

Step 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves

4I Drive and motivations - Anger

For many people, once they get through the overwhelming shame, they start feeling lots and lots of anger. The moral issue is not that we have anger, but the misuse of anger and doing wrong actions in anger. For many of us, we do not know how to handle anger. Instead of healthy expressions of anger, we may have acted out. Anger has a healthy purpose - to protect me and the ones I love.

The AA method of listing resentments is one way of identifying misused anger. "Resentments" are when I have carried anger beyond one day. Healthy anger is expressed and let go that same day.

Inventory how my handling of anger has not been what my higher power wanted:

How have I denied my anger or taught to never be angry? Have I bottled up anger and then let it go all at once?

What has it cost me to not express my anger? What hurts have I received because I have not properly expressed my anger?

How have I misdirected my anger (towards weaker people, victims, or myself)?

Have I raged? Am I able to see the difference between rage and anger? Have I used the expression of anger to intimidate or manipulate others?

Do I have any anger which is from my parents or abusers? In other words, am I carrying the anger that someone else had (Ex. My parents were angry at blacks, so I'm angry at blacks even though I have not been hurt by any.)

To put anger into the hands of a higher power, we need to acknowledge the right use of anger. Anger is the natural reaction to hurt. Over what hurts am I angry?

Can I put the expression of my anger into the care and direction of a higher power? Today, what are healthy ways to express my anger?

What is keeping me from expressing my anger healthily?

What boundaries do I need to protect myself from hurts like that in the future?
Am I able to use healthy anger to help protect myself and the ones I love?