

Understand your anger

Written by Finbarr O'Donoghue

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Anger is an energy – it's actually a good thing, so long as it is expressed in a controlled way. But it's also like fire - when it is out of control, it destroys everything in its path.

When we talk about anger and its impact on you, ask yourself: Is it my anger? Is it someone else's anger: a family member, a colleague, a friend?

Is the anger out of control? How is it affecting me and my relationships?

Anger is a natural emotion – but it's how you deal with it that is important. When you understand what 'sets you off', you can learn how to deal with your triggers. It might have started as something small but you held it in so long that your anger grew. Then you blew, over something that others perceived of as minor.

My role as a therapist is to help clients to recognise and understand their triggers, so that they can express their real feelings at the appropriate time.

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Some people have been angry so long, they no longer remember what happened. They have blocked it out as a way of protecting themselves.

Therapy can help to explore what that turning point was. You cannot change the past but, with help from a therapist, you can understand what it was like for you as a child or young adult being in that situation.

Equally, when you talk to a counsellor, you will lose the fear of your anger.

Some people are afraid that they turn into their mother or father when they are angry, lashing out at whoever is nearest. So, instead of expressing their anger verbally, they bury everything inside and it eats away at them. But therapy can help helps the person understand that they are not their father or mother and they don't have to behave like this.

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