



COPING WITH ANGER

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With the stress of social isolation and everything that is going on with COVID19, domestic violence and child abuse is on the rise. Maybe the usual coping skills that you use to deal with life's daily stressors are not helping during this time of heightened anxiety. Anger is a normal and even healthy emotion — but it's important to deal with it in a positive way. Uncontrolled anger can take a toll on both your health and your relationships.

Learning to control anger is a challenge for everyone at times. Seek help for anger issues if your anger seems out of control, causes you to do things you regret or hurts those around you.

We encourage you to reach out for help if you are experiencing uncontrolled anger or if you are the victim of abuse or violence. Contact information for the National Domestic Violence hotline and website is below:

- [1-800-799-7233](tel:1-800-799-7233)
- [1-800-787-3224 \(TTY\)](tel:1-800-787-3224)
- <https://www.thehotline.org/is-this-abuse/abuse-defined/>
- <https://www.domesticshelters.org/>

TIPS FOR MANAGING ANGER

Below is a list of healthy ways to release anger and can even be fun. Anyone at any age can use these techniques. Parents, we encourage you to engage your children in these coping mechanisms.

Think Before You Speak

In the heat of the moment, it's easy to say something you'll later regret. Take a few moments to collect your thoughts before saying anything — and allow others involved in the situation to do the same.

Practice Relaxation Skills

When your temper flares, put your relaxation skills to work. Practice deep-breathing exercises, imagine a relaxing scene, or repeat a calming word or phrase, such as "Take it easy." You might also listen to music, write in a journal or do a few yoga poses — whatever it takes to encourage relaxation. Apps like [Calm](#) and [Headspace](#) offer free meditation classes that can help you hone your mindfulness skills.

Use Humor to Release Tension

Lightening up can help diffuse tension. Use humor to help you face what's making you angry and, possibly, any unrealistic expectations you have for how things should go. Avoid sarcasm, though — it can hurt feelings and make things worse.

Take a Timeout

Timeouts aren't just for kids. Give yourself short breaks when things start to get too stressful. A few moments of quiet time might help you feel better prepared to handle what's ahead without getting irritated or angry. (if your children are making you angry, let them know that you need a time out because you are feeling very angry and upset and need a few moments to get your anger under control. Be honest with your children, they already know and understand the concept of "Timeout".)

Entertain Yourself with a Fun Activity

It's easy to feel like you've run out of fun activities for you and your family to do together while isolated at home. Here are a few resources that may spark some new ideas to help you relax:

- [101 Fun Things to Do in Isolation](#)
- [7 Fun Things to Do While Working from Home with Kids](#)

Identify Possible Solutions

Instead of focusing on what made you mad, work on resolving the issue at hand. Does your child's messy room drive you crazy? Close the door. Is your partner late for dinner every night? Schedule meals later in the evening — or agree to eat on your own a few times a week. Remind yourself that anger won't fix anything and might only make it worse.

Stick with “I” Statements

To avoid criticizing or placing blame — which might only increase tension — use "I" statements to describe the problem. Be respectful and specific. For example, say, "I'm upset that you left the table without offering to help with the dishes" instead of "You never do any housework."

Get Some Exercise

Physical activity can help reduce stress that can cause you to become angry. If you feel your anger escalating, go for a brisk walk or run, or spend some time doing other enjoyable physical activities.

- Rip paper
- Pop bubble wrap
- Squish playdough
- Wrap your arms around yourself and squeeze
- Write a letter to someone
- Jump on a trampoline
- Do wall push-ups
- Write down what's bothering you and rip it up
- Squeeze a stress ball
- Talk about it
- Scribble on paper and crumple it up
- Do jumping jacks
- Put the palms of your hands together, push and release
- Do stretches
- Bust water balloons
- Stuff a pillow-case full of old clothes, hang it in the doorway and use it as a punching bag