

7 Steps to Uncover the Meaning  
of Anger and Gain Awareness,  
True Strength, and Peace

the  
gift  
of  
anger

Marcia Cannon, Ph.D.



“*The Gift of Anger* is a concise and easily followed guide to understanding and managing anger. By weaving together simple and graspable case examples and insightful broad principles, Marcia Cannon shows us a way to enhance our emotional competence in an important domain.”

—Frederic Luskin, Ph.D., director of Stanford Forgiveness Project and author of *Forgive for Good*

“Cannon’s book is an invaluable tool for thoroughly and soulfully mining the experience of anger for all of its gifts of insight, depth, and growth.”

—Kathy Carlson, Ph.D., MFT, psychotherapist, writer, and documentary filmmaker

“No anger is needed to benefit from reading this exceptional book. This is a manual written by a gifted therapist who looks at the positive effects anger can have on one’s life.”

—Linda L. Haase, ABT, RM is an Asian Bodywork therapist and Reiki master in Johns Creek, GA

“*The Gift of Anger* takes us by the hand and leads us step by step through one brilliant insight after another. In all my years as a psychotherapist, I have never encountered this level of clarity and wisdom about anger. This powerful book is destined to become a classic.”

—Belinda Gore, Ph.D., leadership consultant and coach, director of The Enneagram Institute of Central Ohio, and president of The Cuyamungue Institute, Santa Fe, NM

“The concepts in Cannon’s *The Gift of Anger* are sound and research-tested, but the true gift is in her straightforward and simple-to-follow presentation. The book is grounded in psychological and spiritual truths that transcend religious boundaries, and therefore it is suitable for any faith community or secular group.”

—David Hett, Ph.D., Minister of Religious Life and Learning at First Community Church

“This book is brilliant, easy to read, and deeply intelligent. I was compelled from start to finish by its warmth, wisdom, and truth. No matter where you are in life, the teachings in this book will speak directly to you.”

—Barbara Reiner, Spiritual Awareness Counseling

“*The Gift of Anger* is both intelligent and accessible, two of the most highly valued qualities I look for in books I read and recommend to my clients and students. Cannon presents concrete steps for moving from anger to empowerment. Even though this book is written

clearly and simply, it also deeply explores the function of anger in the human mind. A must-read for understanding the inner journey.”

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—Marla Estes, founder of The School of the Examined Life

“*The Gift of Anger* offers a seven-step process based on perennial wisdoms that motivates us to work with anger honestly and directly, without doing harm to ourselves and others. This book is a practical guide that supports healing, justice, and ignites positive change for all concerned.”

—Angeles Arrien, Ph.D., cultural anthropologist and award-winning author

“What a powerful approach to befriending anger and using it to enhance well-being! Reading and working with this material provides an opportunity for dealing with one’s anger in a totally new light. Through a wonderful combination of clear explanations, case study examples, and personal exercises, Cannon provides the reader with a step-by-step guide to a very rich practice for expanding self-awareness and compassion for self and others. I look forward to reaping the benefits of this practice by incorporating it into my life and sharing the results, as well as this book, with others.”

—Lynda Roberts, International Enneagram Association board member, director of the Enneagram Institute of Georgia, and leadership and management consultant

“All afflictive emotional states can be transformed, through care and attention, into sources of wisdom and compassion for ourselves and others. In *The Gift of Anger*, Cannon provides an insightful, thorough, and effective guide for transforming anger and developing clear, skillful, and generous relationships. Anyone wishing to understand this process would do well to read, reflect on, use, and enjoy this book.”

—Rev. Daijaku Judith Kinst, Ph.D., Soto Zen Buddhist priest and teacher and assistant professor at the Institute of Buddhist Studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, CA

“One of the great breakthroughs that the human potential movement has brought us is its amoral framework for negative emotions like anger, fear, and greed. To regard these as engineering issues rather than moral judgments on ourselves or others puts us in charge of our lives in a refreshing way that holds a great deal of potential for health and happiness. *The Gift of Anger* is a welcome contribution to this field. It lays out systematically how we can take control of our mental state and use the raw energy of anger (for such it is) in constructive ways. Considering that we are living in ‘the Age of Anger’ according to some wisdom traditions, this simple toolset could make quite a difference!”

