



Your Mindful Anger Toolbox

When you notice yourself either stuffing your anger or erupting with anger, practice using these tools:

1. Breathe

Take 5 -10 deep breaths (5 second inhales & 5 second exhales).

Breathing engages your parasympathetic nervous system and sends signals to your body that soothe the threat response.

2. Name it

Name what you are feeling and sensing in your body. For example, you can say, "I am feeling angry. I am noticing a clenching in my jaw and there is a burning feeling in my stomach." *Research conducted at UCLA found that when you name your emotions and sensations, it puts the brakes on your physiological dysregulation and calms the amygdala hijack.*

3. Do it differently

Anger Erupters: Pause, step away from the situation, take some deep breaths, and place a hand on your heart. It is nearly impossible to keep erupting in anger if you are connected to your heart. See if you can generate some compassion and empathy for yourself and the other party.

Anger Stuffers: Freely journal about all the things you feel angry about. Try blurting or yelling in the safety of your room or car, allowing yourself to say **everything** you have been afraid to say. Stand in front of a mirror and growl or roar—feel your inner protector. Remind yourself that it is ok, safe, and healthy to feel your anger.

4. Inquire

Imagine you can ask your anger the following questions, and be open to anything that it shares with you (it might communicate with images, words, or feelings):

- **What do I need to see right now that I have been unwilling to face?**
- **What needs to be protected or supported?**
- **What action do I need to take?**