

Tool kit for understanding Anger

Tool 1: Know your anger signs.

- Learn to read your anger signs in your body.
- Feelings of discomfit, clenching hands and muscles, tight feelings in the gut.
- Do you feel you have to fight, take flight or freeze to survive the situation.
- What are you really feeling? Sad, Anxious, Confused, Ashamed, Guilty?
- Notice your thoughts. How are you being influenced by your thoughts?
- Are your thoughts contributing to feelings of anger.

Tool 2: Safety is men's business.

- To have angry feelings is normal it's just not okay to act those angry feelings out so that you or others are hurt by your words and actions.
- It's essential that your partner/wife child/children feel safe even when you have angry feelings.
- Are you safe from your own angry feelings? Do you take more risks, drink or use drugs when you're angry.
- What do you need to say [self-talk] or do for yourself, to feel more secure?

Tool 3: Time out.

- To be used when you feel rising anger and need to take a break, 30 minutes is usually enough.
- Take time out before your angry feelings have taken over your good brain and you are incapable of thinking straight.
- Use the time out to calm down, take deep breaths, exercise if that works to calm you down.
- Don't drink or use drugs, or drive a vehicle.
- Make sure all your anger signs have returned to normal before returning, or attempting to talk with your partner.

Tool 4: Triggers.

- What are the triggers that make you feel angry? List your triggers, get to know them very well.
- What are the predictable situations where you always end up feeling anger or end up in trouble.
- How can you prepare yourself so that you avoid getting sucked in by the trigger so that you have control over the trigger.
- Triggers can be, thoughts, situations, behaviours, past events, and people that make you feel bad.

Tool 5: Stresses.

- Become aware of all the stresses you're facing. Focus on short term and long term stresses that are causing you to feel angry right now.
- Prioritize your stresses. Start with the stresses you can change now.
- Look at the stresses that will take longer to change, and reduce problems to bite sized chunks.
- Do you have personal supports that you can call on when you need help?
- Have you got professional supports in place when you need help?

Tool 6: Communication.

- Am I really listening to my partner/ person I'm arguing with?
- Am I telling my story clearly without acting out the angry feelings so that my partner understands me?
- Am I using my body to block safe communication?
- Do I feel unsafe because I can't talk or think as quickly or as clearly as my partner? If so how can I sooth myself so I can think clearly.

Tool 7: Conflict resolution

- Are you prepared to work at the problem?
- Can you shift out of blaming others or self blame
- In your time out, can you start to hear her/his issues and think of solutions instead of staying with resentments and feelings of unfairness.
- How will your partner know you're ready to look for solutions?

Tool 8: Fathering.

- Have you wondered if your kids feel safe with you.
- Are you happy with what your children see of your actions, speech and feelings?
- Do you enjoy your children?
- Does your partner feel confident about your fathering when she is not there?
- Do you feel confident about your fathering

Tool 9: Relaxation and Self care.

- Regular 7-8hrs sleep,
- Meditation, Prayer,
- Deep Breathing, Physical Exercise,
- Healthy Diet, Alcohol in moderation.
- Music, Nature
- Uplifting space/people. Art. Hobbies.

Tool 10: Self-reflection.

- What do you want to change in yourself?
- Are you facing up to your problems or are you avoiding your issues?
- Are you attending to your personal growth?
- What would it be like to convert hard times into opportunities as a way of learning about yourself?

Tool 11: Meaning Making.

- Spirituality, Having a belief in something greater than yourself.
- Sacred Ritual.
- Setting constructive goals to create a focus in your life to achieve your potential.
- Finding meaningful work.
- Creativity, and art.
- Creating/growing a satisfying relationship.
- Reconnecting to education/learning. Learning a new skill.