

# SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group

Date: 3/3/2022

## Topic: Navigating Anger

**Description:** More often than not, anger is a stigmatised emotion. This can bring up further complex emotions for us all. However, sometimes anger can serve as a small voice to remind us of areas we may be ignoring, or where our boundaries are being disrespected. Let's come together to explore at what anger looks like, as well as healthy ways to navigate it.

earthling95(PSW)

Hi everyone. First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight.

earthling95(PSW)

Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about Navigating Anger.

earthling95(PSW)

[While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way](#)

through the event, you can find the survey here  
now: [https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW)

**LittleSteps (PSW)**  
Welcome  
earthling95!

Tonight, peer support workers @earthling95 and @LittleSteps will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Navigating Anger. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, anger is a complex emotion which can at times be felt by all. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature as we talk about mental health struggles and our relationship with anger. @Basil, who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. Just a gentle reminder that we share our stories and thoughts in a safe manner 😊. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (<https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support>) or message @Basil.

**earthling95(PSW)**  
We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of Navigating Anger.

**earthling95(PSW)**  
Hello  
**LittleSteps (PSW)**  
tyme! :)  
Welcome

**earthling95(PSW)**  
tyme!  
Hi

**tyme (PSW)**  
Everyone!

**earthling95(PSW)**  
We will be starting the discussion shortly, and

will just allow  
a bit more  
time for  
people to log  
on and  
join 😊

Welcome  
everyone!  
Feel free to  
introduce  
yourselves.

**earthling95(PSW)**

I'm  
earthling95  
:)  
Hi  
everyone! I  
am  
LittleSteps

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

:)

**Basil  
(Moderator)**

Hello,  
I'm Basil  
:)

I'm tyme, and I hope to find  
this discussion interesting  
as I've had problems with  
anger in the past. I'm much  
better now, but would like  
to reflect on it so that i can  
support others.

**tyme (PSW)**

**What are  
some of the  
narratives  
that you have  
equated with  
anger within  
your life**

**earthling95(PSW)**

**experiences  
that still hold  
a firm place?**

**LittleSteps (PSW)** Hello  
@Shaz51 !  
Welcome! :)  
**earthling95(PSW)** welcome  
**tyme (PSW)** shaz51! :)  
Hi @shaz51  
Hello  
@earthling95 ,  
@LittleSteps  
Shaz51 (PSW) xoxo  
earthling,  
could you  
please  
**tyme (PSW)** elaborate on  
the question?  
Hello @tyme  
Shaz51 (PSW) xx

I have been taught that anger is a “bad” emotion, so to speak. I don’t feel that I have been taught that anger can be a functional emotion, a “teacher”, almost. I feel that in our society it is taboo to feel angry, and so it is also taboo to talk about ways of dealing with anger healthily.

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

Growing up, I equated anger as a 'bad' and 'scary' emotion. It felt like a mountain that I wouldn't want to dare to move. Over the years, I have been through a lot of deconstruction work and changed my narratives around it- it's a normal human experience that I denied myself to feel due to sometimes being on the receiving end of it.

**earthling95(PSW)**  
**earthling95(PSW)**

Tyme- we all hold narratives about certain feelings and emotions. I guess in this case, from what lens did you view anger? a healthy emotion to process or something that you didn't want to address?

**What are some situations where you might sense being heightened or angry?**

**earthling95(PSW)**

Thanks for the clarification, earthling. I guess for me, anger was also seen as a 'bad' emotion and something I had to eliminate out of my life, otherwise I'd be considered 'bad' also. After a lot of work with my treating team, I've come to accept that anger is neither 'good' nor 'bad', but rather a feeling. However, it is what I DO with the anger the difference

**tyme (PSW)**

\*what I DO with the anger that makes the difference

**tyme (PSW)**

Wow tyme- 'observing' anger instead of absorbing it

**earthling95(PSW)**

**tyme (PSW)**

Precisely I get angry when I see

**tyme (PSW)**

unfairness.

**earthling95(PSW)**

I definitely find myself feeling heightened or angry when my personal boundaries are disrespected or attacked..and watching injustice. I think it can come from a place of causes I am passionate about as well.

