

Top 12 Tips to Turn Down Volume on Anger: Anger Management Tips

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Is your anger in charge of you? Is your irritability causing trouble at home? Are you held back from your potential because others think you are angry?

Anger is common to all of us. It's part of what makes us human. Anger is a useful, necessary ingredient in a purposeful life.

However, in some of us, anger is dialed up to a high degree. When anger gets too intense, it may lead to constant irritation, feeling misunderstood, frequent arguments and even physical violence.

It's troubling because deep down you know if you could just manage your anger, you would reach your potential and be much more successful. You know deep down that your anger may be undermining your relationships at home and at work. What's more, there may be some anxiety, stress and sadness mixed in with that anger as well.

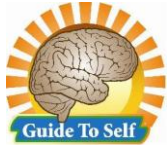
What you're really trying to do is learn effective ways to manage your anger, anxiety and stress so that they do not control you.

You know if you found proven ways to turn down the volume on your anger and anxiety you could be more successful at work and at home.

These skills in this article are necessary for everyone for personal happiness and professional success. So here we go...

1. **Breathe.** Take a deep breath in through your nose for 6 seconds. Hold your breath for 2 seconds. Breathe out for 8 seconds. Breathe into your abdomen or belly. As you breathe in, your belly should inflate like a balloon. As you exhale, your abdomen should collapse or be pulled in toward your spine. Focus on breathing out all the old stale air in your lungs. Repeat 5 times. Anger locks you into a certain way of viewing and reacting to the world. Your breath is one of your most powerful tools to break the hold of anger.

2. **Get out in nature.** Take a leisurely stroll outside. Gaze at the trees, the clouds, the plants and the birds. Studies have shown that a mere 20 minutes spent in a natural environment has a restorative effect on the mind. Remember to breathe deeply during



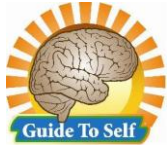
your stroll. In June of 2010, a study came out in the Journal of Environmental Psychology showing the vast mental health benefits of spending 20 minutes per day in nature. Twenty minutes surrounded by trees, birds, plants and fresh air decreases anger, increases vitality, energy, mood and happiness. One of the best ways to get feeling better is to reconnect with nature. Numerous studies have linked increased energy and well-being to exposure to nature. A simple wilderness excursion leads to increased feelings of happiness, less anger, and better immune system functioning.

3. Get up and stretch. Anger creates muscle tension. Anger locks your muscles as well as your mind in place. Stretching is another key to unlocking the angry mind. It relaxes tightened muscles. It improves oxygen flow to the brain which enables you to think more clearly.

4. Exercise. Studies show that individuals who exercise more than 20 minutes per day, sleep at least 7 hours per night, and eat healthy foods that are naturally colorful have reduced feelings of anger and irritation, higher levels of happiness and well-being. Have you worked out today? If not, take a brisk walk for 15-20 minutes (outside in nature of course!) to decrease anger, increase your level of happiness and satisfaction with life.

5. Give yourself a pep talk! Say to yourself, 'Hey, this is going to be okay!' Ask yourself, 'Is this going to matter 10 years from now?' In most cases, the answer is likely 'No, it won't.' Talking to yourself in an understanding, calming manner is another key anger management tool. Train your brain so that in annoying situations, you tell yourself, 'I'm supposed to learn something from this situation. I may not know what that is right now, and that's okay. The calmer I stay, the more likely I can continue making good decisions. I am a good person and I have nothing to be ashamed of.'

6. Express your anger early in the anger cycle. With awareness, let your anger out using words to express why you are angry. First you must work on self-awareness so you know in the moment when you are becoming angry. Before you get to a 5 on a 10 point scale of anger, address the anger before you escalate into a rage. Instead, be conscious of your anger. It's the only way to figure out exactly what is making you angry. This step involves learning appropriate assertiveness where you can identify



what you need and share that need with others in a nonthreatening way. This approach is far better than either sitting on your anger and stuffing it down. It's also been shown to be more constructive than exploding in a rage which often spirals out of control.

7. **Write.** Pull out a piece of paper and write down your frustrations, irritations and annoyances. What is making you mad? Why is it making you mad? There's no need to hold back here. There's no need to worry about other people's feelings. No need to be nice here. The goal of this tool is dump the anger out onto the paper; to release it from your mind. Continue writing until you feel the anger releasing its hold on your mind.

Now let's turn to a few ways you can shift from a negative (anger) to a positive feeling state (happiness, gratitude, relaxation).