—Michael Nagler, Ph.D., author of *In Search of a Nonviolent Future*

“Finally, a book that addresses a truly healthy and wise way to relate to anger. Cannon clearly and insightfully details a process for not only understanding and managing anger, but

also using anger as a guide for personal growth and healing.”

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—Joyce Harris, MA, MFTI

“*The Gift of Anger* is a perfect resource for anyone who has wondered how to work with their anger. It shows us that anger can be a portal to a deeper and more real understanding of ourselves. Anger can truly be transformational when understood in the way that Cannon proposes. I recommend this book as a practical tool and an inspirational guide to anyone who is seeking truth.”

—Kate Betteley, clinical psychologist

“I’ve been moved by the inner reach of Cannon’s book. It provides a refreshing and wise, yet accessible approach to unraveling and understanding the emotion of anger. As a talented teacher and therapist, Cannon takes the reader on a journey that is empowering, immensely satisfying, and healing for the soul. Use her practical guidance and insightful examples to discover how anger can be an important vehicle for authentic well-being.”

—Roxanne Howe-Murphy, Ed.D., author of *Deep Coaching*

“Cannon has written a very useful workbook for self-reflection that will help readers sort out angry feelings and reactions that can impact their self-esteem and personal relationships.”

—Suzy Spradlin, Ph.D., Jungian analyst

“In *The Gift of Anger*, Cannon has given us a very specific method for transforming angry feelings into expanded self-awareness. The step-by-step structured exercises guide the reader to deeply explore this complex emotion with the openness and self-compassion that are necessary for change.”

—Bonnie Payne, Ph.D., psychologist and Jungian analyst in private practice in Los Gatos, CA

“This book takes that most difficult of emotions, anger, shows us how to deal with it, and turns it into a valuable tool for insight. It made my anger a lot less scary and a lot more manageable. My reaction now is going to be ‘Oh, here comes anger, I wonder why?’ instead of my more habitual reaction of ignoring anger when it shows up. I recommend this book to anyone who is on the path of self-understanding, even those who don’t think that anger is a problem. They will find that anger can be a shortcut to self-discovery.”

—Tom Flautt, Ph.D., past president of International Enneagram Association

“Many of us have learned how to manage our anger, but learning how to transform our anger into a gift is a whole new concept. This book guides the participant into realizing how to do just that. Each chapter is rich with discussion, insight, and practices that clearly demonstrate how we can learn to harness anger for the gift of personal growth and development. I have

used this model or aspects of it many times; it has never failed me. I heartily recommend ~~*The Gift of Anger* to anyone who chooses to become a more peaceful, whole human being.~~"

—Mary Powers, former client and orientation and mobility specialist for people with vision loss and blindness

"*The Gift of Anger* provides a reassuring and practical road map for bringing us greater self-awareness and peaceful living. Using the seven-step process clearly outlined in the book, I have moved through my own experiences of anger with more clarity and kindness towards myself and others. Cannon is a wise, compassionate guide and teacher and truly shines a light on the path of this journey!"

—Gerianne Hummel, former client, Reiki master teacher, and owner of Essential Elements Aromatherapy

"A wise book about how to deal with anger in a way that is positive, powerful, and transformative!"

—Marci Shimoff, author of *Happy for No Reason* and *Love for No Reason*



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I especially want to thank my husband, Kelly, who talked through all the concepts with me, edited the chapters, and most importantly, kept me relatively sane throughout this new and challenging process. Thank you for your unfailing humor, Kel, and for your ongoing patience, understanding, and support. Most of all, thank you for the love and joy you bring me and for being the amazing wonderful person you are.

Most of all, I want to thank you, the reader. It is for you that this book is written. May the ideas and process contained here lead you to appreciate all of your emotions as you enjoy a deeper sense of peace.



# Introduction: A New Understanding

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“It’s nothing I can’t handle,” Amy assured me as she described how frequently she felt irritated at work. “I’m sure it’s just normal. Right?”

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“All my life my sister’s been the needy one who’s gotten all the attention,” Linda complained resentfully. “Why can’t my mother ever ask me if I need anything? And why can’t my sister just grow up?”

\*

“I’ve had it with these damn meetings!” Fred fumed. “How do they expect me to get any work done when I’m sitting in conference rooms all day?”

