



## What is anger?

Anger is a normal and natural emotion and everyone gets angry sometimes. Anger is a way for us to release mental and emotional pressure. There are times when anger is useful, for example to help us stand up for and protect ourselves or other people from harm. It is not wrong to feel angry it is as natural as other feelings such as happiness, excitement and sadness. However it is how we react when we are angry that can cause problems. Some people lash out verbally or physically whereas others bottle it up and withdraw. Other people can take their anger out on themselves through self harm or other behaviours. Many people have problems controlling their anger, but it is possible to control our anger instead of letting anger control us.

## Why do I get angry?

There are many different reasons why people become angry. We can feel angry when we react to other people or situations, or by worrying about personal or financial problems. Difficult memories from the past can also lead to angry thoughts and feelings.

## What are the signs of anger?

Anger varies in intensity, ranging from mild irritation to extreme rage. Like other emotions, feelings of anger have an effect on the rest of your body, thoughts and feelings some examples of which are listed below:

### Physical Reactions

- Tight muscles
- Increased blood pressure
- Increased heart rate

### Thoughts

- It's not fair
- I won't stand for it

### Behaviours

- Defend / Resist
- Argue
- Withdraw (to punish or protect)

### Feelings

- Feeling irritable
- Feeling frustrated
- Feeling enraged

## What can I do to control my anger?

### Know your triggers

Identify certain places or times when you get angry these could include:

- Behind the wheel
- At work
- When stressed
- With certain people
- When you have been drinking or using other substances
- When you are hungry or tired

## Timeouts

Timeouts can be an effective way to take charge of anger. Taking timeout involves removing yourself from the situation, which is making you feel angry or when your early warning signs indicate that anger is getting out of control. Timeout may be as short as five minutes or as long as twenty four hours. It is not used to avoid a situation, but rather to return to the situation when you are calmer and more in control of your feelings so that you are able to see different viewpoints.

## Assertiveness Training

Assertiveness training can reduce difficulties with anger by teaching you how to express your feelings and needs in a calm, considered way that is respectful of the other people around you. It may help if your problems are due to a difficulty expressing your anger constructively. Assertiveness training can reduce the frequency of being treated unfairly or being taken advantage of and therefore can prevent situations that give rise to anger.

## Looking after yourself

It is important to try to get some balance in our lives. Nowadays life is often stressful and it can be easy for pressures to build up. There are ways that you can help yourself by making some lifestyle choices to reduce anger and irritation. This can include:

- Eating a balanced and healthy diet
- Getting enough sleep - lack of sleep and food can make you feel irritable.
- Give yourself treats and rewards for positive actions, attitudes and thoughts. Even simple pleasures such as a relaxing bath, a pleasant walk or an interesting film can help alleviate stress and can prevent anger from building up.
- Learn breathing techniques to help you remain calm in difficult situations.



### How could counselling help me?

Counselling can provide you with the opportunity to talk on a one to one basis with a professionally trained counsellor about the difficulties in your life. Counselling can help you to understand your anger and enable you to find new ways of dealing with it safely. It can also provide you with the opportunity to talk through any issues from your past or about things that are happening now which make you feel angry.

### What can I expect?

- What I talk about will be respected and treated in confidence.
- I won't be judged
- I can be myself
- I will be listened to
- My side of the story will be heard
- To learn new ways of dealing with difficult thoughts or feelings

### How do I get Counselling?

You can either contact us yourself and we will arrange to meet with you or someone else can contact us on your behalf. This may be your GP, social worker or another person who is concerned about you.

If you are interested in finding out about us you can contact us directly or visit [www.newlifecounselling.net](http://www.newlifecounselling.net) for more information and where you can fill in our online referral form. We will then be in touch to set up an initial appointment.

“we're listening”

#### Contact Details

For further information or to make a referral, please contact:

25 Ardoyne Road Belfast BT14 7HX  
**Tel: 028 9039 1630**

Unit 20 North City Business Centre  
2 Duncairn Gardens Belfast BT15 2GG  
**Tel: 028 9074 6184**



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**Hello.**

We're New Life Counselling,  
we're here to help you.

**Are you angry?**