



ANGER

What is Anger?

Anger is a natural human emotion – we all feel angry at some point and this is healthy, as anger is a natural response to many events that can happen in life, like being attacked, insulted, lied-to or feeling misunderstood.

When we become angry, adrenaline rushes through our body, often giving us a nervous-type energy and causing tension to build. Common to anger is the 'fight or flight' response – where you make a split-second decision to stay and 'fight' the thing that is making you angry, or 'flee' from it to escape the situation.

What causes anger?

The causes of our anger and how we deal with it will often be heavily influenced by our upbringing and cultural background. Some of us are brought up exposed to excessive anger, and to believe it is always acceptable to act out anger, however aggressive or violent it may be. In this situation we won't learn to understand and regulate our emotions, which can lead to our own angry outbursts.

Equally, witnessing a parents' (or other adults') anger when out of control, can make us view anger as terrifying, destructive and unacceptable; an emotion to be crushed at all costs. We might have been brought up to not complain, put up with injustices, or suffer punishment for expressing anger.

This can lead us to suppress our anger long-term and can mean we react inappropriately in uncomfortable situations. So, whilst it is completely fine to feel angry from time to time, anger can become an issue if it is bottled up or if it begins to take over. Being angry is not, in itself, a problem, but the way we deal with it might be.

When does anger become a problem?

Essentially, anger becomes a problem when it harms us, or people around us. When we aren't able to express our anger or express it at inappropriate times or in unsafe ways, then it can damage our health and relationships.

Suppressing anger may also lead to other types of behaviour, like becoming physically or mentally abusive or separating ourselves from someone. Or you may find you get excessively angry too quickly or too often over small things. You may feel unable to let go of your anger in the moment.

If we experience any issues with anger, we might find that:

- We develop issues with friends, family or personal relationships
- Get into difficulties at work or with the police
- Act violently
- Shout at others



- Try to wind up other people
- Our emotions can feel very close to the surface
- We feel like we have no control over our actions and responses
- Feeling embarrassed or ashamed after we've been angry
- We go out of our way to avoid situations that could upset us, or trigger anger
- We may get overly upset about things that don't usually bother us
- We might struggle with low self-esteem
- We might feel depressed
- We might harm ourselves with eating issues, drinking excessively, putting ourselves in danger and self-harming

Managing anger: Identifying triggers

It can be really useful to look at what is triggering our anger in the first place in order to start addressing it. Keeping a simple diary/notebook detailing times when we have felt angry can be really helpful in finding out what's at the root of the problem. We can ask ourselves questions like:

- What was happening at the time?
- Was it something someone said that set off feelings of anger?
- How were we feeling in the moment?
- How did we behave in response?
- What were our feelings after the event?

How can ListnHeal.Me help?

Counselling can help you understand and work through the deeper roots of anger – whether it shows up as outbursts, simmering frustration, or feeling constantly on edge. In a safe and non-judgmental space, we explore what your anger might be protecting or expressing, and how it connects to past experiences or unmet needs.

Through trauma-informed and body-aware approaches, you can learn to regulate intense emotions, respond rather than react, and build healthier ways to express yourself with clarity and confidence.