8. **Be Grateful.** Jot down 5 things for which you are grateful in life.

Write down 5 things which you do well. Note three things that have gone well today and why they went well. For more on this topic, check out a great book, Guide To Self: The Beginner's Guide to Managing Emotion and Thought. You can pick up a free copy of this award-winning book just for sharing your email address at <http://www.GuideToSelf.com>! This two-part exercise where you write down what you are angry about followed by what you are grateful for is a powerful tool unlocking the angry mind.

9. **Prayer.** If you are a religious or spiritual person, it's frequently helpful to pray to God for assistance and patience during this difficult time. Another approach is to focus on what you are thankful for when you pray. Rather than ask God for more courage, more patience, more of anything, come at the issue as if you already have enough of what you need. For instance, 'Dear Lord, thank you for giving me the patience and calm necessary to deal with these tough times. Thank you for the ability which you have given me to learn and even thrive in these touch economic times.'

10. **Change perspective.** Put yourself in the shoes of the person with whom you are angry. See the world from their vantage point. Sometimes we don't know enough about the person to judge them as good or bad. Sometimes the situation is complicated and a correct decision or action is difficult, if not impossible. This is the strength of empathy.



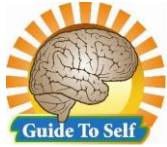
Look at what happened from their viewpoint. The more you practice empathy, the less intense your anger will become. With practice you will come to understand that it is nearly impossible to know enough about another person to judge them, as you haven't walked every step of their life in their shoes. So we rarely are in a position to judge. Think about how you come across to other people? How would you like to come across? Make a conscious decision today in terms of who you want to be and how you want to behave. Then act as if you are that individual now.

11. Self-compassion. While self-esteem has to do with how you feel about yourself generally, self-compassion involves how you treats yourself when things go badly. The goal is to treat yourself with the same type of kindness and compassion that most people extend to loved ones when they fail. When someone else makes a mistake, most people will react with some degree of kindness and understanding. Self-compassion seems to turn down the volume on anger typically associated with huge mistakes while still maintaining your sense of personal responsibility. A 2007 study at Duke University found that 'inducing self-compassion may decouple the relationship between taking responsibility and experiencing negative affect.' The way in which you do this is to speak to yourself as if you were a three-year-old child. This allows for mistakes (which is a major path for learning), screw ups, and errors. Self-compassion seems to be related to greater resiliency (the ability to bounce back from difficulty).

12. Act boldly! Make a conscious decision right now that you are going to muster the courage to face and conquer your anger. Check out my free award-winning eBook at <http://www.GuidetoSelf.com>. Sign up for the anger management skills training course at my site. Learn all the essential skills to turn down the volume on anger AND to turn up the volume on a happier, more fulfilling life.

It's amazing what some simple skills training can do to:

- turn down the volume on your anger and annoyance
- turn up the volume on happiness
- increase your chances of success



- improve your relationships

Anger management includes the following powerful core concepts:

- Education around the big three negative emotions (anger, sadness and fear)
- Stress management
- Assertiveness training
- The infusion of positive emotion, meaning and purpose in your life

Check out the myriad of ways in which John Schinnerer, Ph.D., the anger management expert, can help you. Feel free to sign up for some free online anger management classes. You can learn from them in the comfort of your own home (<http://www.GuideToSelf.com>). All we need is your name and email address for access to tons of free content. By the way, sign up to help men learn anger management, stress management and the latest ways to deal with destructive p now and receive a free award-winning 216 page eBook on emotional management.

About the Author

John Schinnerer, Ph.D. is in private practice teaching men the latest ways to turn down the volume on negative emotions such as anger, anxiety and stress. He also helps guys discover happier, more meaningful lives. His offices are in Danville, California 94526. He graduated from U.C. Berkeley with a Ph.D. in educational psychology. He has been an executive, speaker and coach for over 14 years. John is Founder of Guide To Self, a company that coaches men to happiness and success using the latest in positive psychology. He hosted over 200 episodes of Guide To Self Radio, a daily prime time radio show, in the SF Bay Area. His areas of expertise range from positive psychology, to emotional awareness, to anger management, to coaching men. He wrote the award-winning, "Guide To Self: The Beginner's Guide To Managing Emotion and Thought," which is available for FREE right now at <http://tinyurl.com/2gay78w>. His blog, Shrunken Mind, was recently recognized as one of the top 3 in positive psychology on the web



(<http://drjohnblog.guidetoself.com>). His new video blog teaches men concrete steps towards a happier life for men (<http://drjohnsblog.wordpress.com>)