

How to understand my angry feelings

What is anger?

Anger is an emotion that we all experience. **It's ok and perfectly normal to feel angry** about things that you have experienced. For example, if you feel:

- attacked
- tricked/cheated
- frustrated
- disappointed



- unfairly treated
- dismissed
- misunderstood
- anxious about something else
- scared



Anger is often an emotion that is easy to see. It is triggered by people, places, and situations. Just as the picture to the left shows, anger is often just the 'tip of the iceberg'. Other emotions may be hidden beneath the surface that we are not initially conscious of.

Some of us might express anger in order to cover up emotions that cause us to feel vulnerable, such as hurt or shame. As we know, it can feel scary to express or share our vulnerability with others.

Remember, anger is OK to express. In fact it is healthy to be able to share angry feelings about something, with someone you trust.

Identify triggers

Recognising the types of situations which make you angry is the first step to figuring out what is causing it, which will help to develop strategies to cope and think about how to react before the situation happens again.

You might find it helpful to **keep a diary**, **make notes in your phone** or **quietly reflect** about the times you have felt angry. Some questions to ask yourself:

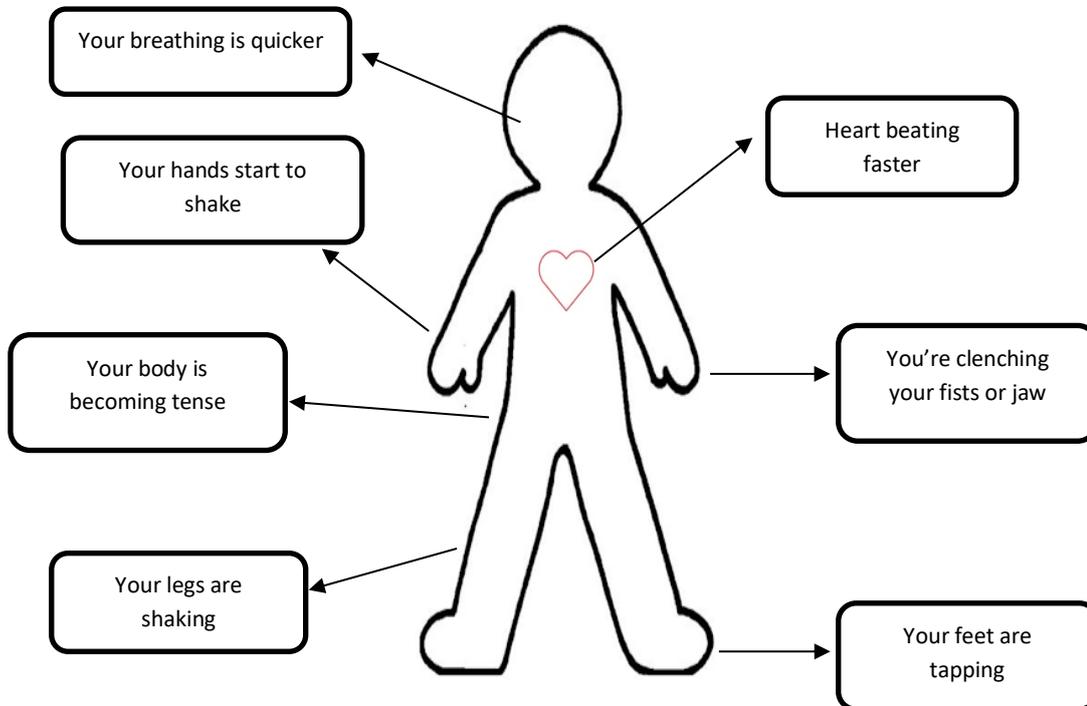
- What were the circumstances?
- Did someone do or say something?
- How did you feel?
- How did you behave?
- How did you feel afterwards?



If you do this for a while, you might start to see patterns emerging.

Look out for physical clues

Anger can cause adrenaline to rush through your body, so before you even recognise the emotion you're feeling you might notice the following physical symptoms:



Recognising these physical signs gives you the chance to think about how you want to react to a situation before responding.

This can be difficult in the heat of the moment and easier said than done, but, the earlier you notice how you're feeling, the easier it can be to choose how to manage your anger.



Top tips



- **Count to 10.** It can help to give you time to think and calm down
- **Breathe slowly and deeply.** In through your nose and out through your mouth
- If you have a problem with someone, **think** about what you want to say to them beforehand and how you want to get your point across. **Listen** to their point of view and calmly put yours across too. Control your tone of voice. Keep it slow and quiet
- Use a **stress ball** or something squidgy. Or slowly make a fist and release your hands, over and over
- **Think** before you react
- If you feel your anger levels rising, **leave** the situation. Walking away shows a lot of strength
- Talking to a trusted person who's not connected to the situation, such as a friend, family member, mentor or staff member at school. **Sharing** your thoughts out loud can help you understand why you're angry and help calm you down
- Consult your GP. You can **talk** with them about concerns or problems you might have to do with your anger or if you're feeling anxious about something else
- **Over time**, you'll learn to manage your anger better independently. When you feel angry or stressed you can try out different **relaxation** techniques to help you calm down. Check out our [Relaxation page](#) for lots of recommendations for what you can do

