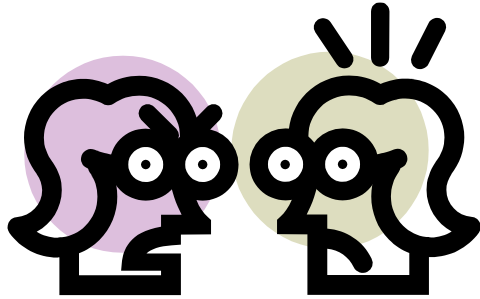




Learn to express your anger more appropriately

Anger management is not about trying to stop you getting angry. It is about helping you to express your anger better. Use the following tips:



- Direct face-to-face stances are seen as more aggressive; try to maintain a slight angle without actually turning away from the other person.

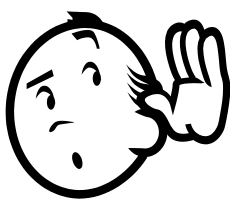
- People feel threatened if their personal space is invaded so keep your distance. A good rule of thumb is that if you can smell or feel the other person's breath, you are definitely too close!

- Try to keep your hands still; some hand movements (e.g. fist clenching) can be viewed as signs of aggression whilst others (e.g. putting one arm across the chest to clutch at the other arm) are seen as passive.

- Your face should match your emotion and what you are saying. Don't laugh when you are upset and don't have a frown when you are happy. Sometimes people can laugh or smile through nerves when they are angry but this belittles your message.



- When you are making an assertive expression of your anger, you need to be heard. In order to be heard you have to pay attention to the tone, the inflection and volume of your voice.



- Don't forget to listen to the other person and give them the chance to respond. When we are angry, it is easy to be so caught up in our own feelings that we don't or won't listen to the responses. Listening shows that you are acknowledging and respecting the other person's rights too.

- Avoid posing statements as questions: Many of us turn what would otherwise be a simple statement into a question just by letting our voice rise up at the end of the sentence. This is known technically as a high-rising terminal (or HRT) in linguistics, and can be perceived as reflecting uncertainty and nervousness. It's something people's voices do when they are unsure of themselves and seeking approval – although nowadays, it is becoming a more and more popular intonation all the time. Conversely, a falling intonation — where the pitch of your voice drops towards the end of the sentence — is much more assertive.



- Don't apologise unless you're actually sorry! It seems like such a little thing, but the words we choose say much more about us than we might first think. How often do you say "sorry" when you don't actually mean it? Do you say "sorry" when you really mean "excuse me" or "no"? If so, start saying what you actually mean! Saying sorry is essentially a way of accepting blame for something — it sets you up to be submissive. People also apologise for disagreeing or even for being angry, so try to avoid doing this as again, it diminishes the power of your message.
- Let your statements stand on their own; avoid those 'add ons' to your sentences that weaken your message because it looks like you are seeking approval (which is very non-assertive). Examples of unnecessary add-ons include, "...Don't you think?", "...Do you know what I mean?", 'know what I'm saying?', 'if you get my drift ' etc
- Avoid disclaimers; these are the things we say that promptly discredit our message in order to make us somehow, sound humble. Examples are, 'it's just my opinion', or 'you might not agree with me but' etc.

Other specific aspects of anger language, both verbal and non-verbal, are shown in the following table:

	<i>Verbal Language</i>	<i>Body Language</i>
<i>Aggressive</i>	Speaks too loudly/shouts Uses insults or personalise the issues. May swear Constantly interrupts Lays blame easily Uses degrading language	Waves fists Points with finger Has hands on hips Bangs fists on table Jabs at other person with finger Glares Leans head forward Leans upper body forward May invade personal space (gets too close to the other person)
<i>Passive</i>	Speaks too quietly Adopts an apologetic tone Hesitant voice	Avoids eye contact Adopts a stooped posture Bows head Has 'closed' posture e.g. with arms folded across chest and/or legs crossed
<i>Assertive</i>	Speaks clearly Speaks audibly May repeat requests	Maintains direct eye contact Maintains an upright posture Has 'open' posture e.g. with arms by side and legs uncrossed Keeps distance so as to respect personal space

