

# **Legendary Love. Module 3. Handling Disagreements.**

## **Lesson 16. Handling Anger.**

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## **Handling Anger.**

Communication is an everyday event. As you discovered in the last lesson, it's especially important during times of stress. It's also crucial when children are part of the new family.

Regardless of how good your communication is, someone will get angry at some point. In this lesson, you'll learn the real reason people get angry, the different ways people respond to anger, and the differences in how people handle their own anger.

### **The True Cause of Anger**

Anger is the result of loss - it's the 2nd stage of the grief cycle. Most people think of the grief cycle being related to death, a tragedy, or the end of relationship. You can experience grief at any loss, such as a job, money, things, or even safety.

**When you and your partner are angry, think about what you lost.** This is where you begin your conversation.

### **Consider these ideas:**

1. **There are additional feelings hiding beneath the anger.** These are the feelings to discuss when you're engaged in Reflective Listening.
  - **Fear is often hiding beneath anger.** Fear has you feeling weak and powerless while anger has you feeling strong.
  - Sadness can also hide beneath anger. Sadness has usually been present for a while before anger surfaces.
  - Jealousy can also be beneath the anger. **Jealousy, however, is more connected to the fear of losing something or someone.**

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### **2. Anger is a strong emotion. Treat it gently.**

- You may need some cooling-off time before you sit down and discuss your anger. **Just be sure that you do sit down and talk about it.**

**There are different ways people cope with their own anger:**

#### **1. Some people express their anger by exploding.**

- Anger can produce fear if the other person is afraid of being harmed.
- **If you're fearful of being hurt, go to a place of safety.**
- Many people who express their anger in an explosive manner are often no longer angry afterwards. If this is your partner, you might want to let them vent as long as you feel safe.

#### **2. The other extreme to exploding is holding your anger within you.** You bury it inside until something forces the anger to break through.

- For some, their anger eventually becomes explosive.
- For others, their anger can turn inwards to depression and even self-harm.

**As you and your partner come to know each other, you'll come to recognize the signs that you're angry.** As soon as you recognize those signs, it's time to set an appointment with each other to use Reflective Listening to sort through the emotion.

**There are also differences in how people talk about their anger, such as:**

1. **"I'm going to tell everyone about what you did to me."** Some people do need to vent to someone else so that they won't say something to their partner they can't take back.

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- The best person to vent to is a third-party person you can trust completely. You don't want your relationship difficulties spread across the world like feathers in a strong breeze.
  - If you need to vent, remember that the people you vent to don't know when everything's okay. If these are friends and family members, be sure and keep them updated so they don't hold onto their anger at your partner.
2. **"I'm not going to tell anyone about my anger."** They often don't tell themselves about their anger. Remember the Johari Window? They hide their anger in the "unknown to self/known to others" window or the "unknown to everyone" window.
- When you're not aware of your own anger, you can't talk about the anger. You can, however, discuss with your partner the other feelings which are present. **The anger will often come to the surface as you're talking about the other feelings.**

### When Do You Talk about Your Anger?

As important as anger is to discuss, you and your partner could be at odds as to when to talk about it.

Some people need to cool off before they discuss their anger. They may need from an hour to a day before they're able to discuss it. If this person is forced to sort everything out immediately, this can increase their frustration and anger.

### Implement these steps when the two of you are at odds as to when to talk about the source of the anger:

1. **Set an appointment with each other for the discussion.** This may be difficult for the person who wants to talk about things right now, but it'll relieve some of the inner tension because they know exactly when they can talk about it.
2. **If you want to talk right now, you'll benefit from some activities to relieve the inner stress.**

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- Take as long as you need for some deep breathing.
- You may find some relief from your inner tension by journaling.  
**Getting the words on paper will also help you sort through your own feelings and be prepared for the upcoming discussion.**
- You can also take a walk, read a book, listen to music, watch a movie, or find another way to distract yourself until it's time.

**It's important that the two of you sort through the causes of the anger.** You may want to ignore what happened, but that can weaken your relationship.

### **Summary**

Anger is a sign of loss. People express their anger in different ways. They may explode, withdraw, stuff it, or even deny that it happened. The important step is to set aside time to sort it all out, so it doesn't fester and weaken your relationship.

In the next lesson, you'll learn that what people think they're upset about isn't it at all. You'll learn some techniques to discover what the true source of your emotional discomfort is.

Before you go on, please take a few minutes to reflect on what you've explored in this lesson.

### **Reflection**

1. What do you do when you're angry? Do you hold it in, scream and yell, post everything on social media, or ignore it all?
2. How have you and your relationship been affected by the way you handle anger?

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3. Write out what you would like you and your partner to do when you're angry.