

UNDERSTANDING ANGER

Anger is always a signal. Mindfulness helps reveal what it signals. Sometimes it is a signal that something in the external world needs to be addressed. Sometimes it is a signal that something is off internally. If nothing else, anger is a signal that someone is suffering. Probably it is you. Sit still in the midst of your anger and find your freedom. ~ Gil Fronsdal

What is Anger?

Anger can imply deep and strong feelings aroused by injury, injustice, wrong, etc.

Anger is a form of survival that helps us fight or flee from a threat.

Anger is a drive to action that can be harnessed to create positive change.

Sources of Anger

Our feelings usually result from:

- * How we choose to receive what others say and do.
- * Our particular needs and expectations in that moment.

What needs may be hidden and are not being expressed?

Ask yourself, am I feeling:

Hungry? Thirsty? Tired? Lonely? Vulnerable?

Are there any environmental factors that may contribute to feelings of anger such as:

Weather

Time of day

Time of month

Time of year

What other circumstances in your life might influence your ability to think clearly, stay calm, and problem solve?

Language can invalidate our feelings and experiences such as:

“you” statements, “shoulding”, “but”, universal statements like “always”, “never”, “forever” etc.

Being tough on the person but soft on the issues can invalidate feelings too.

Transforming Anger

Pause. Most situations don't need to be solved right away despite anger's urgent rush. Try to pause during an angry exchange. Patience.

Notice the need to react without reacting.

Not reacting is not suppression, it is empowerment.

Acknowledge your feelings of anger. Give

yourself permission to feel.

Lean into the anger, silently. Sit with the discomfort. Thoughts fuel more anger so drop into your body and feel it race.

Investigate feelings that might arise such as: uncertainty, fear, hurt, inadequacy or vulnerability.

Be honest with yourself and others. It takes courage to admit vulnerability.

Identify your needs. Find a kind way to express your needs and make a request of yourself or others to meet them.

Transforming anger by building mindful awareness is a process. Be kind to yourself as you work towards this change. Treat yourself with unconditional high regard.

“Are you willing to let go of being right in order to be understood?”