

# WHY PEOPLE STAY

# ANGRY

*Reasons why the destructive emotions of anger are always present-*

## Control & Power

People stay angry to exert power and control over other people or situations. This is done by yelling, screaming, threatening, name calling or hitting. Angry people also like to control others with fear. They get meaner or angrier so others will succumb to them. However, rage is expensive-- it will cost you relationships and your own well-being.

*TRY* talking to someone calmly instead of yelling.

*TRY* compromising instead of bullying.

*TRY* listening instead of lecturing.

## Avoidance of Responsibility

An angry person will blame everyone but themselves. This absolves them of any responsibility for their actions. It is easier to blame others, but it is also the easiest way to guarantee unhappiness.

*TRY* seeing things from the others' point of view.

*TRY* realizing what you could or can do differently to change the situations.

## Poor Communication Skills

When someone is overwhelmed with anger issues, they mutter, mumble, scream, yell, pout or storm off, because often they do not know what to say. They can't talk or listen as they may never have learned basic communication skills. They do not know how to speak clearly or declare what they want to say. The result is frustration and anger directed at themselves and towards others.

*TRY* writing down what you are feeling and how you would like to say it.

*TRY* taking time to process how the situation is affecting you.

## Defence from Other Emotions

Anger can be so overwhelming that it prevents you from noticing anything else. Angry people do not often display softer emotions (fear, sadness, joy, shame or guilt) because by staying angry all the time they do not have to deal with the ups and downs of reality. It is also used as a defence against closeness. The angry person should know that no one will stick around to be bullied, attacked or insulted for too long.

*TRY* opening up.

*TRY* cutting through the anger and showing your vulnerability. You might get hurt, but the chances of someone abandoning you are greater when you are acting with anger.



## Force of Habit

Force of habit is a major reason why people stay angry. Habits are overlearned behaviours -- we do not think about what we do or why, we just do it. For someone who has an anger habit, displaying this emotion is a daily routine—they have lost their ability to be flexible and display or feel other emotions. Anger is a hard habit to break, but an important one to get out of.

**TRY** slowing down the process and thinking before you act. If you feel yourself getting instantly angry, make yourself stop.

**TRY** asking yourself: *Is there any good reason for me to be angry right now? Is this the old anger habit creeping up again?* If so, stop what you are doing and do something else.



## The Anger Rush

The anger rush is an addictive high that keeps people angry. They replace intimacy with intensity -- a stronger feeling with less closeness. This is because anger is exciting and takes away the boredom and the depressed feeling for an angry person. Often when an angry person is trying to change and stop depending on the anger high, they have feelings of dullness, relapse, and turn to anger again. They are emotionally dependent on the feeling of anger and need to learn to give up extremes.

**TRY** calming yourself through exercises like meditation or yoga.

**TRY** practising this new calmness when interacting with people, and you will find your relationships more satisfying.

### More TRY's

- ✓ Take a time out
- ✓ Use visualization
- ✓ Get some exercise
- ✓ Know when to seek help
- ✓ Use humor to release tension
- ✓ Practice different breathing exercises
- ✓ Get a massage
- ✓ Let grudges go

What's your strongest reason for staying angry? Is there more than one?

If you are asking yourself what to do next, decide on which is the most important reason for you. Ask others you know to help you decide. Ask your EFAP Counsellor to help you get started and recognize that it will take time. But you and your relationships will benefit.

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