

HOW TO SAFELY PROCESS ANGER

The only way to escape from anger is by confronting it, listening to it, and working it through, just like grief. As a powerful emotion, some are frightened by it, or have been taught to avoid pain. Find ways that allow you to safely process and discharge the anger. Below are some examples to get you started.

PHYSICAL EXTERNALIZATION

Do something physical that doesn't make you more frustrated (don't continue hitting golf balls if you keep missing them).

- ✓ Hit the ground using a rubber hose.
- ✓ Beat on pillows.
- ✓ Throw a bowling ball.
- ✓ Hit golf balls at the driving range.
- ✓ Run.
- ✓ Chop wood.
- ✓ Pound nails.
- ✓ Stomp on bubble wrap.

EMOTIONAL EXTERNALIZATION

Do something that allows you to express your frustration and anger.

- ✓ Cry, yell and scream.
- ✓ Throw a tantrum in your bedroom (this combines physical and emotional release).
- ✓ Allow yourself to gut cry.

INTELLECTUAL EXTERNALIZATION

- ✓ Keep a journal and write down how your anger started and how you feel about it. Does it scare you? What do you do about it? Where does it cause you to choke up?
- ✓ If you're angry at an individual, write a letter and let it all hang out, and then burn it. If your writing skills need development, take a writing workshop.
- ✓ Give yourself permission to talk about your anger in your support group.

SPIRITUAL EXTERNALIZATION

- ✓ Give it to God. Talk to him.
- ✓ Spend time in still meditation or listen to spiritually soothing music.
- ✓ If your spirituality is closely aligned to your faith or religion, revisit your association with the faith of your youth or the faith of your rebirth.

ACTIVE FORGIVENESS

It is difficult to get on with your own life without forgiving those who anger you. This is why externalizing anger is very important, otherwise it's just words without action.

Active forgiving involves letting issues pass through, noticing them, and letting them go. The confessional works for some, personal confession and prayer works for others.