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Anger Management

Anger is a feeling just as sadness, fear, happiness and worry are all feelings. People tend to feel angry when their rights have been violated or when someone has caused them harm. Often people feel angry but may not know why they feel so angry; their family and friends may just experience them as being volatile and unpredictable. Often for these people the cause of their anger is long forgotten but they react angrily out of habit when they experience stress. If this is the case for you, it is important that you learn more about your anger and to express your anger in a safe way at the true cause, not just the people or objects around you.

It is important to distinguish anger, which is a feeling, from violence, which is a behaviour. If you are behaving violently you may be tempted to believe that this is because you have a problem with anger. The causes of violence are much more complex than this and it is important that you seek suitable help to stop causing damage to your relationships and the people who you care about.

If you are having difficulties with your anger it may be helpful to:

- ◆ Do some soul searching and try to find out more about your anger. What other feelings do you also experience? Are there particular memories or relationships that you feel angry about but have not been able to resolve? Can you figure out any patterns to your anger? You may find it helpful to discuss this with a counsellor who has a good understanding of the underlying causes of anger.
- ◆ Do what you can to address the original cause of your anger. This is far less destructive than taking it out on the people who are around you.
- ◆ Try to understand what triggers your anger on a day to day basis and learn to deal with these triggers differently.
- ◆ When you know the types of situations in which you get angry, practice different ways of dealing with this other than by getting angry.

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- ◆ Know that being angry can be a habitual way of feeling if you are faced with an emotion which you find uncomfortable. This is can be particularly true for people who have been hurt as children and who have not learnt to express a wide range of emotions in a safe and comfortable way.
- ◆ Remember that being angry is not bad. It is a deep part of you telling yourself that you have been hurt and that it is not okay. Take your anger seriously and deal safely with its original causes.
- ◆ Think about what you do on a day to day basis that makes you feel good and that you find relaxing. If you don't feel this is enough make any changes that you can to your lifestyle to make time for recreation and relaxation.
- ◆ Ask the people who see you angry how they experience you being angry. You may be surprised how much of an impact your anger has on them. Take their responses seriously and figure out ways of dealing with your anger which doesn't have a negative affect on the people around you.
- ◆ When people are angry they always have beliefs and self talk which fuels their anger. Consider the messages you give yourself when you are angry. Think about whether they are true, biased or exaggerated.

Please feel free to contact Life Supports on 1300 735 030 if you would like to discuss your situation with a professional counsellor. You can find more information about Life Supports services by visiting www.lifesupports.com.au.