

9 Ways to Control Your Anger

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There is a phrase in parenting that states, “Choose Your Battles Wisely”. Surely there will be times in life when it is important to fight for things you believe in. The problem is many people spend their lives fighting over relatively unimportant things that come up on a daily basis. This not only causes stress and tension it also alienates people around you.

To help you control and reduce the anger inside yourself here are 9 steps to follow:

- Maintain a daily hostility log – Write down the angry feelings you have, aggressive actions you have taken (name calling, honking horns, road rage, threats made, etc.) and your negative thoughts. Being aware of your actions is the first step in making a lasting change
- Try proven ways to manage your anger – Back off, count to ten, go for a walk, don’t confront someone when you are angry
- Question yourself – Ask yourself these questions when you start to feel angry; “Is it important?”, “Is my anger appropriate to the situation?”, “Is the situation modifiable?” “Is it worth taking action?” “Does it really matter?”
- Don’t take it personally or personalize it – Rudeness, slow service and recklessness are everyday occurrences. Many people operate this way without knowing any better. Don’t make the mistake by thinking they have something against you.
- Weigh alternatives and consider options – Ask yourself what the options in handling each situation are.
- Put it in writing – Write out what you are angry about. The writing puts a different perspective on everything.
- Cost-benefit – Ask yourself, “Is this anger going to get me anywhere?” Many times it is good to just LET IT GO
- Can I do anything about the situation – You must realize that there are many things you cannot control. For example, if it rains or traffic is backed up your anger will accomplish nothing. The serenity prayer states it best, “God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I can’t change; courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference”

- Look at the flip side – When anger starts to come on focus on the positive. For example, if traffic is backed up realize that you can listen to a book on tape or a motivational seminar. Or if you get a dent in your new car realize at least you were not hurt.

Follow these guidelines on a regular basis and you will have less stress, tension and will enjoy life to the fullest.

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