

The Anger Iceberg

Anger is often referred to as a *secondary emotion*. It's thought that we subconsciously shift into anger to protect ourselves from more vulnerable, uncomfortable emotions such as fear and sadness.

Whereas anger provides us with a surge of energy and can help us feel powerful, fear and sadness are more difficult for us to sit with and express.

The Anger Iceberg represents this psychological phenomenon. Although anger is what we see on the surface, there's often a range of emotions hidden underneath.



Anger Iceberg Journal Prompts

Use the questions below as a starting point for exploring the emotions, needs, and experiences that may be contributing to your anger. Reflecting on what lies beneath the surface can help you respond with greater awareness and self-compassion.

What is my anger trying to protect?

Could your anger be shielding more vulnerable feelings such as shame, fear, grief, rejection, or disappointment?

What is my anger trying to protect?

(Cont.)

Deep down, what was I hoping for in that situation that I didn't get?

Consider any unmet expectations, values, or needs. Were you hoping for respect, safety, certainty, connection, validation, support, fairness, or appreciation?

What would it look like to express my feelings and needs in a healthy way?

How could you communicate what you're feeling and needing honestly and respectfully?

What would it look like to meet that need in another way?

Are there other actions, choices, or sources of support that could help meet this need?

What is one small step I can take next?

Identify one practical action you could take to respond to the underlying feeling or need you've explored.