



Coping with Anger from a Loved One

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Coping with anger from anyone can be tough. However, when anger is coming from someone dear to you, it can be especially difficult to deal with.

If someone you love is showing anger now, or continues to show anger on a frequent basis, you must ***resist the urge to fight fire with fire***. Fighting back will only make the situation explode and you and your loved one will find it increasingly difficult to come to a resolution.

Keep the following tips in mind as you deal with anger from someone you love:

- 1. Avoid reacting immediately.** You shouldn't let yourself explode with a burst of emotion. Anger can get heated quickly and you don't want to respond rashly, whether it's with anger, sadness, or resentment.
- ***Allow yourself time to cool down*** so you can approach the situation calmly and rationally.
- 2. Refuse to take things personally.** There's no doubt about it, this is hard to do when a loved one is hurling mud your way. It's easier to avoid taking it personally from colleagues and strangers, but for those close to you, it's hard *not* to take their opinions personally.
- Talk to your loved one about what they said. Explain how you see their actions as personal attacks. If they didn't intend it as one, they'll have a chance to explain themselves.
- If they *did* mean to personally attack you, it's important to work out the issue. What can you do to improve the situation so these outbursts won't happen again?

3. **Admit the problem.** It's also important for your loved one to admit that they have a problem with anger if it's recurring. They may say they have control over it, but it's only a matter of time before it flares up again and causes deeper wounds.
4. **Help them cool down.** Whether the anger is directed toward you or another person, step in and help them cool down before they lose control and let anger take over. While you may like them to develop these skills independently as they practice on their own, they may need your assistance in the beginning. ***You can help them reflect on their thoughts and feelings before they act.***
5. **Identify feelings.** People don't just immediately burst out in anger without a flood of emotions first. Help your loved one identify their triggers so they can put a halt on anger before it starts.
6. **Teach healthy anger expressions.** Anger *is* a part of life. However, ***it's how we react and deal with anger that's important.***

Here are some healthy ways they can express and cope with anger:

- Write in a journal.
- Exercise - go for a jog or run when anger arises.
- Count to 10 and take several deep breaths before reacting.
- Practice relaxation techniques such as yoga or meditation.
- Express anger through art.
- Focus on the good of a situation.

It's important to discover a coping mechanism that works for your loved one. At the same time, you shouldn't get lost in your loved one's struggle with anger. You can go over some of the healthy anger expression techniques and implement them yourself as well. By becoming a model for your loved one, it just may be what they need to change. But if their anger turns violent, remove yourself from the situation immediately and seek professional help.

By helping your loved one learn and grow, you just may be able to strengthen your relationship and develop a lasting bond.