\*

Anger. As these brief quotes illustrate, it comes in a range of strengths, from mild irritation, to frustration, all the way to fury and rage. In one form or another, one thing is for sure—we all get angry. When we do, we are often taught by conventional wisdom that what we feel is bad and dangerous, and that we should manage our anger and hopefully get rid of it. But what if conventional wisdom is wrong? What if anger, like all of our other emotions, can be positive, useful, and a guide to our own increased well-being? What if, rather than being a problem, your anger can be a gift?

## The Need for This Book

I wrote *The Gift of Anger* as an antidote to the negativity and misunderstanding that so often surround this emotion. I wrote it to show you a positive, more useful definition of anger and a process for working with it that is not only satisfying but healing and empowering as well. Whether you are mildly frustrated, outright furious, or anything in between, you will learn how to use your anger creatively and effectively—not to hurt your neighbor but to heal and help yourself. Using the information and techniques in this book can help you become stronger and more positively connected both with yourself and to the world around you.

It is time to move beyond the shame or fear associated with this emotion. It is time to embrace your anger constructively and learn how to use it to achieve the very goals that most people wish for—decreasing pain and increasing your sense of personal effectiveness and empowerment. Stated differently and more personally, it’s time to feel really good about yourself. I’m not talking about the superficial and momentary boost that an angry outburst can grant; instead, by using your anger to help you uncover and integrate a more accurate and positive definition of yourself and of the world around you, you will gain a deep and long-lasting sense of achievement and well-being.

This is not a book about communicating with others to resolve your anger. While that is a worthwhile subject, there already are a number of good books on interpersonal communication and anger management. *The Gift of Anger* is different. It invites you to communicate with *yourself* and shows you how to do so in a way that makes use of the positive potential of your anger while dissolving its negative impulse. The process you’ll learn will heighten your awareness of yourself as it helps you to uncover the true purpose of your anger and learn how to use all of your emotions in ways that further your understanding, your self-confidence, and your sense of inner and interpersonal harmony.



This is a book for all of us who know we get angry and wish we could use our anger positively rather than just containing it, acting it out, stuffing it back inside, or somehow getting through it. The book is also for each of us who carry around old or new resentments, wishing we could be rid of them but not knowing how. It is, as well, a book for those of us who believe we almost never become angry but perhaps feel hurt, tired, overwhelmed, or depressed by some of our encounters with other people. In fact, this is a book for everyone who wants to gain a better understanding of anger, a better understanding that begins by exploring the two stages of anger.

## A Brief Introduction to the Two Stages of Anger

What you have learned to call “anger” is actually only its first stage, the *protective stage*. Here, your anger gives you a power boost to make you feel bigger and stronger so that you can face a person who seems more powerful than you or a situation that seems too difficult to manage. But this is only stage one. Anger has a second stage, one that is at least as potent as the first, though much less well known. The second stage, the *awareness and growth stage*, is quieter and more thoughtful than stage one. This is a time when your anger can become an unerring guide to healing your emotional pain. It will enhance both your sense of well-being and your capacity to respond more calmly and successfully to the inevitable changes and difficulties that are part of everyone’s life.

While the first, protective stage of anger is automatic, showing up whether you want it to or not, the second stage is optional. To reap the benefits of stage two, you have to consciously choose it. The book will show you how.

Chapter 1 of *The Gift of Anger* examines the first (protective) stage of your anger, while chapters 2 and 3 focus on the second (awareness and growth) stage. You will explore the often-overlooked attributes that make your anger so valuable when you choose to use it in stage two. You will delve deeply into how anger is created and learn how the very ingredients that cause anger can be used to help you heal from your angering experiences and empower you to move beyond them.

The next seven chapters, the heart of the book, are devoted to teaching a seven-step process that makes full use of the potential of anger for increasing awareness and assisting personal growth. Using this process, you can reduce the emotional pain associated with your anger, gain self-awareness from your anger, and move more deeply into a state of personal and interpersonal peace. In each of the chapters, I explain one of the seven steps of this process, offer examples of its use, and then provide exercises that allow you to personalize the information by exploring yourself and your anger as deeply and fully as you wish. The final chapter shows you how to use this process when you are angry with yourself.

As you do the chapter exercises, it will be helpful to write them down. Consider doing so in a journal that you dedicate to recording the discoveries you make about yourself and about your anger as you complete each exercise. Doing so, you will have all the information you gain about your anger in one place so that you can easily refer back to it as needed and track your progress as well.

