



DVDs and CDs no longer available for this training

Program Overview

Much of contemporary psychology reflects society in placing emotion, wisdom, and knowing as inferior to rationality, mind or mental processing, information and action. This over-focus on problem-solving, control and evidence, has translated to a profound loss of connection with soul or wisdom and care within the individual and by extension, in our relating and way of living. It is reflected in increasing rates of violence, cruelty and abuse to animals, children, strangers and loved ones. Directed inwardly, we find a relationship between escalating mental health issues and the implosion of anger and other emotions.

Grief, shame, fear and despair are more readily addressed in therapy than anger which is generally approached in a management model omitting fundamental factors in learning healthy anger.

This workshop will explore an approach developed over 20 years to assist clients to respect and process anger, from feelings of intense rage, to disconnection (masked, displaced, somatized) through to the wisdom it offers, and effective strategies for dealing with interpersonal and intra-psychic conflict.

Participants will learn how to effectively assist clients to identify, integrate and appreciate healthy anger. They will learn strategies to show clients the difference between anger that empowers - nourishing love, compassion and personal responsibility - and anger that disempowers through being directed in aggression and violence which is really a failure to feel and respond to anger.

Participants will explore why it is necessary to process anger in all 4 ways it is experienced. What we call 'feelings' are complex experiences of emotion, beliefs, physiological states and behaviours – all of which can be influenced by protective defense mechanisms for what is not possible at the time, or does not feel safe, to address. The more effectively these skills combine, the more compassionate and respectful behaviour toward Self and others is expressed.

We will cover comprehensive and practical strategies for addressing and integrating feelings along the spectrum of anger. Emotional processing, which includes the body's involvement, will be given special attention as these aspects are typically neglected and raise special challenges particularly for those who have experienced trauma or abuse.

Program Outline

DAY 1

9.00 – 10.30 I. **Biological Basis and Psychological Complexity of Anger**

- The neurobiology of anger
- The 4 elements of defense mechanisms: fight, flight, freeze and 'fool' -

- continuum from everyday to extreme threat
- Masking feelings and identifying patterns of disconnection
- Conflict between need to feel and also to avoid distress
- The spectrum of anger
- Anger in unexplained health problems and psychiatric disorders

11.00 – 12.30 II. **Healthy Anger Versus Aggression / Violence**

- Responsibility, guilt, shame, grief, fear, despair, forgiveness and spirituality in relation to anger
- Violence / aggression: overt and covert or active and passive
- Anger as a cornerstone of spirituality and peace-making
- Mindfulness and anger
- Understanding does not integrate emotions
- Balancing attributing responsibility with not blaming

1.30 – 3.00 111. **The 4 Dimensions in Experiencing Anger**

- The RALF Model addresses mind, body, soul and spirit
 - physical stress, bodily sensations, pain, discomfort, numbing
 - emotions: challenging, intense and conflictual
 - beliefs / sense of meaning: self / world
 - behaviour: choices regarding internal and external conflict
- How we show and tell what anger requires to be integrated and why we ignore it

3.30 – 4.30 IV. **Fundamental Components of Setting the Scene Safely**

- Creating safety: general and specific boundaries
 - management of session beginning, middle and end
 - client / therapist rights and responsibilities / expectations
 - pacing: verbal and non-verbal; conscious and subconscious
- Non-pathologizing approach supports growth model
- Being human not perfect – model, reinforce and anticipate
- Distortions in medical, psychiatric and New Age concepts

DAY 2

9.00 – 10.30 V. **Implementing RALF**

- Identifying client's strengths and challenges
- Exploring outcomes in neglect of challenging dimensions
- Anticipating and responding post-honeymoon period
- Assisting client in establishing healthy anger with children
- Swearing and children – being real yet responsible

11.00 – 12.30 VI. **Key Considerations in Developing Respect and Compassion**

- Expressive art work and emotional processing
- Emotional integration exercises
- Utilizing the body and somatization
- Developing insight versus blame: of self and / or others
- Contact issues with person/s behaving abusively

1.30 – 3.00 VII. **Therapeutic Benefits of Relational Issues**

- Utilizing transference eg. hostility, distrust, fear, shame
- Capitalizing on client-therapist relationship and perceived 'crisis'
- Harnessing counter-transference

3.00 – 4.00 VIII. **Therapist Self-care – Appreciating Your Anger Too!**

- Exposure to others pain: compassion fatigue - vicarious traumatization - getting bent out of shape
- Activation of personal issues; collective pain
- Issues where therapist has a trauma history
- Identifying and responding to warning signs
- Benefits and limitations of self-care plans
- Embracing your anger - personal and professional benefits

Learning Objectives

1. To understand why and how anger is pivotal in healing, forgiveness and happiness
2. To discuss the 4 aspects or dimensions of anger requiring development of very different skills
3. To outline effective strategies for facilitating safe connection with healthy anger through the body, emotions, perspective and behaviours
4. To discern forgiveness versus forgetting and appreciate why genuine forgiveness and well-being can not occur without integrating anger
5. To differentiate between anger directed constructively and destructively and the respective empowering or disempowering outcomes for Self and others