

FACTSHEET

Coping with feeling **FRUSTRATED**

Definition: “feeling or expressing distress and annoyance resulting from an inability to change or achieve something”.

Feeling frustrated can be very common with ASB as usually we cannot change the behaviour, although hopefully we can achieve something by channeling that frustration into doing something constructive about the problem.

Be aware that frustration can escalate to aggression, which can lead to retaliation. With ASB, if you retaliate you are no longer the innocent victim and could end up being accused yourself.

As you cannot change the behaviour, the key is to change your perspective, or angle, on the events so that you don't feel so frustrated.

Tips to cope with frustration

1. Breathe deeply. Before you act out of anger or frustration, pause and take a deep breath. Count to ten slowly until you feel calmer and more in control.
2. Change your expectations of other people's behaviour. You may not be happy with what they are doing, but you should try to focus on controlling your own reaction, not their behaviour.
3. Expect dealing with anti-social behaviour to take a long time, to require speaking to a variety of different people, for long processes to be followed and much paperwork to be filed. Prepare mentally for this and stay calm.
4. Check that your reaction is reasonable. Before you shout, make a rude gesture or insult someone, stop and run the event over in your head. Ask yourself:
 - Did things really happen as I saw them?
 - Will positive, polite words help or be more effective? (This applies to the police, council and other agencies as much as to the person committing ASB.)
 - Can we find a way to compromise so that both sides get what they need?
5. Write it down. Write down your frustrations and perhaps talk them through with a trusted friend who will listen and not judge you. This will also help in building up evidence for anti-social behaviour cases.
6. Distract yourself with activities that take your full concentration. Dwelling on your frustration or negative aspects of your life can make it worse, until it develops into a mental habit. Find something that you can give all your attention to, like sport. Or try to take a break from the situation, such as moving in with family for a few days.