

# ANGER

Anger is a powerful emotion that everyone experiences. It is the body's response to events that make us feel threatened, attacked, frustrated, powerless, disrespected, or invalidated.

## SIGNS OF ANGER INCLUDE:

- Facial expressions like frowning or glaring.
- Clenching fists, turning away from others or invading their personal space, throwing objects, threatening others, pushing, shoving, hitting, slamming doors and any other aggressive behavior.
- Increased heart rate and blood pressure, feeling tightness in the throat, sweating, turning red or feeling hot in the face and neck, muscle tension.
- Speaking in a raised voice, yelling or shouting.
- Crying, shaking, pacing, getting quiet and withdrawing.

## HERE ARE SOME WAYS TO HANDLE ANGER:

- Recognize it. Know how to identify when you are angry and what is causing you to feel this way.
- Take a few deep breaths or talk to a neutral person and wait until you are able to think through your options before deciding what to do next.
- Once you have come up with a few options, consider one that will either have the most positive impact in the long run, or will be least detrimental.
- Respond firmly and clearly, not aggressively. Communicate your thoughts and/or feelings with respect and consideration for others involved.

## HOW IS ANGER DIFFERENT FROM OTHER EMOTIONS?

- It's a motivating emotion. When we feel angry, we often feel the urge to take some type of action. Healthy ways to release anger include going for a walk, working out or doing a breathing exercise before deciding how to respond to the person or situation that made you angry.
- It's a more complex emotion because it can be our reaction to a reaction. In other words, something or someone might make us initially feel one way, like hurt, disrespected, vulnerable, marginalized or ignored, which then makes us angry. When this happens, we tend overlook that initial feeling and respond in anger.

## ANGER CAN BE A POSITIVE RESPONSE WHEN IT MOTIVATES AND ENERGIZES US TO SOLVE PROBLEMS. HOWEVER, THERE IS A POINT WHERE ANGER CAN BEGIN TO HAVE A NEGATIVE EFFECT ON A PERSON'S LIFE, SUCH AS:

- When a person feels out of control when angry.
- They regret things that they said or did when angry.
- If the way anger is expressed causes problems in a person's relationships or job.
- Feeling angry so often that it's difficult to concentrate on work or school.
- Using alcohol or drugs to manage or cope with anger.

For free, confidential counseling for Gwynedd Mercy University students, contact:

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