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management techniques



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aspirus.org/clinics/wwih/eap_overview.php

Managing Anger

managing anger

Anger is a natural emotion. It reminds us what we like and what we don't like. Many of us were taught, as children, to deny or stifle our anger, but acknowledging to ourselves that we are, indeed, angry is the first step to managing anger.

You may have been denying anger for such a long time that it will take some practice to recognize when it's there. But when you start to look for it, you will see that many things can stir up angry feelings. You spilled your coffee, you burned your toast, now the car won't start and you'll be late to work. No one did these things to you - they just happened. We tend to feel angry when we sense we've lost control or when we feel vulnerable or afraid. We all have these feelings sometimes. The effects of anger, however, depend on what we do with it.

denying anger

Many times we deny that we are angry because it doesn't seem rational to us or we're embarrassed by it. Remember that all humans feel anger, whether or not it is expressed. By denying anger, you deny that you are human.

blame-placing

Sometimes we blame others for our anger. Some people do this regularly as a habit. People generally don't like to be around blame-placers because they never know when they might be next in line to be blamed for something.

accepting and expressing anger

By recognizing and accepting our own anger, we can control it and release it responsibly. Acknowledging what makes us angry instead of denying or placing blame leads to self-understanding. Once we identify some common anger-making situations, we can make a choice to change them, ignore them, or talk about our anger honestly and respectfully.

helpful steps to dealing with anger-arousing incidents:

1. Recognize and acknowledge when anger is building up.
2. Calm yourself before you say or do anything more. Go somewhere quiet, away from the agitation. Take some deep breaths.
3. Identify unhelpful thoughts and challenge them. Create more rational thoughts such as:
 - "This isn't really the worst thing in the universe."
 - "I can deal with this situation even if I don't like it!"
4. Decide what is in your best, long-term interest to do, and do it. Sometimes the best choice may be to not do anything until you are calmer. You might choose to be more assertive with someone, to take some action, or to do nothing. Take responsibility for whatever you do.
5. Congratulate yourself for managing your anger appropriately.

Remember, managing anger depends on taking responsibility for your emotions and your actions, rather than remaining stuck in blame and fury or silent resentment. If anger simply becomes an attack on the nearest scapegoat instead of an opportunity to change a bad situation, it loses its power and feeds on itself. The result may be a rather unhappy and lonely life. When managed well, however, anger can help clarify needs and improve relationships.

help is available

Aspirus Employee Assistance Services has counselors available to help you and your family. You can call the confidential helpline 24 hours a day at:

715.848.4357 ~ 800.236.4457

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