

Feeling angry

Why you might feel angry

Everyone feels angry sometimes – anger is a normal human emotion.

As a parent, you are probably balancing many different demands. It is easy to lose patience and feel angry when children do not cooperate or things do not go to plan.

Being busy or tired, and things like illness, stress, financial difficulties and not enough time for yourself, can also make you more likely to feel angry.

You might also sometimes feel angry with your spouse, if you have one – for example, when you do not agree about something. Other people's anger or frustration can also make you feel angry.

For some people, parenting can also raise unresolved anger or other difficult emotions from their own childhood. If you experienced trauma, abuse or neglect as a child, you might react strongly to some situations or have trouble controlling yourself when you are angry.

Why is managing your anger important?

Anger can be a good thing. Sometimes it can give you the energy to get something done or to stand up for what you believe in.

But losing your temper when you are angry can make problems worse and lead to conflict with others. For example, you might say or do unhelpful things that cannot be taken back. Being around a lot of conflict is frightening for children.

If you are angry, it can be difficult to be firm but fair when you use discipline or consequences with your child. It is better to wait until you have calmed down so that you use discipline appropriately.

[When it's hard to manage your anger](#)

If you find you are feeling angry often, or if you are finding it hard to control yourself when you are angry, it might help to talk to a health professional. You could start by seeing your local medical practitioner, who can help you make an anger management plan. If you are so angry that you feel you might hurt your child, seek help immediately.

Tips to better manage your anger

These anger management techniques might help you if you find yourself getting angry a lot or you have trouble controlling yourself when you are angry.

Step 1: identify the early signs of anger

The early signs of anger include faster heart rate, churning stomach, sweating, tense muscles and faster breathing. When you can recognise these signs, you can also take steps to stop your anger getting out of control.

It is really important to know and say that you are angry, even if it is just to yourself. For example, 'This is making me angry' or 'I can feel myself getting angry here'.

Step 2: do something to calm down before it escalates

Once you notice the early signs of anger, you can do a few things to start calming down. Here are some ideas:

- Take a big breath and sigh. Try to slow your breathing.
- Do something that soothes you, like listening to music.
- Go outside for a run or walk.
- Take a warm shower.
- Go somewhere quiet for a few minutes.

Signs that you are calming down include your heart rate slowing down and your muscles relaxing.

Step 3: reflect on the situation

When you have calmed down, it can help to think about what has just happened. This can help you learn from the experience and handle similar situations better in the future. Ask yourself:

- 'How important is this? Why was I so upset about it?'
- 'How do I want to sort out this situation?'
- 'Do I need to do something about this, or can I just let it go?'

Setting a good example for your children

Your child will learn from you how to manage anger, so it is important to set a good example.

Tell your children or your spouse how you are feeling and what you are doing about it. It shows them a better way to manage their anger before it gets out of hand. For example, 'I'm feeling angry. I need to go outside for a minute to calm down before we talk about this'.

If you lose your temper, it is better to say sorry for yelling rather than sorry for being angry. This shows your children that it is OK to feel angry sometimes, but it is not okay to yell or throw things.

It is also a good idea to take a moment to work out what to say when you apologise – for example, ‘I’m sorry for losing my temper. I shouldn’t have said that, even though I was angry. Next time I’ll take myself away to calm down earlier’.



Recommended Reads

- [It's ok to go up the slide: renegade rules for raising confident and creative kids](#)
- [How to weep in public: feeble offerings on depression from one who knows](#)
- [5-Minute Mindfulness: Parenting](#)