

Tools2Thrive — Anger

Do you get frustrated and annoyed by the slightest thing?

Do you find yourself saying hurtful things when someone has annoyed you?

Have you damaged or thrown things within the context of your anger?

Have you been physically aggressive toward someone because of your anger?

If you answer is “yes” to any of these questions, you may benefit from one or several of these techniques for managing your anger. This week, we will look at ways to recognize your anger and some steps you can take to minimize its effects.

Mark the boxes that regularly apply to you:

Feelings

- Furious/Raging
- Tense
- Irritable
- Stressed

Physical Symptoms

- Chest feels tight
- Tense muscles
- Feel hot
- Sweating
- Light headed
- Heart races
- Raised blood pressure

Thoughts

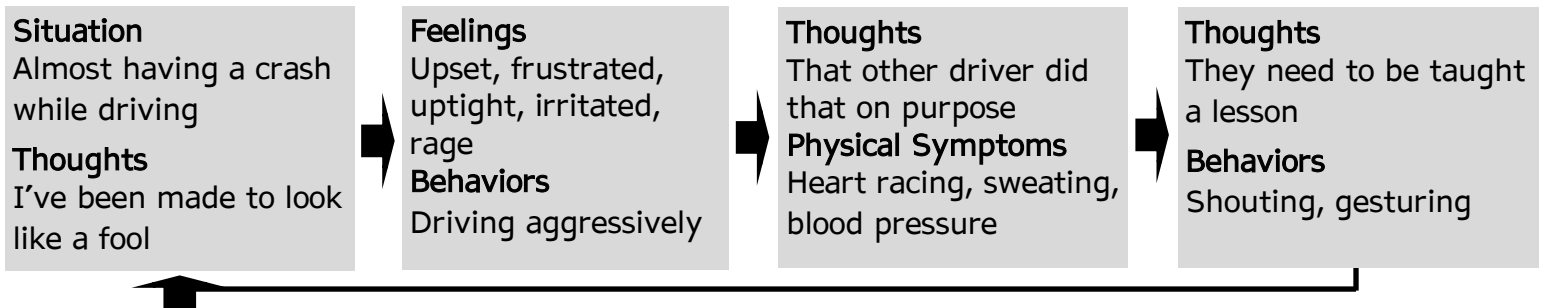
- I’ve been made a fool
- Everything is ruined
- I have to do something about this
- This is so unfair
- They deserve it
- I’ve been let down

Behavior Patterns

- Easily irritated
- Arguing
- Say hurtful things
- Shouting and swearing
- Physical violence toward things or people
- Storming out of a situation

Understanding Your Anger

Have a look at some of the examples and try to fill in something of your experience. Can you recognize a similar pattern occurring within yourself?



Challenging unhelpful thoughts: The way we think about things has an impact on our stress level and mood. Many of these thoughts occur outside of our control and can be negative or unhelpful. It is therefore important to remember that they are just thoughts, without any real basis, and are not necessarily facts. Even though we may believe a lot of our unhelpful thoughts when we are feeling angry, it is good to remember that they should be questioned, as they are often based on wrong assumptions. The following will help you begin to recognize if you are thinking about things in an unhelpful or unrealistic way, and discuss how you can start to make changes. By doing so, you can learn to see things in a more realistic light, which can help improve your mood and help you to manage your angry feelings. You might have unhelpful thoughts about all kinds of things; these thoughts may be hard to identify. Try thinking about a time when you felt angry. Consider what was running through your mind at that time.

Some Examples:

About Yourself/Your Actions and Thoughts:

- I am entitled to certain things
- I must stand up for myself
- I cannot tolerate frustration

About Others:

- Everyone’s out to get me
- No one else is on my side
- Someone else is always to blame

About Anger:

- I have to express my frustration
- It’s not good to hold back strong emotion

It is clear to see how this kind of thinking might lead to you feeling more angry. Do you ever think in any of the ways outlined above?