The seven-step process you’ll be learning establishes a blueprint for working with your anger from the moment that you first become aware of feeling something upsetting to the time when you feel more deeply and consciously at peace. You will explore specific steps to take and a specific order for taking them, and you can read about others who have offered their stories so that you can “see” the steps in action.

It’s important to remember that the process is not focused on condoning bad behavior. In fact, the opposite is true. I’m sure that, like most people, you’re aware of how difficult it can be to think

clearly and speak effectively while under the influence of your own anger. The more you use the process in this book to understand your anger and heal its underlying causes, the more you will become calmer, stronger, and able to effectively address whatever person or situation you're facing.

With the techniques you learn here, you can use your anger positively, with less risk to your relationships. You can learn how to experience anger as a step on a path toward growth, a step that can lead you to a deepened sense of inner and interpersonal peace and understanding and a heightened sense of well-being.

## If You Need Help

While this process can help in any angry situation, it is not meant as a substitute for professional counseling. If you have a serious issue, such as working through anger that causes or results from violence, I encourage you to see a professional counselor. When life experiences are traumatic, the kindest and often most effective way to work through them is with the supportive help of a well-trained professional. The same is true if you find that any of the exercises in this book bring up difficult emotions or memories. If that happens, a trained counselor can help you to use the experience as a deeper opportunity for healing.

## Why I Wrote This Book

I did not personally invent any of the techniques in the seven-step process; they have been around longer than I have. What I did was to bring them together and integrate them in a specific way as I discovered what worked best, first for myself and then for clients.

I first learned some of the basic concepts many years ago when I was looking for ways to work with my own anger. Later, as a psychotherapist working with individual clients and with couples, I found that no matter what their reasons for coming to therapy, most of my clients needed help working through anger. I used the techniques I had learned and refined the process as I saw what was most helpful to clients. Over the years, in clinical settings and in private practice, I've used the process to help people transform their angry feelings into the self-confidence that awareness and personal growth brings.

When I began working on my Ph.D. in 1999 and needed to choose a dissertation topic, the gift-of-anger process seemed a natural choice. I did a controlled study using a small population and tested participants over time using the process I'm offering here. My goal was to measure both the immediate and long-term effects on participants' feelings and behavior.

The results of the study were exciting. People who took the training expressed relief and gratitude. They had finally found a positive way to work with their anger, a way that left them feeling strengthened, centered, and more at peace.

The people who learned the seven-step process made significant, positive changes in their attitudes and behavior toward themselves and those with whom they had been angry, and they maintained those positive changes over time. Most exciting was the fact that study participants reported feeling both increased inner strength and a greater ability to handle the nasty surprises that life often delivers. Many said that they would never look at anger in the same way again.

The people I describe in this book are based on workshop attendees, study participants, and clients. I have changed their names and other information to protect their privacy, and I have used examples that I've found to be representative of many people's issues. I hope you will see yourself in some of

these examples. When you do, please take heart in the fact that these people, using their anger and hurt as a starting point, turned their lives around. You, too, can use your anger as a starting point and let this process lead you to an increased sense of peace, strength, and compassion, both for yourself and for those around you. Anger can be a healing tool, a powerful initiator of positive change. That is its gift. It's time for each of us to understand our own anger that way and to use it wisely.

Our greatest ability to influence others is through example. When you use your anger as the positive force it was meant to be, then your increased self-awareness, inner healing, and heightened sense of confidence and peace will affect both you and those around you in ways that may surprise and delight you. That is the power of anger properly used. It can be your power. Just open your gift, and you'll see.



## Stage One: Anger As a Protective Reaction

Every living being needs some form of protection in order to survive. People are no different from animals in this respect. When the world seems hostile, anger is one of the defenses we humans use to protect ourselves. Like the spikes on a cactus or the thorns on a rose, anger is designed to keep us safe.

Anger is a built-in, natural emotion that everyone feels. Each of us, from youngest to oldest, is born with the ability to get mad, and it's not a shy emotion that waits to be asked to emerge. Like it or not, your anger comes up automatically when you need help to deal with a perceived threat or in seemingly tough situations that you don't feel powerful enough to handle calmly and easily.

### The Power-Boost Effect

Anger pumps you up. It offers protection by increasing your power, giving you (at least temporarily) the extra strength you need to feel bigger, stronger, and more formidable. With the added strength of anger, you can gain safety by distancing yourself from the people around you, your anger acting as an imposing armor between you and the rest of the world.

