

Building Resilience: One Step at a Time

Avoiding Anger

Clearly there are many divides in our social settings related to world events, ongoing pandemic news, politics, and so much more. Emotions run deep and may surface often during the day.

One of those emotions is anger. Anger at people and their choices. Anger at systems. Perhaps anger at God. Anger at the fact that we cannot change people's situations. Even anger at ourselves for not being able to get a handle on these events and our emotions.

We cannot solve all the root problems that are contributing to our anger. But we can manage our anger in ways that may keep it from depleting or harming us. Following are a few tips for managing anger that are known to help people release their anger appropriately. These can help us be free of the toxic effects of holding anger within us.

First, recognize that you can choose anger, and therefore can choose to let go of or even to not take up anger. There is great freedom and far less stress that comes when we decide to not pick up anger and to let go of that which we have picked up already. Freedom from pain, anger, rage, hopelessness, and resignation in us. Freedom to move past the problems and on to solutions and effective performance. Freedom to collaborate with those we might otherwise be seen as enemies.

Second, choose wisely to forgive and move on. Remember that when we do not forgive, it is like drinking poison and expecting it to hurt the other person. Learning to let anger and bitterness go is the path to freedom, health, hope, strength, and release you.

Third, try some of these ideas to help you avoid anger as a reaction.

- Allow yourself to express the emotions you are feeling—don't wait, don't bottle them up. Do so with responsible people who can help you release the emotions.
- Ask for and accept support from those who can listen responsibly to your emotions. Others in your support system may be overwhelmed, so choose your listeners wisely, those who can help you process and let go of toxicity.
- Give yourself time to heal; be patient with changes in your emotional state.
- Write your thoughts and emotions honestly in a journal. Even if they are angry thoughts and feelings, writing helps with "getting them out." Finish by writing something like, "And I let all of this anger and hopelessness go, and let it fall to the floor."
- Reach out to help others, redirecting your own pain, anger, or bitterness.
- Take care of yourself physically: Eat well-balanced meals, exercise, avoid drugs and alcohol, get plenty of rest.
- Avoid major life decisions until the anger has passed and you can make well-thought-out decisions.