

What Anger Is...and Isn't
Adapted from: Domestic Abuse Project (1991)

What Anger Is:

Anger is an emotion that says “something is wrong.” It can be expressed by telling others about your personal limits, values, rules and boundaries. Expressing anger respectfully tells others how their behavior affects you.

Anger is:

- A natural response to something that may happen to us
- A source of discovery, once a person learns to trust their feelings
- Normal and appropriate
- A part of assertiveness and a way to raise self-esteem
- A gift, because it tells others clearly where you stand on issues
- A healthy release
- A form of protection

What Anger Isn't:

Anger can be distorted, and expressed in ways that harm others. Anger is an emotion which does not need to result in violent behavior.

Anger Isn't:

- Blaming others and refusing to take responsibility for yourself
- Sarcasm and hostile joking
- Violence against others or yourself
- Vindictiveness, or seeking revenge
- Punishing others for what they did to you
- Aggression or bullying
- Sulking
- Manipulation, used to control other indirectly
- Scapegoating, or taking out your anger on those who do not deserve it