

# UNDERSTANDING ANGER

A TINY GUIDE



SOURCE MATERIAL BY  
**MEGAN  
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**CREATING  
A CULTURE  
OF DIGNITY**

# ANGER



Why is this emotion  
so confusing?



# WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR BRAIN?

Events + how you  
interpret them  
= your emotions



You experience  
an event.



Your brain  
processes and  
sends signals to  
your brain's limbic  
system.



Feeling angry is a result  
of your brain perceiving a  
physical or emotional  
threat. When that  
happens our brain sends  
distress signals.



Your brain sends chemicals  
to the rest of your body  
telling it to protect you.



# THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS:



# PURPOSE OF ANGER

Why it's a good thing.



Anger's function is to identify physical or emotional threats to your well being.



The brain processes getting punched the same way it processes emotional threats like social rejection.

It's a self-protective emotion.



# WHEN ANGER IS HARD

It can cloud your vision.





**Since your brain sees anger as a function of self-protection it can make it hard to manage yourself in the moment.**

When we're feeling a lot of anger, it can be difficult to stop and think about others because our body is sending our brain chemicals to focus mostly on ourselves.

In the moment, we can come across as we don't care about the other people we're so mad at.



**Anger is so powerful that it can make us feel like we're right and everyone else is wrong.**

It can shut down communication and escalate conflict.

None of these things make the reasons we're angry in the first place go away.



# IS IT REALLY ANGER?



Anger is an Iceberg Emotion



**Anger is often not really  
about anger.**



It can be about more vulnerable  
emotions that are harder to manage.

To protect you from vulnerability your  
brain can short cut to anger.





# ANGER

*embarrassment,  
shame,  
humiliation,  
disappointment,  
guilt, hurt, sadness,  
anxiety frustration,  
uncertainty*

# PROCESSING ANGER OPTIONS



**Get some space** from the person or event that is upsetting you.

***I'm too angry right now  
to think clearly. I'm  
going to calm down  
and get back to you.  
That way I'll be a better  
listener.***





*What am I  
really feeling?*

Get to a quiet spot and write down  
what happened and the reasons  
you're angry.





Being able to name your emotions  
is the first step to taming your  
emotions. It may sound silly, **but**  
**say it out loud,**



**"I'M ANGRY!"**



# SO YOU WANT TO TELL SOMEONE YOU'RE **ANGRY**...

If you feel safe, tell the person exactly what you didn't like and what you want instead.

Own up to anything you did that contributed to the problem.

Be ready to listen to another side of the story.

Affirm your personal boundaries and respect the other person's perspective and personal boundaries.



**YOU MATTER.**

**YOUR EMOTIONS MATTER.**

**OTHER PEOPLE MATTER.**

