

## ANGERS AND HURTS

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Hurt is often unacknowledged or dismissed as feeling upset. People are hurt when they feel they have lost something – friendship, self-esteem, a loved one, a confidence, or a job. The building up of hurt leads to anger.

Anger is a very common and immediate response when a spouse dies or a divorce occurs. It is a major component in the grieving process. The anger doesn't have to make sense to be real. Generally, the more we are hurt by the death or divorce the more anger we have. If we had a healthy, loving relationship, we could be angry with our spouse for leaving us deprived and/or helpless. We would be angry with our spouse for abandoning us even when, in fact, we were the one who filed for the divorce. We could be angry with someone who is not suffering as we are or with counselors or friends who are pushing us to do our grief work. It is important to understand that it is emotionally freeing to get in touch with and express our anger.

Even today, society is uncomfortable with the feeling of anger. How often have we been told, "don't get so upset", or "you shouldn't be so angry". Because of this, anger has become a difficult emotion to express and, consequently, we bury it. We are the unknown consequences of anger.

Anger and hurt are as essential to our emotions as joy and love. We need to understand them more fully and learn to express anger in appropriate ways. So often we have been told that it is wrong to be angry with someone we love. Yet those are the very persons who are capable of hurting us the deepest because we have allowed ourselves to be vulnerable with them. The feelings of anger towards a loved one only reinforce how important they are to us.

Repressed anger often results in self-hatred and depression. Allowing the feelings of anger to be felt and expressed enables the emotional wound to close and heal in a healthy way.

**Teaching our children, as well as ourselves, about expressing our feelings of anger can be simplified by remembering the following:**

- 1. Getting angry is okay.**
- 2. Ask a caring person to listen to your feelings and help you sort through them.**
- 3. Write down your feelings.**
- 4. Don't dump your feelings on anyone. Find an appropriate way of expressing your anger.**
- 5. Don't hurt other people or mistreat their personal possessions.**
- 6. Try to do something about what is making you angry.**
- 7. It is okay to cry, scream, jump up and down, exercise, yell, pound your pillow, or write down your feelings.**