**tyme (PSW)** Situations that are unjust, and people are getting hurt

**LittleSteps (PSW)** I feel like one big on for me where I might feel heightened or angry is when my boundaries are crossed. It can feel much more complex than just feeling "angry", it can mean feeling frustrated or even embarrassed, or out of control. I suppose what defines us as people is what we do with that anger, and how we express it.

**tyme (PSW)** I have also noticed that fear can turn into anger.

**earthling95(PSW)** So true LittleSteps- it can definitely be an over powering emotion..almost like an umbrella. So much goes on underneath.

earthling95(PSW) definitely  
tyme- I  
have  
definitely  
felt that  
when my  
fear didn't  
get a  
voice..I felt  
anger.  
**Anger is a  
functional  
emotion. What  
are the benefits  
or processing  
anger and  
expressing it in  
a healthy  
manner?**

earthling95(PSW) Anger can be a warning sign for when our boundaries have been crossed, or for when we are not addressing aspects of our life and self-care. Processing anger can help us to honour where perhaps we have been treated without respect, or where we are not having our needs met. The benefits of expressing anger in a healthy manner is that we succeed in taking all aspects of a situation into account, meaning ourselves and other people. Expressing anger in a healthy manner can have an array of effects, including assisting us to set boundaries, acknowledge self care and express our needs.

tyme (PSW) That's a good point earthling! That 'anger is a functional emotion'. I guess looking back at evolution, processing anger could have meant the difference between life and death! Today, I feel sometimes people don't 'hear' unless anger is expressed (not all the time, of course)

earthling95(PSW) I think anger is a survival emotion. It has helped me be more aware of my personal boundaries and also foster healthy

relationships. In the past, I found myself not speaking up to 'keep the peace' and not express my needs, fearing I would be 'clingy'. Processing anger taught me what healthy and respectful communication should look like.

Processing anger also made me mindful about the plethora of painful emotions I was burying deep inside.

**earthling95(PSW)**

I have had similar experiences and learnings, earthling95.

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

Me too

**tyme (PSW)**

When I finally accepted that it is OKAY to feel anger, I learnt to use it in a different way. It was no longer about lashing out because I felt out-of-control, but rather, a reminder that I was human

**tyme (PSW)**

"reminder that I was human.." love it.

**earthling95(PSW)**

**How might  
you  
communicate  
healthily to  
others that  
you are  
angry?**

**earthling95(PSW)**

Hello @teej !

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

Welcome!

**earthling95(PSW)**

Howdy  
@teej :)

**tyme (PSW)**

Hi @teej!  
Just catching  
up. Hi all 🙌

teej

**earthling95(PSW)**

Some of the ways I communicate- " I am noticing myself feeling extremely overwhelmed and there's a lot going inside my head. I don't want to say something I regret, i'd like a few minutes just to feel a bit more grounded before I can express myself clearly"

**tyme (PSW)**

In terms of communicating to others that I'm angry, I don't do it there and then. I feel when I deal with something in the midst of anger, it tends to come out wrong.... and then I regret it and have more work trying to repair the damage. However to my children, I tell them 'You've made me feel angry because...'

teej

My problem with anger is not with others but I turn on myself. I struggle to be angry at others. In the past I've always just assumed I did something wrong. On a slow path out... because I've become a bit of a hermit.

earthling95(PSW) I hear you  
teej- it's  
often our  
own self  
talk that  
needs the  
most  
nurturing.

LittleSteps (PSW) If it were me, I would try my best to name my emotions and describe them. I would also try to state my reasons for being angry, to allow people to empathise and understand. I think, for me, it's also really important to use "I" statements when expressing anger. For example, I would probably say something along the lines of "I am feeling angry. For me, this makes me feel like I can't sit still or concentrate. I am feeling frustrated because I feel like my boundaries aren't being respected right now."

earthling95(PSW) Thanks for sharing  
LittleSteps- something  
I could definitely  
incorporate more into  
my toolbox. "I"  
statements can be  
empowering.

earthling95(PSW) **Anger is an  
emotion that  
can often be  
felt in our  
body. How  
does anger  
feel like for  
you?**

teej I think doing DBT was  
helpful for navigating  
using I statements and

understanding it better  
to help try to teach my  
teenagers at the time.

