

[IMAGE]

Show Anger the Door

By Editorial Staff

We all get angry sometimes, whether it's pure rage or a combination of anger and frustration. Life doesn't always go as planned, and depending on your demeanor, you may not be able to stay as cool as others can (or even as cool as you've always told *yourself* you should be). In the majority of cases, when a situation brings the anger out of you, a few simple strategies can bring you to a place of healthy calm before things get out of hand:

1. Strategy #1: The Time Out: We learn to give our kids "time outs," so why wouldn't they work for us, too?

The purpose of a time out isn't just to teach our children there's a consequence to their actions (e.g., restricted activity); it's also a valuable tool for instilling calm reflection in the face of chaos. A few moments of quiet time can take the sting out of your anger, usually to the point that you realize it wasn't that big of a deal in the first place. So, if you feel the rage building, cut it off at the pass: Take a deep breath, distance yourself from the situation, and return with a renewed purpose to stay cool when things heat up.

2. Strategy #2: The Other Foot: Let's use road rage as the example here. A minivan just cut you off and you've *got* to get even. You're hurling expletives (at no one but yourself, by the way, since they likely can't hear you) and ready to drive them off the road. Again, take that deep breath and assess the situation. Put the shoe on the other foot for a change. Is the driver trying to manage a car-full of screaming kids? Is it an older driver who may not have seen you? Is it a rainy day and the driver isn't particularly adept at driving under such circumstances (i.e., they're having their own anger / fear moment)? None of the above means your anger isn't justified, but recognizing why something happened may make it easier to digest without your blood boiling.

3. Strategy #3: Not Worth It: This is the most difficult strategy to adopt consistently, but it's also the most rational. Simply put, when is it worth it to get angry? Yes, sometimes blowing off steam is important as a stress reliever, but in general, all you're doing is amping yourself up, making your day less enjoyable and often less productive. The source of your anger is rarely impacted.

Does that mean you shouldn't voice your displeasure with someone when they anger you? If it's justified anger, then of course you need to communicate with them. But there's a difference between being angry and *acting* angry. When you act angry, it's often a visceral, out-of-control response you end up regretting.

So go ahead, be angry when you deserve to be. But deal with it the right way – you'll thank yourself for it.

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