

Before Anger, Pain and Fear

Before we strike out with such a powerful reflex response, we are always feeling hurt or threatened in some way. The situation, which triggers our reflex anger, is often just the last straw, the final stress, the last ripple to overwhelm and sink an already tired and drowning swimmer. This is the real cause behind road, or any kind of rage. When we are confronted with unfamiliar or threatening kinds of people and situations, or changes we can not control or understand, we feel uncomfortable, threatened and, depending on the circumstances and how strong and secure we feel within ourselves at the time, express some level of defensive criticism, judgment or anger. Here lies the cause of all prejudice and racism, an attempt to separate ourselves from or annihilate those whose ways we do not understand, are different and therefore often threatening to us.

The Best Defense Is A Strong Offence

Anger, therefore, for most of us, becomes our final and most powerful defense in situations where we feel deeply hurt, overwhelmed or threatened. When confronted with the unexpected, or someone fails to live up to our expectations, when we feel lost, helpless, or not in control, we often strike out, sometimes viciously, in a desperate attempt to gain back a feeling of control and power or drive back the attack that appears to challenge our safety.

Escape From Responsibility

“You drive me crazy!!” “You piss me off!!” Behind every outburst of anger is the feeling and message that the other person has caused and is therefore responsible for the pain and anger we feel. They are to blame and we, the innocent victims, are therefore fully justified in dumping our anger and rage upon them. In truth, most of us do not know how to release our emotional pain and fear constructively, leaving it locked within us ready to explode at the first suitable opportunity. Rarely, therefore, is our anger proportional or even related to the immediate circumstance, which becomes little more than a convenient excuse to release all our pent up frustration.

Anger Is A Choice, Rarely Justified

Whether we believe it or not, anger is a chosen and learned response to pain and fear, learned as a child from parents, etc. and repeated so often it has become, for most of us, an unconscious, reflex response. Notice that the people we choose as targets for our anger are most often those who can not hurt us back, those weaker or who depend upon us, family we know will not abandon us or those we care little about. Rarely do we choose to dump our anger on bosses or others we depend on for our support, security and approval, who might be able to hurt or reject us. There are other more appropriate and constructive response to painful feelings and threatening situations, but they leave us feeling exposed and vulnerable. For example, the appropriate and constructive response to feeling helpless, disappointed, hurt or rejected is a willingness to feel, breathe, and sink into the pain, perhaps cry and then move through it. We must be prepared to give up the blame, feel and express the pain, taking full responsibility for our own emotional experience and its constructive expression, something few of us are able or prepared to do. One may trigger pain or fear in us, but no one makes us use anger. This is a conscious or unconscious choice to defend, control or drive away the threat to our safety, .

Mirror, Mirror On The Wall, Others Mirror All

Those we love reflect what we see and like in us. Those we hate reflect or trigger what we **don't see**, don't like and fear within us.

Short Term Gain / Long Term Pain

In any situation where we hold more strength, power and authority, the use of anger, working through fear and intimidation can appear very fast and effective in gaining control and getting our demands met. In addition, being able to blame someone else for our

uncomfortable circumstances let us off the hook so we don't have to feel badly about ourselves or change our own behaviour. It also gives us a good excuse to dump all our pent up pain and frustration on someone else, a kind of emotion and stress release tool. However, once fear enters into a relationship, through anger or any form of intimidation, any heart felt emotion is killed. Trust, love, respect, and kindness can only survive in an environment of freedom and safety. Your spouse, children or employees may do your bidding at the time, because they fear your anger, but you have ended your relationship with them. They will withdraw from you, close off their hearts and you will rule an empty kingdom. Our anger is like a dark ocean wave that returns eventually to sink us, often when we least expect it. Whatever energy we put into the universe returns to us. "What goes around, comes around." Our anger and negativity will, in the end, draw this same kind of experience back to us. We are the authors and creators, not victims of our reality.

Managing Your Anger -Some Tips-

1. Anger is a symptom of distress and may lessen with relaxation training or stress management strategy. If not and your outbursts of anger continue to occur too frequently, with very little provocation, get a medical and have the doctor check especially for blood sugar and hormonal imbalances as well as food allergy problems. Often these kinds of body chemistry issues cause enough inner anxiety that our defensive anger becomes triggered over the smallest issue, similar to women with P.M.S.
2. Begin to see anger and rage for what they really are, a **cry for help**. When individuals scream out at us angrily in blame, criticism and judgment, it means only that they are feeling upset and threatened within themselves, and no matter how intimidating they may appear, are asking for help in the only way they can feel safe. Knowing this means you can ignore the blame and choose not to defend with reflex anger. Instead, take a deep breath and try responding kindly with something like, "You're really upset with me for ..." and continue to actively reflect and listen kindly to their complaint. Their upset and anger will lessen when you don't fight back and soon you will be able to talk with them more reasonably. By not fighting back, the anger and negativity will not escalate and, you won't have to worry about your own negativity coming back to you in the future. What energy you give out, you will eventually receive back. This is the Universal Law.
3. When someone hurts you and you feel angry, instead of playing the victim role with a blaming angry outburst like, "You make me so damn angry!" try breathing into the pain, feeling and owning it more fully and responsibly. Then use a statement like, "I'm (upset / disappointed) with you for ... In the future, I'd like you to .." By owning your pain, you make yourself more vulnerable, less likely to trigger defensive anger and more likely to be heard.
4. When some aspect of a person triggers your discomfort and anger, try and find out where and when you behave in a similar way, or share the same trait. If you can see and accept this quality more within yourself, it will not upset you so much when you see it in others.
5. We use anger much like alcohol, to avoid feeling pain and distress, as well as threatening situations. We cannot heal what we cannot feel. The only way out of a frightening and painful experience is to breathe into the pain and fear until we sink **through it**. Try It!!

This world is a classroom and the most important lessons are on Our Fears. Like clouds, every one we go through brings us closer to the Light, Love and Peace within us.

