

I feel a little bit wound up



Do you know what is causing it? Use your stop and think skills. Do some relaxed breathing. Try and focus on something else,



I feel quite angry



What is it you feel like doing? What would the consequences of doing that be? Try and relax, take some time out and use self-talk skills.



I'm furious!



Leave the situation if you can. Try and get your breathing to return to normal so you can clear your head. Do something physical that won't hurt you or anyone else



## My Coping Plan

This plan will help you think about what you are experiencing and different ways to cope. You might want to share it with your family and teachers so they can support you when you need it.

What causes me to feel angry?

.....  
.....  
.....

Understanding My Anger...  
What I think:

.....  
.....

What I feel:

.....  
.....

What I feel in my body:

.....  
.....

What I do:

.....  
.....

What coping strategies can I use?

.....  
.....

How can other people help me?

.....  
.....



**The Meadows**  
Sexual Assault Referral Centre

# Managing ANGER

The aim of this guide is to help young people who have experienced a distressing incident manage the thoughts and feelings that they may have. Sometimes when something bad happens, you might feel angry - at the person who did it, at yourself or at other people around you.



## This guide will talk you through

- What anger is
- Signs and symptoms
- Coping strategies
- My coping plan
- How to get further help



## What is anger?

Everyone gets angry at times. It's completely normal and can be a helpful emotion to have (because it tells us that something is not right).

Sometimes anger can get out of control. This is when anger becomes a problem, especially if it means you start hurting others or hurting yourself (emotionally and physically).

## Signs and Symptoms

Anger is a normal emotion - when you feel angry, it tells you that something is wrong, and you need to do something to change that. Anger can help keep you safe. Anger can affect:

- **Physical feelings in your body** - feeling tight, tense, hot, very alert, wanting to lash out
- **Thoughts** - wanting to break things, hurt people / self, thinking that no one understands
- **Feelings** - stressed, tearful, wound up, restless, furious
- **Behaviour** - shouting, screaming, slamming doors, aggression

Sometimes when stressful things build up, little things can make you explode. Think of anger like a bottle, where every little thing that stresses you out is a drop of water. If you don't learn ways to cope with stress, what will happen? The bottle will fill up and everything will spill out.



It is helpful to notice the little things that are making you angry. You could make a list of what winds you up, and notice how it makes you feel, think and behave.



## Coping Strategies

Here are some things you can try to cope with anger.

### Use relaxation.

If you are feeling angry or stressed, relaxation is a really helpful tool. Relaxation comes in many different forms, so it's important that you find something that works for you. Try these different techniques:

- **Deep breathing.** This helps with the physical feelings of anger, helping your body to become calm. When you feel calm and relaxed in your body, it is easier to think clearly. This is a really important skill to learn, as you can do it anywhere
- **Listening to music.** Some people like relaxing music. Some people like music they can sing along loudly to. See what works for you
- **Exercise.** This can be going for a walk, or doing something more active
- **Use pictures.** These can be of people you love, or a happy place you have been. Anything that makes you feel good feelings

### Talk to people.

Tell them why you're feeling angry or wound up. They might be able to help. If someone is annoying you, think of how you can tell them that in a calm way:

- Explain how you are feeling
- Try not to use blaming language
- Apologise if you have done something wrong
- Be clear about what you would like the other person to do

### Coping cards.

You might want to use these to show people that you're getting wound up, and you need some time-out.



**Stop and think.** What will happen if you act on your angry feelings? Will it make things better in the long term, or worse? If you use some relaxation skills, it is easier to think about consequences.

### Keep a diary.

This will help you think about what causes you to feel angry, and plan how to avoid those things if you can. If you can't, make a plan about what you can do to manage your anger in that situation?

### Self-talk.

This doesn't mean talking to yourself out loud - unless you want to. Prepare some phrases in your head that will encourage you to use coping strategies and bring your anger down. You might want to say things like "I don't want to upset anyone" or "I can control my angry feelings." You could write these on your coping cards.

### Find an activity.

Doing something active can be a safe way of getting out the physical feelings of anger. This might be kicking a ball around, jumping on a trampoline, squeezing a stress ball, screaming into your pillow, or punching a mattress. Whatever works for you!

