

Grandfather sat contemplating.  
'What's wrong?' asked the grandson  
'Grandson I have 2 wolves fighting inside me.  
One is anger. One is peace.'  
The grandson asked 'Grandfather, which one will win?'  
In his wisdom, the old man replied,  
'The one I feed?'

American Indian Proverb

We all have anger. It's a normal human emotion. At times it is useful to express strong feelings as it helps us deal with situations that trigger those strong feelings. However management is the key. If anger is expressed in harmful ways then it can lead to problems in relationships and affect the overall quality of one's life.

### ***Recognizing Anger***

Our bodies are great indicators of anger. When you get angry, your heart rate and blood pressure rise and stress hormones are released. This can cause you to shake, become hot and sweaty and feel out of control. You may then yell, throw things, criticise, ignore, storm out, and sometimes withdraw and do nothing. Take note of your body as it can help you control the extent of your anger.

### ***Anger is a problem when:***

- It involves verbal, emotional, physical or psychological abuse.
- You feel angry a lot of the time.
- People close to you are worried about your anger.
- Anger is leading to problems with personal relationships and work.
- You think you have to get angry to get what you want.
- Anger seems to get bigger than the event that set it off.
- Anger lasts for a long time, and well after the triggering event has passed.
- Anger affects other situations not related to the original event.
- You are becoming anxious or depressed about your anger.
- You are using alcohol or other drugs to try to manage your anger.
- You are getting angry with the people who are closest to you, or with people who are less powerful than you, rather than dealing with the situation that sparked off your anger in the first place.

Anger can often lead to violence if not properly controlled and some people use anger as an excuse for being abusive towards others. Violence and abusive behaviour gives someone power and control over another person, usually through creating fear.

### ***Tips to Manage Anger***

*Make a list* of the things that often set off your anger eg running late, your children not cleaning up after themselves, or a co-worker blaming you for something you didn't do. If you know ahead of time what makes you angry, you may be able to avoid these things or do something different when they happen eg. for lateness set your clocks ahead of schedule.

*Use strategies* to calm yourself – deep breath, count to ten, punch a pillow, walk away, put your anger into getting a job completed, talk to a friend (but when calm).

*What you think affects how you feel* so CONTROL YOUR THINKING - self-talk yourself into rational thinking. Know you are in charge of you. Choose to act and think calmly. It will win more friends and achieve better outcomes.

*Be assertive* - Being assertive means being clear with others about what your needs and wants are, feeling okay about asking for them, but respecting the other person's needs and concerns as well and being prepared to negotiate. Avoid using words like 'never' or 'always' or 'should' (for example, 'You're always late!', 'you should do this'), as these statements are

usually inaccurate, make you feel as though your anger is justified, and don't leave much possibility for the problem to be solved.

*Seek professional help* if your strategies aren't working

We all have choices. When dealing with anger *which wolf do you want to feed?????*

Adapted from Anger Management : [http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip\\_sheets/anger/#s5](http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/tip_sheets/anger/#s5)