You can feel this armor in a variety of strengths, depending on the level of your anger. You might think of anger as an “umbrella” term, because it covers a lot of seemingly different emotions. Annoyance, irritation, bitterness, exasperation, frustration, resentment, aggravation, indignation, fury, and rage are just some of the labels given to various intensities of anger, each one offering a different level of protection.

Anger also offers you protection by removing some of your inhibitions against using verbal and physical force so that you can take a firm stand when you feel it's necessary. With its added strength and lessening of inhibitions against using that strength, anger can enable and even compel you to speak a difficult truth you've been unable to express—to say no and mean it, even when you have previously been too scared to do so. While it can be misused, anger can give you courage, determination, and the willingness to set limits and take action. Consider the following examples.

#### **Carolyn**

Carolyn was tired but happy—so happy! She had been caring for her mom for months and now *finally*, she was getting a vacation. Although she had a brother, Carolyn was the one who lived closest to their mother, and Carolyn was single. Unlike her brother, she could make no excuses about the long trip and its high cost, nor, since she was single, could she plead other family needs pulling her away. But finally her brother, Jerry, was taking time off from work and from his growing family to come and stay with their mother while Carolyn spent a week with a friend. *A week she thought to herself, whole week. I can hardly wait!*

She was in the middle of imagining her long-awaited vacation when the phone rang. It was Jerry. Something about an unexpected project at work. He was in the middle of explaining when Carolyn broke in with her own words. “No!” she yelled into the phone. “You promised, and now you do it. Do you hear me? You just do it!” Carolyn's words were out before she could even think about them.

before she even realized they were there. Shaking with unexpected fury, she took a deep breath and silently told herself to calm down.

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Carolyn's unexpected anger gave her the power to command her brother to make the trip to take care of their mother, no matter what obstacles were in his way. It made her act strong and tough, considerably tougher than she normally felt. In the end, her anger was not enough to get her brother to keep his promise, but it did show them both that Carolyn needed help with their mother. As a result, after a number of discussions that ranged from heated and tearful to heartfelt, new caretaking arrangements were made that gave Carolyn set vacations that she could count on.

## **Steve**

Steve sat in my office feeling remorseful. "I don't know what came over me," he said. "The driver stopped short and I almost hit him, and then he made a quick turn and took off. The next thing I knew I was enraged. I chased the guy to the stoplight and got out of my car to face him. I only came to my senses when I saw that the driver was a woman. I have no idea what I would have done if she'd been a man. I'm just glad we're both okay."

Talking further about what happened and about his life in general, Steve admitted that times were pretty tough. A building contractor newly out on his own, he'd been hit hard by an economic downturn. "I'm taking jobs helping other contractors," he said dejectedly, "but finding work is pretty tough. I'm worried about my business and about my bills. I'm worried about my future."

Scared about what might happen and about what he should—or could—do about it, Steve felt he was losing control over his life. He described it as feeling "at the mercy of whatever might come next." What came next was a woman driver who stopped quickly and then made a fast turn in her car. That was enough to galvanize and focus (or, in this case, mis-focus) his anger at his life's uncertainty.

## **Different Kinds of Protection**

Through the power boost of anger, you can protect your self-image by fantasizing about reacting powerfully or take immediate action that you might not have thought you had the strength to take. Thus, Carolyn's anger gave her the power to stand up to her brother, something she had previously felt too weak to do. More than just provide the power, her anger demanded that she stand up to him and even took over and did the job for her. Then, her anger propelled her to discuss her need for caretaking help with her brother, a discussion she'd been nervous about having. Steve's anger gave him a momentary (though dangerously inappropriate) outlet for his fear and frustration at not knowing what his future would look like or what he could do about it. In my own case, as you will read below, my anger kept me safe.

## **Marcia**

Years ago, I was working alone in an office when a man who was a stranger to me came in. He was tall and large and began speaking loudly and incoherently when he saw me. As he walked quickly toward

me, I became afraid. He advanced, and I backed up until I realized that if I backed up any farther I would be trapped in a back office with this frightening stranger.

At that point, my fear turned to anger and the protective power boost from my emotion changed the situation completely. Speaking in a forceful, authoritative voice, I told the man it was time for him to leave. As I spoke, I walked purposefully toward him. “You have to leave now!” I said loudly and firmly, continuing to walk toward him. The balance of power shifted in that instant. As I advanced, he backed up. A few seconds later he was out the door, which I immediately locked.