**earthling95(PSW)**

My head feels heavy, my  
hands shake..and I often  
end up crying. This is a  
sign for me to sit with  
what's coming up instead  
of wanting to 'fix it'.

teej

In the past my self  
hatred anger came out  
as strong suicide urges  
(sometimes acted upon  
🤔🙏). Now it's more  
just trying to ride that  
wave.

**earthling(PSW)**

Anger  
definitely  
isn't an  
easy wave  
to surf  
through.

**tyme (PSW)**

I've felt  
that in the  
past too  
teej...  
inward-  
directed  
anger

teej

@earthling95 I hear you with  
the learning to sit with it rather  
than fix it. Early on I would go  
searching for a magic wand to

“fix it”. When I couldn’t find the magic wand I’d struggle to sit with it.

**Anger can sometimes be an emotion that is often a scaffolding to underlying feelings. What does anger teach us?**

**earthling95(PSW)**

Anger is a “teacher” of sorts. I think that anger can teach us how to honour our boundaries, self care commitments and sense of self.

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

I hear you teej. I spent a considerable amount of time wanting to 'fix' my emotions and run away from them. They're a tough cookie hey...yet they persisted! Oof haha

**earthling95(PSW)**

Anger has in some way taught me

**tyme (PSW)**

**tyme (PSW)** that violence  
is not an  
answer.  
And that  
violence and  
aggression is  
NOT the  
same as  
anger.

**earthling95(PSW)** Anger taught  
me patience,  
dealing with  
failure..and  
strength.

**teej** @LittleSteps  
(PSW) That  
statement “ I think  
that anger can  
teach us how to  
honour our  
boundaries, self  
care commitments  
and sense of self”  
just stirred curiosity  
for me.

**teej** Sorry  
stirred  
the  
wrong  
word  
but I  
hope  
you  
know  
what I  
mean

**earthling95(PSW)** Being curious towards our anger can definitely help us get a perspective and deal with it in a healthy manner

teej I realised that it's hard to have boundaries if you don't have a strong sense of self.

**earthling95(PSW)** So true teej.

**LittleSteps (PSW)** @teej I hear you. I believe boundaries can be difficult but important.

teej There is a bit of chicken and the egg thing.

tyme (PSW) I think always being

open  
and  
curious  
can help  
us go a  
long way  
in life.

**What are some ways to  
reduce the stigma  
around anger being such  
a taboo and “negative”  
emotion? What are some  
steps that we can take to  
reduce this taboo?**

**earthling95(PSW)**

Hello  
VegeChips! :)

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

Welcome!  
Welcome

**earthling95(PSW)**

VegeChips :)

Model to  
others what  
healthy  
anger can  
look like

**tyme (PSW)**

Hi

**tyme (PSW)**

VegeChips!

Brilliant  
response  
tyme. Love  
it,

**earthling95(PSW)**

VegeChips

Hi, I'm sorry.  
it says 7pm.

VegeChips  
teej

I must be an  
hour late  
Thanks for  
the  
welcomes all  
:)  
Hi  
@VegeChips

**tyme (PSW)**

Separating  
the feeling of  
anger and  
the  
behaviour  
associated  
with anger  
can also  
help.

**earthling95(PSW)**

Stigma in itself breeds anger. I  
think just echoing on what we  
discussed before- becoming  
curious about anger and a lot  
of self-compassion. Feelings  
are not 'good' and 'bad'.

**teej**

I think that learning  
about anger and  
awareness of it are so  
important. I think as a  
society we have to  
teach about anger  
from toddler years  
on.

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

I think a lot of what we have touched on today is a good start.  
Opening up a dialogue about anger, it's functions, origins and

expression is important, I think. We've already talked about how we might be able to express ourselves in a healthy manner when angry. Maybe role modelling these strategies, as @tyme (PSW) mentioned, can be a way to overturn taboo?

