



WHAT TO DO WHEN ANGER BECOMES PROBLEMATIC

INFORMATION FOR VETERANS

Everyone gets angry. Anger can motivate you, give you a sense of strength and help you react quickly to threats. While many people think that being angry is wrong or bad, anger itself is not a problem. However, if anger is expressed in ways that are harmful to ourselves or others, or that persist for a long time, it may be a problem.

ANGER MAY BE A PROBLEM FOR YOU IF:

- you feel angry, frustrated, or irritated a lot
- your anger is 'close to the surface' much of the time
- your anger is out of proportion to its trigger
- you feel like you might explode or lose control
- you've been irritable and resentful for a long time
- your anger is expressed as verbal or emotional abuse, or physical abuse or property damage
- it takes a long time for your anger to reduce after you're triggered
- you think anger is the only way to get what you want
- you feel anxious, regretful or depressed about your anger
- you use alcohol or drugs to manage your anger
- you engage in risky behaviours for the adrenaline rush to help 'burn' or release your anger
- your anger causes problems with your family, friends, colleagues, or the law

WHERE TO GET SUPPORT

CFMWS Family Information Line website: <https://cfmws.ca/support-services/family-information-line>

Phone: 1-800-866-4546 (North America), 00-800-771-17722 (International),

E-mail: FIL-LIF@cfmws.com for information and/or video appointments

YOU CAN LEARN TO MANAGE YOUR ANGER

- Talk to your doctor about getting counselling and professional help.
- While you may have doubt, therapy provides a confidential space to understand your anger, feel more in control of your reactions, and to learn tools that help to diffuse anger.
- Getting help is not a weakness, and it's not a luxury. It's a normal part of life
- Address your anger to minimize the negative impact on your health and relationships.
- Take responsibility for your words and behaviour. Although anger can be a behaviour associated with PTSD, anxiety, and stress, we are each accountable for our actions.
- Start to identify signs that your anger is starting to rise, such as muscle tension, clenching fists or jaw, increase heart rate, or tunnel vision.
- Once you've identified your anger signs, you can break the cycle (take time out, use 'grounding').
- Explore how drinking or substance use might affect your anger, and vice versa.
- Learn healthier ways to deal with anger (exercise, journaling, venting to counsellor or friend).
- Know that you have a right to express your feelings in an appropriate way when you are calm.



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