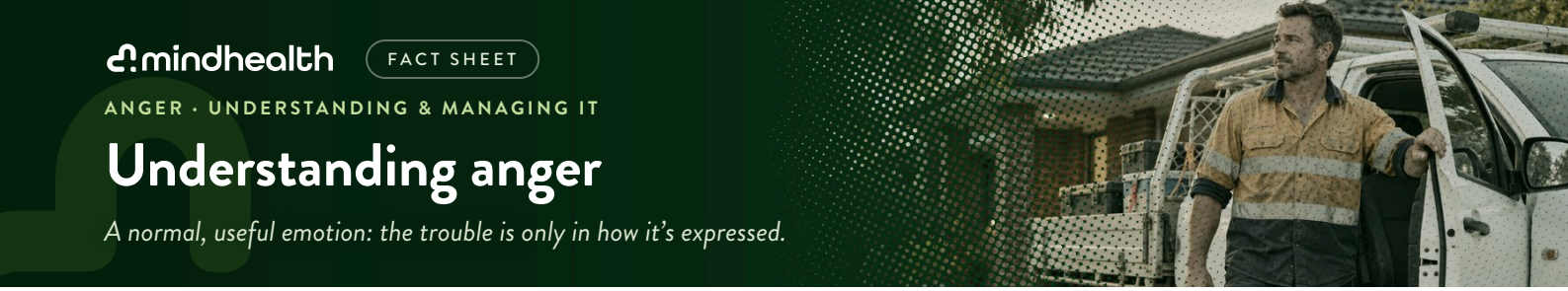
mindhealth FACT SHEET

ANGER · UNDERSTANDING & MANAGING IT

Understanding anger

A normal, useful emotion: the trouble is only in how it's expressed.



The heat
Irritation building to rage

The body surge
Tight jaw, hot face, racing heart

The reaction
Snapping, saying what we regret

01 Anger isn't the enemy

Anger is a normal, healthy emotion. It flags that something matters (a boundary crossed, a need unmet, an unfairness), and it can give us the energy to act. The problem is rarely the feeling itself; it is what we do at boiling point, when the surge takes over and we react in ways that harm us or the people we care about.

02 The window before boiling point

Anger builds along a fairly predictable curve. Once you are at the top, the thinking brain is offline and reasoning rarely helps. But early in the build-up there is a window: a moment where you can feel the heat rising and step in before it peaks. Knowing your own early warning signs, and having a plan for that moment, is where change happens.

03 What genuinely helps

- Spotting your early warning signs, in body and mind
- A time-out before boiling point, then coming back to it
- Slow breathing to bring the body's surge down
- Looking under the anger: hurt, fear or feeling unheard
- Assertive communication instead of aggression

MYTH-BUSTING

MYTH
"Venting anger gets it out of my system."

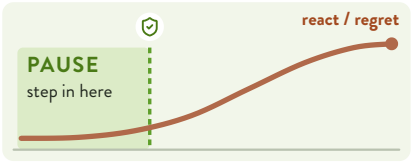
IN FACT
Venting tends to rehearse anger, not release it.

MYTH
"Some people just have a short fuse."

IN FACT
Anger responses are learned, and can be re-learned.

THE PATTERN

Catch it early



BUILD-UP TO BOILING POINT

Once you hit boiling point, reason is offline. The window to step in is early, on the way up.

PRACTICAL TOOLKIT

The circuit-breaker

1. Name it: "I'm starting to heat up"
2. Step away before you boil over
3. Slow the breath, then return to it

A pause is strength, not defeat.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

If anger is damaging your relationships, work or how you feel about yourself, a psychologist can help. Ask your GP about a Mental Health Treatment Plan for rebates.

DID YOU KNOW?

Psychologist Raymond Novaco developed one of the first structured anger management programs in the 1970s.

Novaco, 1975

THE KEY TAKEAWAY

You can't always choose the spark, but you can learn to choose the response.

Need support right now? Lifeline **13 11 14** · Emergency **000** — available 24/7. More options: **mindhealth.com.au/urgent-help**

TALK TO US WHEN YOU'RE READY

Parramatta and online, Australia-wide · **Book at mindhealth.com.au**

1300 084 200

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