@teej I agree

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

**earthling95(PSW)**

Absolutely!  
Also..making  
peace with  
anger; not  
being  
intimidated by  
it.

**earthling95(PSW)**

I have hind sight now but had no clue about emotions because they were taboo in my generation and definitely my parents. As a result my kids learned about anger when I learned about it and by then it is hard for them to want to take it in. They were raging testosterone teenagers then.

teej

maybe  
calling it  
over for a  
cuppa  
and really  
hear what  
anger has  
to say :)

**earthling95(PSW)**

**Have you learned  
anything helpful from  
others' experiences here  
tonight that you might  
be able to apply in your**

**earthling95(PSW)**

**own life? If yes, what did you learn?**

VegeChips	Oh, if someone is interested, and not outright dismissive, that helps me heaps. But some people don't even want to deal with the emotion. Said often to kerb it.
<b>tyme (PSW)</b>	You've raised such a good point @teej. The understanding of anger has shifted over the generations.
teej	I think that role modelling is a huge step and just finding an open space to talk about anger in a vulnerable way will help remove the stigma and help others hugely.
<b>tyme (PSW)</b>	definitely @teej!
<b>LittleSteps (PSW)</b>	@VegeChips good point!
VegeChips	I guess I haven't ranted as much in Jan or def Feb as I used to. Had such richous indignation for past few years. Trying to stick to one sentance per text or email has helped heaps. Gives

others time to become present. Like in the moment conversations.

VegeChips Thank you :)

Also been given email approximate boundaries was helpful. For example: We honestly couldn't even reply - as clearly as we want to for 3 days.

VegeChips

I have learnt a lot of helpful things today. I think what's been really helpful for me has been talking about anger in a different light and a safe space.

**LittleSteps (PSW)**

Yes..I am glad we were able to give anger a safe and nurturing space today :)

**earthling95(PSW)**

I think that's why I came in tonight @earthling95 @LittleSteps (PSW) to talk in a safe space and hear what others experience too.

teej

I'm so happy we all came from a curious and compassionate space.

**earthling95(PSW)**

VegeChips

Thank you all for being here. I'll catch up on the chat log. Text to voice. Boy that's frustrating at times. Thank you. Didn't realise how many others can experience anger too.

earthling95(PSW)

I hear you  
VegeChips-  
it's a  
validating  
feeling.  
Have a good  
night, thanks  
for joining us  
:)

earthling95(PSW)

**Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about our relationship with anger. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do? 🤔**

earthling95(PSW)

teej



I'm getting a Mcflurry ice cream..yipeee

earthling95(PSW)

VegeChips

Hahahaha.  
I already felt

ok to take a  
deep breath.  
Whatever  
feels natural  
for self care  
here.

**earthling95(PSW)** just took a  
deep  
breath as I  
read this  
VegeChips!  
thanks for  
the  
**earthling95(PSW)** reminder :)

VegeChips oh  
wow

**LittleSteps  
(PSW)** For  
me,  
it'll be  
a  
good  
nights  
sleep!

[We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. As we're trialling this service, we'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this](#)

**earthling95(PSW)** [link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW](https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW)

Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at: 1. Anger Is Your Ally: A Mindful Approach to Anger (Youtube Video – Trigger Warning - This resource touches on a lived experience recount of psychological abuse):

**earthling95(PSW)** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sbVBsrNnBy8> 2. Anger, Compassion and What It Means to be Strong (Youtube Video): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QG4Z185MBJE> 3. Anger Coping Strategies (PDF Document):

<https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/-/media/CCI/Mental-Health-Professionals/Interpersonal/Interpersonal---Information-Sheets/Interpersonal-Information-Sheet---02---Anger-Coping-Strategies.pdf>

[Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here <https://www.sane.org/peer-support/online-mental-health-meet-up>. You can also ask questions for us to \[discuss in future peer chats!\]\(#\)](#)

**earthling95(PSW)**

Goodnight

**earthling95(PSW)**

folks!

Thank you for  
such a heart  
warming and  
inspiring  
discussion!

**earthling95(PSW)**

Thank you  
@earthling95 and  
@Basil  
(Moderator) !!

**LittleSteps (PSW)**