

# Anger Management

Anger is a natural adaptive response to threats; it inspires powerful, often aggressive, feelings and behaviors, which allow us to fight and to defend ourselves when we are attacked. A certain amount of anger, therefore, is necessary to our survival, but too much of it will be disastrous.

## Managing Anger

1. Managing anger is often managing Communications: - For two people to communicate clearly, there needs should be that of a talker and a listener. However is an argument there are two talker and no listeners! Thus to resolve an argument one must remember several tech. of good communication.
  - (a) Use active listening: - Making eye contact and saying, "I understand what you're saying, or "I understand that you feel such and such", helps calm the other person down and helps clarify misunderstanding, often laying the groundwork for him to listen to you after he has calmed down.
  - (b) Choose non-attacking words and use a polite tone: - we can always express our views in a variety of ways, so the choice of words is important, our tone of voice and our body language convey as much information as our words.
  - (c) Do not let the argument expand: - In many arguments (especially marital ones) one person brings up old issues from previous disputes. That expands the argument and creates too many issues to resolve at one time. If one person tries to bring up other issues, the other can use the "broken record technique", repeatedly politely insisting that he/she will stick to the first issue, and will deal with the others only after the main issue has been resolved.
- (2) Choose constructive (not destructive) methods/solutions/ideas: - Try physical outlets e.g. exercise, housework, crafts etc. Problems can be resolved with action plans e.g. forming a neighborhood watch to combat vandalism.
- (3) Involve an objective third party: - Ask someone you trust to be a sounding board. Identify "Who might this be?"

- (4) Use the 'empty chair' exercise: - Pretend you are sitting across the person you are angry with and then say what's on your mind. Who is this person?
- (5) Writing a letter to the person you are angry with: - One can also write down to the person describing it as if, it happened just now or one can also report about the event that took place or both.
- (6) Use relaxation technique: - e.g. guided imagery, self-help tapes, and music.
- (7) Use positive self-talk: - e.g. "I am able to choose my anger style" and "I am angry but I am not going to let it".
- (8) Work towards anger resolution through acceptance: - Learn to live with the fact that certain people and situations, past, present and future will not change. Make realistic expectations e.g. what is one frustrating anger situation?