

Valentine's Day is less than two weeks away. The typical thoughts around this day involve love, happiness, hearts, flowers, bliss, romance, and of course, chocolate ;-)

Those who have a partner may plan a romantic evening or feel compelled to buy a card or flowers. Those who are single or in a strained relationship may feel a sense of loneliness or an ache in their heart. Perhaps, they just think all the hearts and flowers are a bunch of hooey. In fact, within relationships certain expectations of what one should do on Valentine's Day can create hurt feelings, anger or maybe even a fight.

When I thought of writing about the 14th of February, this stuck out to me and I felt inspired to write about anger instead of the mushy gushiness that is so often related to this day of love.

What I want you to consider today is this - how can you overcome anger? Anger boils up in us coming from our ego. The ego is there as a "body guard" to protect us from harm. It tries to keep us on track and tries keep us from opening our hearts. The ego doesn't want us to risk pain or show our vulnerabilities. Therefore, when we encounter something that doesn't sit well with us we may feel anger beginning to build up...it is building a protective wall. Unfortunately, that also means that sometimes we end up throwing "bricks" from this wall at those around us.

So, how can you get rid of anger? Well, you can't! As I said, it is a protective measure - a defense mechanism put in place to keep us safe. Yet, becoming aware of it and understanding it can give you amazing insight. With awareness you can overcome the anger - even though it will always be a part of each and every one of us at one point or another.

This is a deep subject, and I only have a tiny bit of room in this article to write about it, but I will give you an important point to

ponder.

Anger comes from fear. What?? Yes - that is what I said - anger comes from a four letter word, F-E-A-R. We may become angry because we are afraid that:

1. We aren't right or that others will discover we are wrong about something.
2. We have lost control or have no control over a situation.
3. We aren't loved by those around us.
4. We will be alone and have to handle things on our own.
5. We aren't respected by those around us.

This might be difficult to digest at first. In fact, I am willing to bet that some of you may feel defensive and even a little bit angry at the above suggestions. Why? Perhaps, you are afraid of another viewpoint? Perhaps, your ego is telling you that can't be right because it still needs to keep your trust instead of you listening to your soul - your heart.

So, humor me and take a breath. This is not about judging yourself or others. This is about becoming aware and finding an inner peace, an inner calmness or as Rob and I often say - an Inward Oasis. :)

Moving through and then past anger takes practice, but here are four things you can do to achieve it.

1. Remember that anger can come up at any time - and for most people will come up at some point or another.
2. Become aware of the anger - take notice that you are feeling it. Accept that it is happening.
3. Stop and ask yourself why this emotion is showing up. Ask what your ego may be trying to protect you from.
4. Transform the feeling with love. Imagine love radiating from

your heart towards whatever brought on the anger. Continue to focus love towards this person, animal, object or situation until you feel calmer. Inhale deeply and exhale slowly. Repeat breathing deeply and as you exhale imagine love and compassion flowing from you toward your point of anger. Consider this as a moment to be thankful for - as it is an opportunity for growth within you.

These steps will take practice. It doesn't happen overnight anymore than learning to ski or learning to do a pirouette happens the first time you try. You will fall down. You will lose your balance. Just keep trying. It is well worth the effort for you and for everyone around you and beyond. Make this Valentine's Day the start of moving through, accepting and transforming your feelings of anger as they arise. It still is a day for love – it just doesn't have to always be the mushy kind.

Janelle Alex, Ph.D., Co-founder of Inward Oasis™ ©2012  
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