Anger Discussion Questions

1 Although it might sometimes feel like your anger "explodes" and comes out of nowhere, this is almost never the case. Anger builds slowly, and if you aren't paying attention, it can happen entirely outside of your awareness. Can you think of a time when your anger caught you by surprise? In retrospect, were there any warning signs you could've picked up on?

2 Some people describe anger as a "secondary emotion". This means that anger is a response to a *primary* emotion, such as hurt, fear, or sadness. For example, someone might feel hurt, and lash out with anger in response. Do *you* think anger is a secondary emotion? Why or why not?

3 Many of us pick up life-long habits related to anger when we're children, based off of the examples set by our parents. Do you notice any similarities between how you and your family members deal with anger? What are your family's strengths and weaknesses in dealing with anger?

4 Everyone experiences anger—it's a completely normal emotion, and it's healthy within limits. But as we know, anger can become a problem when it gets out of control. When *is* anger healthy, and when does it become unhealthy or harmful?

5 People can express their anger through words, actions, art, or any number of other ways. Do you express your anger in any healthy ways, and if so, what are they? What do you think might happen if you *never* expressed your anger?

6 How you think about a situation can influence how you feel about it. For example, if you think that someone "has it out for you", you will probably see all of their actions in a negative light. Can you think of a time when your thoughts affected your anger? In what ways could changing how you think help you control how you feel?

7 What would it look like if someone was really good at managing their anger? Not just hiding their anger or ignoring it, but managing it in a genuinely healthy way. Do you know anyone who manages their anger well?

© 2016 Therapist Aid LLC