

~ *Anger* ~

Anger is like a raging bull that destroys and maims,  
A frightening beast when freed — one most untamed.

It is quite similar to a quickly burning wild fire  
Carving a path of devastation — spreading ever so far.

Just as the air we breathe, anger is a part of life —  
An unwelcomed companion or relative not liked.  
And yet it should be noted that anger has its place  
Of assisting us in setting boundaries and saving face.

It is not good to stuff our feelings of resentment and rage,  
For it will eat at our gut and cause us to quickly age.  
Anger buried deep within, like a splinter left, will fester  
Spreading infection through the body — bringing disaster.

It is difficult to manage the anger we intensely feel,  
But unless we try — the price we pay is all too real.  
Loss of self-esteem, and much we truly value  
Will be the cost of avoiding what we need to do.

To manage our anger we must first be willing to own  
Complete responsibility for thoughts and vocal tone.  
We always have a choice regardless of what others do,  
To erupt in rage or to choose to do something new.

In time we can learn skills regarding how to express,  
Our feelings assertively so conflict will be less.  
It is a challenge to learn to use our anger constructively,  
But the risk is worthwhile and I know this truly.

# Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write what you typically do when you experience anger. Do you tend to stuff it or blow up?
2. Journal briefly about how anger has created some problems for you.
3. Write about how you handle your anger better now or how you hope to handle it better in the future.

*~ Depression is Often Misunderstood ~*

Depression is a most painful disease,  
and it is often misunderstood by so many.  
When severe, it drains a person of all energy  
leaving one for a time a living corpse.

It is not a state of mind that anyone wants,  
and it does not simply go away at one's will.  
Depression is a disease that disrupts sleep,  
and robs so many of the desire to even eat.

In a depressed state, one has low self-esteem  
with feelings of helplessness and no hope.  
Hurtful memories tend to be magnified,  
and joyful memories for a time are lost.

Decisions may be painfully difficult to make,  
and interest in everyday activities vanish.  
Many experience feelings of guilt and shame  
based solely on irrational thought.

Deep depression often necessitates both  
medical and psychological treatment.

Depressed persons most of all need  
support and understanding of their illness.

It does no good and actually causes harm  
to place blame on one for being depressed.  
Someone to listen, care, and be present is  
what one with depression desires and needs.

# Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write about a time when you were depressed. What did you experience?
2. Journal briefly about how situational depression (job loss, death of a pet, etc.) differs from chronic depression.
3. Write about several things you might do to support someone you know who is depressed.

*~ Coping with Panic ~*

Out of nowhere at times there comes  
intense fear,  
That is overpowering and leaves me  
feeling so defenseless.  
My heart beats rapidly feeling like  
it's about to explode,  
And I find myself gasping for air as  
I take quick breaths.  
Thoughts of dying and going crazy  
race through my mind,  
As I fear looking foolish to others and  
being embarrassed.  
There is truly nothing to fear but  
fear itself,  
For panic is but a feeling based on  
emotion without fact.  
If I try to control it through willpower  
and force it to stop,  
I find it grows stronger and feeds on  
my efforts to control.  
If I accept it and understand in time  
it will pass,  
It becomes weaker as I let go of my  
worry thoughts.  
It would be nice to never experience  
panic again,  
But I take comfort in knowing that it is  
simply a bag of wind.

# Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write about a time in your life when you were frightened.
2. What are steps you take to calm down when you feel overly anxious or panic?
3. Write about what you might do to support someone who struggles with excessive anxiety.

*~ Taming Emotions ~*

It makes no sense to think you should  
not feel how you feel.  
Emotions are simply a physical response to  
what you sense and think.

There are healthy ways to tame the intensity  
of your feelings,  
But be aware that numbing and stuffing may  
make things worse.

Way too often persons judge themselves  
for having feelings,  
And their judgments trigger a chain  
of undesired events.

Understanding that all of your emotions  
serve a purpose,  
And that anger is neither good or bad  
is helpful knowledge.

Accepting that emotions are an important  
part of life,  
And thoughts intensify or decrease them  
gives us control.

Assuming the worst often leads to  
fear and anger,  
While assuming the best can bring  
some peace of mind.

There are times to take deep breaths and  
times to go for walks,  
And we must tend to the body in order to  
quiet the mind.

Let go of perfection, judgments and the  
need to be right,  
And you will begin to experience success  
in taming your emotions.



## Journal to Grow and Heal

1. What emotion tends to cause you the most problems?
2. Write about what steps you might take to better manage that feeling.
3. Journal briefly about how letting go of perfectionism, judgments, and the need to be right could help you to better manage your emotions.

*~ Letting Go of Guilt and Shame ~*

For countless years I believed I was to blame  
for making others angry and hurt,  
But now I realize I'm not the cause for how  
others feel or what they do.  
I allowed them to convince me that my actions could  
stress another enough to die,  
Until I began to see how their judgments and  
blame created their own stress.  
I believed I should always give in to any  
demands placed on me,  
And failure to please others led me  
to feel overwhelming guilt.  
It is clear that I was simply being manipulated  
by countless guilt trips,  
And now I'm free to not take on their demands  
or to feel unjustified guilt.  
Persons create their own stress by thoughts  
and ways they live,  
So I choose to stop allowing others to control  
me through blame.  
I alone am responsible for my thoughts,  
feelings, and actions,  
And to the extent I believe this, I will be able  
to find happiness and peace.

# Journal to Grow and Heal

1. Write about a time when you have felt unjustified shame or guilt.
2. Briefly write about someone who uses guilt trips to try to control others.
3. What steps could you take to be less influenced by others who tend to trigger you to feel bad?