

# Anger: Manage It (Forever), or Master It (For Good)?

By Ilene Dillon, MSW, LCSW

What's your relationship with anger? Never have it? "Inherited" it from your Irish Grandmother? Rage-aholic? Depressive? Everybody experiences anger during their lifetime. Most of us know so little about it that we entertain myths, such as "Anger just happens to me," it's "all-powerful," or it "goes out of control". We attempt to "get rid of" anger (an impossibility) because we "shouldn't have it." (This is a guaranteed way to have more anger, which we'll talk about later.) In the coming weeks, I'll be posting information and perspectives on anger that can help you change your relationship with anger for now, and into your future.

We're told to "manage anger," as if anger is a herd of wild horses we can only keep safely in a locked corral. Not to mention that anger is a gift, given to us to navigate life, the question remains: If you were a wild horse trainer, would you choose to "manage" the horses, or choose to be a "horse whisperer," befriending and gentling those wild horses so you had no further concern about their "wildness"?

Any person, regardless of their current relationship with anger, can develop "whispering ability" when they focus on Anger Mastery. When my daughter was 4, I took her horse back riding. The wrangler put her on her own very big horse! Not wanting to scare her, but wanting to offer help for the task, I said to her: "This is a big horse. It has a lot of muscle. But you are smarter than the horse. The horse is depending on you to be the 'boss,' so your job is to tell the horse as clearly as you can what you want it to do." She got it. Anger can be mastered, putting you in charge of using and benefitting from this powerful emotion. Anger can provide the muscle; but you are smarter and need to put yourself into the "boss" position.

When you're an Anger Master, you're in charge of anger; anger stops being in charge of you. You may be surprised to find anger is more in charge of you than you now believe. There are hidden forms of anger that we don't recognize as anger. If you are in debt, are abused, depressed, seem to have your success in the world blocked, are sick, wracked with guilt, sarcastic, or find yourself being syrupy sweet in relationships, you are likely holding anger inside that is insidiously poisoning the vessel in which it is kept—you.

You may want to know who I am to be offering you this new perspective on anger. I've been a California-based psychotherapist 40 years, for families, groups, individuals and organizations. I host Internet radio's *Full Power Living*, focused on emotions, aired on the Internet 7 years. I am a frequent guest on the programs of others, like "The Let's Talk Moms" Show with Bianca and Phillip Tyler. Add writings (20 books, workbooks, CDs on emotions), public speaking (professional member of The National Speakers Association since 1984), Teleseminars (Anger, Self-Esteem and Conscious Parenting), and coaching, to articles on my work in *Woman's Day*, *Care Notes*, *Personal Excellence*

and *The San Francisco Chronicle*, and you have an idea of my broad-ranging relationship with anger.

My most important connection is as a “Recovered Angry Person,” however. Challenging childhoods foment lots of anger; and my childhood was challenging. I started out in some of the same places you may now be standing in your life. I’ll be sharing with you all that I have learned on a personal, as well as a professional, level.

If you’re ready to develop Anger Mastery, I invite you to read these posts I’m preparing for you. Discussions include what anger really is, why we have it, how to reduce its hold on us, how to address it in our relationships, learn from it, how it destroys self-esteem, and how to have fun with anger (yes, it *is* possible to have fun with anger!).

Meantime, go to my [EmotionalPro](#) web site. Get your copy of a list I’ve prepared for you, “Anger Management OR Anger Mastery: You Decide!” While you’re there, let me know your most pressing problem regarding anger, and check out our product special. In all learning, repetition is required. For future, set up your personal “Anger Journal” into which you can put all you’ll discover about Anger Mastery in coming weeks, so you can review how to master the anger you experience.

All emotions operate similarly; yet anger is our most active emotion (it is more disruptive). Once you understand and know about anger, it will be easy for you to master other emotions, like fear, jealousy or loneliness. When we all become anger masters, our world will be quite different. Get started today!

~~~Ilene Dillon, M.S.W.  
Recovered Angry Person

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Ilene Dillon, MSW, LMFT, LCSW, aka The Emotional Pro, facilitates personal and global transformation as a coach, psychotherapist, author, professional speaker, radio host and product creator. A 42 year California Marriage and Family Therapist, Ilene teaches parents how to Raise Incredible Kids, end manipulation, master anger, and create ease and balance as part of their parenting experience. Ilene is author of over 20 books, workbooks and media courses on emotions and parenting, and longtime creator/host of the Internet’s Full Power Living radio program.