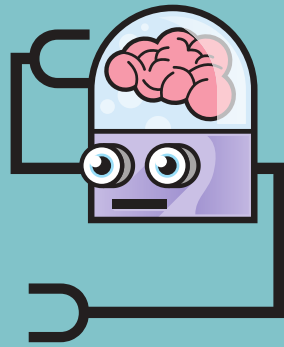


UNDERSTANDING ANGER

Why this emotion is so
confusing



WHAT'S GOING ON IN YOUR BRAIN?

Event + Interpretation= Emotion

- You experience an event
- Your brain starts processing and sending signals to your limbic system
- Anger is the result of a perceived threat, either physical or emotional. If your brain senses a threat it activates your amygdala before you even know.
- Your amygdala sends chemicals to the rest of your body telling it to get ready to be on guard to protect you.



PURPOSE OF ANGER

Why it's a good thing

- Anger is the response to a perceived threat.
- The function of anger is to identify violations to your well being, which can be either physical or emotional.
- The brain processes getting punched the same way it processes emotional threats like social rejection.
- It is a self-protective emotion



WHEN ANGER IS HARD

It can cloud your vision

- Since your brain sees anger as a function of self-protection it can make it hard to manage in the moment
- It can be difficult to stop and think about others when we are feeling a lot of anger because our bodies are sending chemicals telling us to think mostly about our well-being
- Anger is a powerful feeling and can make us feel like we are in the right no matter what, shut down communication, and escalate conflict



IS IT REALLY ANGER?

Anger is an Iceberg Emotion

- Anger is often not really about anger. It can be about more vulnerable emotions that are harder to manage, so your brain decides anger is easier
- Vulnerable emotions that can cause anger are things like embarrassment, shame, humiliation, disappointment, guilt, hurt, sadness, anxiety frustration, uncertainty, etc
- To protect you from vulnerability your brain can short cut to anger.





PROCESSING OPTIONS

Having tools is empowering

- Get some space from the person or event that is upsetting you. Take a walk and a few deep breaths.
- Ask yourself if it is really anger or if the anger is masking more vulnerable emotions
- Write it down, being able to get meta about your emotions is super helpful and makes you feel more in control
- Being able to name your emotions is the first step to taming your emotions. It may sound silly, but say out loud, "I am ANGRY!"
- You know yourself best, so think about strategies that would make you feel in control