

Tired of feeling crabby?

With so many demands on us these days, it's easy to feel cranky all the time. But you don't have to! says Ashley Bedell. She found a way to release her anger and restore her joy!



"Taming my anger made a huge difference in my life," says Ashley. "For the first time, I feel truly happy!"

It doesn't matter how nice a person you are. We all lose our cool sometimes! But every little thing set Ashley Bedell off. Until she learned how to let go of her anger—and finally find happiness . . .

The 26-year-old counselor had every reason to be happy. She had a satisfying job and a great guy. And living in South Lake Tahoe, California, she enjoyed hiking and snowboarding. But on the inside, she felt like a volcano about to erupt!

Secretly, everyday frustrations made her livid! And while at work she never lost it, Ashley—like lots of people—took out her frustrations on the one she loved the most . . .

Everything her boyfriend, Rob, did set her off! Like dropping by with take-out when they'd planned to have dinner out!

"You're so inconsiderate!" she raged.

And Ashley didn't just get mad. She'd stay mad for hours—or bring up things they'd argued about weeks before.

"What's wrong?" Rob pleaded.

Ashley wondered the same thing. But growing up in a family where everybody went ballistic, she didn't know how else to handle her feelings.

Then after one fight, Rob told her, "Maybe this isn't working out."

"I don't want to lose you," she cried. And she knew she had to change . . .

But how?

A whole new Ashley

"Can you help me?" Ashley tearfully asked Janet Pfeiffer, a counselor she knew who specialized in anger management.

"Absolutely!" Janet answered confidently.

For starters, she encouraged Ashley to express her feelings so they didn't build up inside her.

Or if she was angry with someone she couldn't be open with—like her boss—to have an imaginary conversation with that person in her head. "It sounds silly—but it works," Janet insisted.

And Janet suggested walking away from situations when she felt really upset. "It'll give you time to calm down, so you can talk without losing control," Janet explained.

Finally, she suggested that Ashley start journaling to sort through brewing feelings.

The next day, when another customer cut in front of her at the store—something she would have stewed over before—she spoke up. "Excuse me, but I think I'm next."

At home, when she and Rob started bickering . . .

"Let's talk about this later," Ashley suggested. And soon, they were snuggled together on her couch making sweet talk instead of war!

And after journaling her feelings, she finally understood what was going on between her and Rob.

"I feel like you don't take my feelings into consideration," she opened up.

"From now on, I'll talk to you first," Rob agreed.

Today, with the lines of communication finally open, Ashley and Rob are happier than ever—so happy, they're even talking about marriage.

"None of the changes were huge, but they made a huge difference," Ashley says. "I finally know how to deal with my feelings—and that feels wonderful!"

Did you know?
The top most stressful jobs are those where we have to hide our true feelings—like customer service and sales!

How to fight fair in your relationship

Keep discussions from getting heated with these simple steps:



- 1 Start with "I feel."**
Though it's tempting to say, "You shouldn't have . . ." or "You always . . ." they'll put your loved one on the defensive. "Expressing how you feel, instead, turns a conflict into a discussion," explains Pfeiffer.
- 2 Use this magic phrase.**
It's, "I hear what you're saying." "Often, the person we're in conflict with thinks we don't understand, so they fight to be heard," says Pfeiffer.
- 3 Stick to one subject.**
It's easy to get carried away and start bringing up everything that's ever annoyed us! "But that turns into an attack," says Pfeiffer.
- 4 Tell him this.**
That you're willing to compromise until the two of you resolve whatever you're discussing. "When someone knows this, they're much more willing to take in what you have to say," notes Pfeiffer.

What to do when you're upset

Feel like you're about to blow your top? Take these steps from anger management pro Janet Pfeiffer (www.pfeifferpowerseminars.com):

- ✓ PRETEND YOU'RE THE OTHER PERSON.**
If someone cuts you off in traffic, for instance, imagining they're about to miss a train, rushing to a hospital or just overstressed can change your attitude—and settle your nerves fast.
- ✓ ASK YOURSELF THESE THREE QUESTIONS.**
"What am I upset about?" "What is it that I want to accomplish?" and "What's the best way for me to do that?" "This takes your focus off what's bothering you and puts it onto how to resolve it," Pfeiffer explains.
- ✓ STOP WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND TAKE A DEEP BREATH.**
"It automatically calms you down so you can think clearly," says Pfeiffer.

