**Anger and tips to manage this emotion**

Most people feel angry sometimes, it is a normal emotion that we all experience. Sometimes we can struggle to manage and deal with these feelings and it can start to cause problems. If it's affecting your life, or someone else’s, there are things you can try that may help.

Symptoms of anger

Anger can cause many different symptoms. It might affect how you feel physically or mentally, or how you behave. Some people become aggressive towards others when they're angry. Other people hide their anger and may take it out on themselves. It's not always easy to recognise when anger is the reason why you're behaving differently.

Physical symptoms;

* faster heartbeat
* tense muscles
* clenching your fists
* tightness in your chest
* feeling hot sweaty

Mental/psychological symptoms;

* feeling tense or nervous
* being unable to relax
* being easily irritated
* feeling humiliated
* resenting other people

Behaviour changes;

* shouting
* ignoring people or sulking
* starting fights
* breaking things
* self-harming

Some of these symptoms are triggered by the ‘fight or flight’ response, this is when your body believes that there is a threat and responds by flooding the body with adrenaline. Fight or flight is a very primitive response and designed to keep us from being caught by a saber-toothed tiger! Whilst it is rare that you will ever encounter this type of threat, your body does

not understand this and therefore deploys this survival mechanism sometimes inappropriately which can cause some of the above symptoms. If you recognise these symptoms and that anger can cause you or others difficulties then you may wish to try some of the methods below.

**Things you can try to help manage your anger**

1. try to recognise when you start to feel angry so you can take steps to calm down as early as possible
2. give yourself time to think before reacting – try counting to 10 and doing calming breathing exercises
3. talk to people about what's making you angry – speak to someone who is not connected to the situation, such as a friend, a GP or a support group such as Samaritans
4. exercise – activities such as running, walking, swimming and yoga can help you relax and reduce stress
5. find out how to raise your self-esteem, including how to be more assertive
6. consider peer support, where people use their experiences to help others. Find out more about peer support on the Mind website
7. listen to free mental wellbeing audio guides
8. search and download relaxation and mindfulness apps or online community apps from the NHS apps library

**Things to avoid;**

1. do not try to do everything at once; set small targets you can easily achieve
2. do not focus on things you cannot change. Focus your time and energy on helping yourself feel better
3. try not to tell yourself that you're alone – most people feel angry sometimes and support is available
4. try not to use alcohol, gambling, drugs or other negative behaviours to relieve anger – these can all contribute to poor mental health

If you feel you need professional assistance to deal with your anger or any other mental health issues please discuss with you GP or one of the services listed in the Mental Health helpline factsheet

If you require further support, please contact your GP or in an emergency, call 999. You can find further mental health helplines on the separate factsheet, link HERE?