



Ways People Express Anger

Stuffing – Avoiding the feeling

- Denying - Trying to prove to yourself that you are not angry *when you really are: “I’m not angry!!!”
- Repression - Burying it. Admitting you are angry but holding it in. (Which can build up over time)
- Self-Doubt – Insecure feelings leading to a belief that you don’t have the right to be angry. “It’s all my fault” (Even when it isn’t)
- Intellectualizing – Ignoring the emotional aspect of anger and its underlying causes by trying to philosophize your way out of it. For example: Someone is clearly doing something that is upsetting you but trying to tell yourself “I am not going to let him/her make me angry” (even though that person is really triggering you)
- Substance Use – Using drugs or alcohol to get high and repress feelings of anger

Displaced Anger – Channeling anger in the wrong direction inward on yourself or outward toward an innocent or uninvolved person, animal or object.

- Displacing anger inward – Cutting, self-harm, self-destructive behavior, self-sabotage, self-hate, depression
- Displacing anger outward- Picking fights or starting arguments, hurting animals, breaking stuff, abuse
 - Passive Aggressive Anger – Acting out in seemingly unrelated ways when angry- Teasing, bullying, undermining the work of others, doing subtle things to insult or hurt others feelings, doing mean things supposedly by “mistake”

Uninhibited Anger – Letting it all out – not holding back

- Attacking, direct aggression, assault, humiliation, rage

Sublimating – Channeling feelings of anger into more socially acceptable arenas

- Sports, exercise, music – for example

The problem with all of the above ways of expressing anger is that the source of the anger itself is never dealt with

Effectively Dealing with Anger: *Identifying, Expressing and Coping*

- Taking ownership of both your anger and any feelings that may be behind the anger. – Anger is often a “secondary emotion” – Quite often there are deeper feelings like FEAR, SHAME or HURT fueling the anger
- Assertively expressing your feelings - Letting others know how you feel in a calm and respectful manner
- Examining the root cause of anger and problem solving these issues in a responsible manner