power to make changes in yourself? Or could you have accepted what you can't change, expressed your anger in a helpful way so you could let it go, and then done something good for yourself?

You can go through the steps of anger management even after you express your anger in a harmful way. Sooner or later, you will begin to use your anger to work for you, or you will express it in a helpful way, or you will use problem-solving skills. Changing your behavior may take two or three months, so don't give up if you don't get the steps right away.