

When You Start to Get Angry



RETHINK Your Anger

RETHINK

- Recognize that you're angry
- Empathize with the other person
- Think about the situation in a new way
- Hear what the other person is saying
- Integrate respect into what you say
- Notice what works to help control anger
- Keep your attention on the present

The Institute for Mental Health Initiatives developed an easy way to remember a strategy when you start to get angry. **RETHINK:**

Recognize and label your angry feelings.

Empathize with the other person and try to see the situation through their eyes. What is he thinking? What is she feeling? Have you had similar feelings?

Think about the situation in a new way. See humor or a challenge in it. Look at how you're contributing to the problems

Hear what the other person is saying. Check to see if you understood. Let them talk without interrupting.

Integrate love or respect with what you say. Express caring. Communicate your feelings without blaming.

Notice what works to help you control your anger. Taking a deep breath, counting to ten, going for a walk or shooting hoops can relieve angry feelings. Find out and use what works for you.

Keep your attention on the here and now. Bringing up the past or old grudges only increases anger.



RETHINK and control your anger

What makes your blood boil?

Rage gets stirred up by stress. Your rage triggers make your blood boil: that person (your ex's lawyer), that frustrating situation (traffic) or that outrageous injustice that makes you see red. Stress and fears trigger your rage and anger.

What threatens you? A look? A comment? A criticism? A social inequality?

Does it threaten you by insulting your intelligence, questioning your competence, undermining your reputation or going against what you believe?

Maybe there's a history to your rage triggers, like a pattern or a memory.

By finding your triggers, you can work with a therapist to understand them when you begin to get angry, then make healthy choices (instead of the old familiar reactions).

"People who learn to settle arguments so that everyone wins feel better about themselves."