

## How to Identify Anger Triggers

Your anger triggers are things that consistently make you angry. These can vary from person to person and are related to your own experiences and the wiring in your brain. Most of the time, we do not think too much about possible triggers so every time we are confronted with the same situation, we get angry all over again.

Managing your triggers and avoiding them as much as possible will help you manage your anger. If you can't avoid them, you can get prepared ahead of time to deal with the feeling the situation evokes in you.

### Identify your triggers:

- Keep an anger diary or journal. Use it to track situations where you got angry. Write down entries that focus on situations or people that make you angry or frustrated. To get the most out of each entry, you should include:
  - What happened that made you angry?
  - What about the situation upset you?
  - Rate how angry you got.
  - What were you thinking when this situation occurred?
  - How did your behavior affect you or other people?
  - Were there other circumstances that may have made you angrier?
  - How did your body react?
  - What did you do?
  - How did you feel right afterwards?
  - How did you feel later?
  - Were there any consequences?
- You can also think about people or situations that make you angry. Examples include:
  - People not doing what you expect them to do
  - People taking advantage of you
  - Violation of your personal space
  - Disrespect
  - Injustice
- Next determine if there are things that you can do to make the situation less upsetting.
  - You can make a choice not to get angry.
  - Change your attitude to the situation.
  - Change the situation.
  - Lower your exposure to the situation.
  - Prepare yourself for the anger. Proactively use anger management techniques when you know you are going to come in contact with something that angers you.
- Over the long-term, you want to think about why the person or situation makes you angry. This may be related to personal feeling, thoughts, or assumptions that you have. Your responses are often associated with memories or experiences deep in your subconscious so you will have to do some mental work – maybe even with a professional – to understand why you react as you do. Once you understand your reactions, you can better begin to restructure your reactions to upsetting situations.