

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry
Living with Anger
First Parish Church of Stow and Acton, MA, November 2018

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

Let go
Of all that binds you
Of all that burdens you
Of what you carry
Of all that shames you
Of fear
Of trespasses and transgressions
Of woundedness
Let go of guilt
Let go of anger
Let go of small mindedness and pettiness
Of ways of being that no longer work for you
Of compulsions that consume your living
Let go of what you cannot change
Let go of regret
Of that which haunts you
Let go of pain
Let go of ways in which you missed the mark
Let go

Lois Van Leer

Check-in/ Sharing: This is a time to mention briefly any major issue or event on your mind that you would like to share.

Topic: Living with Anger

Anger is one of the most fundamental drives in our nature. It can burn within us like a fire. When we use it for motivation, it can show us that something is wrong and empower us to change it or give us necessary energy for survival. When we allow it to override our reason and caring, it can drive us to insensitive or hateful deeds. It can be damaging, empowering or embittering. All of us have experienced it, to varying degrees, throughout our lives.

“I realized that if my thoughts immediately affect my body, I should be careful about what I think. Now if I get angry, I ask myself why I feel that way. If I can find the source of my anger, I can turn that negative energy into something positive.” - *Yoko Ono*

“For every minute you are angry, you give up sixty seconds of peace of mind.” - *Ralph Waldo Emerson*

"Anger, that beautiful daughter of hope, demands action. Anger changes things. It seeks to correct the injustice that offendedness merely wants to savor. Anger sees injustice and tries to rip it out at the root." - *Fred Clark*

"When you are angry, you suffer as though you are being burned by the fires of hell." - *Thich Nhat Hanh*

"Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host. But anger is like fire. It burns it all clean." - *Maya Angelou*

"Sometimes when I'm angry I have the right to be angry, but that doesn't give me the right to be cruel." - *Author unknown*

"Anger is a great force. If you control it, it can be transmuted into a power which can move the whole world." - *Sivananda*

Possible Questions for Discussion:

- How did I see handling anger role modeled in childhood? How was I taught to deal with my own anger?
- Have there been instances where anger drove me to do things I regretted or when expressing my anger was not helpful?
- Have I ever used anger constructively, by finding a way to express it or perhaps transforming it to another emotion, to accomplish a needed goal?
- When I've encountered anger in other people, how have I felt and how have I reacted? Have my reactions been different when I've encountered it in family versus friends or strangers?
- What makes it possible/easier for me to hear or accept another's anger?
- What emotions or behaviors arise from or accompany my anger?
- Have there been times when I wish I could have let go of anger, or times when I succeeded in letting go of anger?

(Please take a few minutes to consider topic and questions, followed by sharing)

Wrapping Up: How did you like this topic and session?

Closing Words: "Holding onto anger is like grasping a hot coal with the intent of throwing it at someone else; you are the one that gets burned." - *Buddha*