

A GOOD REASON TO BE ANGRY

“I just lost my partner, and I am angry about it! No one can give me a good reason or tell me why this is happening to me. I feel like I feel the least little thing could set me off, and I could explode at any minute. Everyone around me is walking on eggshells. This is exhausting!”



Angry Moments Can Arise

Losing your partner, the person you have shared your life with is a good reason to be angry. During the grief journey there may be times when anger rises within you without warning. Many times, it is a reaction that just appears, usually uninvited and unwelcome. Perhaps your anger is specifically directed at someone. You may feel mad at the person who died, or with someone

who caused your loss like the drunk driver, an abuser, or the one who stole from you. People, even family and friends, can do or say the wrong things that make you angry. There may be no particular person you are angry with; sometimes you just feel mad at the whole world. You may not understand the reason for your loss and the injustice of it all makes you want to scream in frustration and pain. Maybe you have generalized your anger toward “fate”, life or even God for allowing the loss. There are times you just feel angry!

Unresolved Anger

Anger is a natural reaction to grief and loss; getting mad occasionally is normal. But if anger stays too long, it can develop into a stronger emotion called rage, and that can turn out of control. Anger that is unresolved can create bitterness. If it’s left to fester too long, anger can also turn into fury and vengeance. These are all dangerous and destructive by-products of a normal emotion that you don’t want to keep. Through diligence and forgiveness, the anger you feel now will become weaker until it ultimately changes forms. The energy is still there, but if you allow it to, the anger can change from negative to positive.

Releasing Anger

Anger tends to come and go before it is finally resolved. Yes, anger can be resolved, and should be. Rather than being held in the caustic grip of prolonged anger, you can choose to release the powerful and negative emotion. If you hang on to it for an extended period, it can become a stumbling block in your recovery. Even though it is typical to feel this way, it is important to get these feelings out. However, you do not ever want to take your anger out on another person. There are some things you can do to release these emotions constructively.

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When feeling angry:

- It may sound simple, but count to 10 and take several deep breaths
- Scribble hard on paper or tear up strips of scrap paper, then wad up the papers and throw it all into the trash; imagine your anger being discarded with the paper
- Draw, paint or use other art forms to express your anger
- Talk to someone in your support system or let all your emotions out in your journal. Explain what makes you angry; be honest and open with your words and don't worry about sounding "right."
- Exercise and being active helps to release negative energy
- You may feel like physically letting your emotions out; sometimes expression of anger does not come in words. In those times, you can find a safe place to vent your emotions by yelling, kicking, screaming, stomping your feet, shaking your body, pounding your fists into a pillow, or running. However, if you choose to release your anger in such a way, make sure you tell someone you trust what you are doing and always make certain you remain safe. You do not ever want to hurt yourself or others while releasing your anger
- You may choose to direct the negative force into something constructive by becoming an activist for a particular cause or advocate change where it is needed

Beyond Anger

It helps to see yourself moving past anger and into a more satisfying future. Stewing in your anger or imagining ways to hurt or get back at others will only embed the anger and anchor it deep in our heart. You will likely find that expressing your feelings will make you feel better. When you couple that with doing something helpful for someone else, you are well on your way to releasing this strong emotion and moving beyond anger.

