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ANGER... How to STOP it being destructive

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All of us experience anger from time to time. It's a normal, commonly experienced emotion. However, anger can be incredibly destructive if we don't know how to work with it, or control it. Frequent or misplaced anger can hurt our reputations, destroy our relationships, limit our opportunities, and even damage our health. So, next time you feel the angry part of yourself starting to fire up ... try any (or all) of the following techniques.

1. Yell "Stop!" loudly in your thoughts. This can interrupt the anger cycle.
2. Use relaxation techniques to calm yourself down.
3. Count to 20 before you respond.
4. Manage your negative thoughts by imagining something more pleasant, or thinking the opposite of those negative thoughts.
5. Go into a room and close the door, or find a quiet space, and meditate or breathe deeply for five minutes.
6. Distract yourself from your anger – visit your favourite website, play a song that you like, daydream about a hobby that you enjoy, take a walk, or phone a friend.

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7. Consider the facts of the situation, so that you can talk yourself out of being angry. Maybe when you look at what you can observe about the person or situation, you might determine that it's unproductive to respond with anger.
8. If another person is the source of your anger, use empathy to see the situation from their perspective (and be objective). Remember, everyone makes mistakes.
9. Listen. Miscommunication contributes to frustrating situations. When others are speaking, focus on what they're saying, and don't get distracted by formulating your response before they've finished. When they're done speaking, show that you listened by reflecting back what they have just said.
10. Be assertive (not aggressive). When you're aggressive you focus on winning and you care little for other people's feelings, rights and needs. When you're assertive you focus on balance – you're honest about what you want, and you respect the needs of others. Let other people know your expectations, boundaries, and issues. When you do, you'll find that you develop self-confidence, gain respect, and improve your relationships.

However, if these strategies aren't enough, and anger is still affecting your life negatively, seeking professional assistance could be useful.

If you would like help in managing your thoughts, feelings or behaviours, please feel free to contact us on 0488 954 195, amanda@awakenpsychology.com.au or [click here](#)

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