My anger had been automatic. Had I thought about what I was doing, I don’t think I would have had the courage to act. Actually, I don’t even think I would have trusted that that behavior would work. When the power boost of anger takes charge, we often find ourselves acting without thinking. While in Steve’s case, his anger resulted in dangerous behavior, in my case it may have saved me from harm.

## Exploring Your Own Power Boost

Like the people in these examples, and like everyone else as well, you’ve undoubtedly gotten angry with others and had others become angry with you. If you are like many people, however, you may have done little objective exploration of your own anger, your own protective power boost. With the exercise that follows, you can begin this process, a journey of self-exploration that will continue throughout this book. The following exercise, and the exercises that come later, will enable you to explore your anger in depth and from different angles so you can understand it more thoroughly and use it safely and successfully to further your own well-being and growth.

As you read the exercise, consider approaching it and all of the other personal exercises in this book with what Buddhist philosophy calls *beginner’s mind*. Starting with the idea that a mind already filled with information and answers has no room left to deeply explore a subject, consider gently moving aside whatever you already know about anger. Doing so, you can come to these exercises with a fresh mind, a beginner’s mind, and see where the exercises take you. Then, as you complete this exercise and the ones that follow, write down what you have discovered about anger and about your own expression of anger in your anger journal, creating a central place to keep your observations and record your growing awareness.

This first exercise will help you personalize the idea of your anger as a protective power boost. Using the following questions, you can explore your own anger to see what caused it, how you used it, and how doing so affected you.

### Exercise: An Experience of Anger

Think of a time when you became angry. Pick an experience that resulted in a fairly low level of anger, such as frustration or annoyance, rather than one resulting in more intense anger, such as fury or rage. Doing so, you can more objectively focus your attention on the questions below. When you have your experience clearly in mind, give yourself the time to thoughtfully answer the following:

1. Describe the situation briefly and review what it was about this experience that angered you.
2. Did the power boost of your anger protect you by propelling you to take a stand? Set limits?

Take action? Something else?

- ~~3. What effect did your anger have on your level of courage? Your determination? Your estimation of yourself and of the other person/people?~~
  4. Did becoming angry bring you the results you hoped for? If not, what did result? Is this result familiar?
- 

Having answered the questions above, you have hopefully gained a more personal understanding of how the protective power boost of your anger works. Next, you can add to your understanding by exploring what triggers your anger. Frequently, three key factors work together to act as a trigger.

## The Three Keys

The first of three key factors that usually work together to trigger anger is your *experience of a situation or behavior that you judge as unfair, hurtful, or in some other way “wrong.”* This negative experience almost always involves someone or something not meeting expectations that are important to you, expectations that you value.

The second key factor in becoming angry is that you *feel unable to calmly and easily right the wrong.* Perhaps you believe that you lack the skill or the ability to do so, or perhaps the person or situation you’re facing seems bigger and more powerful than you. If that is the case, you may be too frightened to confront the person calmly or discuss the problem with a cool head. You may also feel shocked by what has happened, and therefore temporarily overpowered or overwhelmed by the experience. In addition, you may be dealing with other recent experiences that have already strained your ability to respond calmly. Like Steve, who chased another driver in an earlier example, your current experience may be one problem too many. Whatever the reason, you are left feeling unable to resolve the problem calmly.

The third key factor that initiates anger is that *the experience is troubling enough that you cannot simply tolerate it or let it go.* It feels too big, too upsetting, and you feel caught in its grip.

Taken together, these three factors comprise a powerful combination of circumstances. First, you are faced with an experience that seems wrong or unfair. Second, you don’t feel able to calmly correct it. And yet, in order for you to feel okay, the situation must be successfully resolved because leaving it as it is does not feel like an acceptable option (the third factor).

There is a moral sense to this trio of judgments, a belief that you or someone you care about deserved better. Most likely, you also have a sense of personal diminishment as a result of not being able to simply fix the problem. The situation has overpowered you, at least for that moment, and you feel weaker, smaller, and less in control as a result.

In this kind of predicament, you’re left with a conflict. You feel a strong desire to right a situation that seems wrong, yet you also believe that, at least for now, you are unable to do so. When this set of circumstances occurs, your normal, built-in, human response is anger.

### Jim

As an example, consider Jim. At age twenty-three, he is eager, energetic, and determined. Jim has



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