

Anger Do's and Don'ts

Here's a review of the basic do's and don'ts to keep in mind when you are feeling angry:

1. Do speak up when an issue is important to you

Of course, you don't have to address every single issue that comes along however, it is a mistake to stay silent if the cost is to feel bitter, resentful or unhappy. We dishonor ourselves when we fail to take a stand on issues that are important to us. Sometimes, letting something go can be an act of maturity.

2. Don't strike while the iron is hot

Sometimes a good argument or fight will certainly clear the air in a Relationship. However, if the goal is to change some chronic entrenched pattern, the absolute worst time to speak about it is when you are feeling angry and tense. If you find that during a fight you begin to get hot and fiery, then it is perhaps best to take a temporary time off from the 'conversation'. Seeking temporary distance is not the same as cold withdrawal or emotional cut off.

3. Take time out to clarify your position

Before you speak out, take the time to ask yourself the question, what is it about the situation that makes you angry? What is the real issue here? Where do I stand? What do I want to accomplish? Who is responsible for what? What do I want to change? What are the things that I will do and will not do?

4. Don't use 'below the belt' tactics

These include criticism, defensiveness, diagnosing, interpreting, warning, interrogating, preaching, analyzing, ordering, contempt, Ridiculing, stonewalling and lecturing.

5. Do speak the 'I' language

Learn to say 'I think...' 'I feel....' 'I fear....' 'I want....' A true and genuine 'I' statement says something about the self without criticizing or blaming the other person and certainly not holding the other

person's responsible for our feelings or reactions. Please be careful to not accept and be aware of disguised 'I' statements such as 'you are controlling and self-centered'.

6. Don't make vague requests

Let the other person know specifically what you want (the best way that you can help me right now is to simply listen, I really don't want advice at this time). Don't expect people to anticipate your needs or do things that you have not requested.