



SPIRITUAL AFFIRMATION:
I express my anger in healthy ways

Week 24: Winter

>> Lesson 20: It's OK to be Angry

I express my anger in healthy ways.

Getting to the Heart of the Lesson

Anger has been given a bad rap. Somewhere along the way, many of us learned anger is “bad.” And bad things are to be avoided. The important message of this week’s lesson is anger is an emotion -- a feeling we all have and, just like every other emotion, anger wants to be acknowledged and expressed. In Psalm 4:4, King David instructs, “Be angry and do not sin;” King David did not write “If you are angry, it is a sin.” Too often we have gotten confused about this. “Turn the other cheek” teachings are the goal, but they must not gloss over the important work of recognizing anger in order to speak one’s truth (as we will see in the story for this lesson).

Behind anger, there is always an important message. Ignoring our feelings, or “stuffing” them away with other substitutes, becomes harmful to us and those around us. In this lesson, we explore how anger feels in our bodies, how to listen to our anger, and how to express our anger in healthy ways.

Anger lets us know where we have been hurt or when we have witnessed something that is unjust, unkind, or not alright. In this way, anger invites us to become more clear and more capable in our ability to speak up, voice our needs, and do justice. This is very important! The ideal outcome of this lesson is for all of us to have new ideas about how to listen to our anger and how to turn anger into a clean, clear channel of expression and a clean, clear request for truth and transformation.

(NOTE: If you wish to focus more intentionally on the Christian calendar, Lent and the time before Easter, this lesson illustrates important teachings from Jesus during the events of Holy Week.)

Teacher Reflection

Some reading and a 10-20 min exercise (more if you have time and wish to take it) so you are able to experience the teachings offered through this lesson.

Do you get angry? Some of us go there readily.... for others, anger is a scary place to be.

Option 1 — Read through the Wisdom Quotes and Sacred Text selections for the week. Which phrases resonate for you? As you reflect on anger and the role it does or does not play in your life, what would be most helpful for you in creating a healthy relationship toward anger? In what ways might anger be a teacher for you this week? Within your family? Watching the news? Running errands? Completing a project? Waiting in line (or waiting in general)? Take some time to journal or meditate on this. Then, as best you can, put your reflections to practice this week.

Option 2 — If expressing anger is new for you, or if you are looking for ways to express anger more productively, it might take a few attempts before you find a way to share your anger in a way that feels helpful, liberating, even healing. Notice if anything on this list feels like a good place to start and then try the activity with something that has recently made you angry: crying out to God (in spoken prayer, journaling, making music, etc), talking with a trusted confidant, writing a cathartic letter (that will not be delivered) to the person/issue with whom we are upset, attending an anger management or other support group, processing the experience in therapy, confronting the person with whom you are upset, establishing healthier boundaries (to what we say “yes” and “no” in our lives), or creating (painting, dancing, acting, etc.).

Read through the lesson before your time with the children. Decide which Activity Exploration will work best for your class (There are usually two options; choose one). Just below the heading, “Children’s Lesson and Story” you will find the preparations checklist for this lesson so you can collect any needed materials or make arrangements to

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

support your selected activity.

Sacred Text Quotes

Christian Scriptures. Matthew 21:12-15 (NRSV)

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers."

Christian Scriptures. Ephesians 4:25-28 (NRSV)

So then, putting away falsehood, let all of us speak the truth to our neighbors, for we are members of one another. Be angry but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not make room for the devil. Thieves must give up stealing; rather let them labor and work honestly with their own hands, so as to have something to share with the needy.

Hebrew Scriptures. Psalms 4:4 (NRSV)

When you are disturbed, do not sin; ponder it on your beds, and be silent.

Confucianism. Analects 15.10

The Master said, "What the superior man seeks is in himself; what the mean man seeks is in others."

Islam. Qur'an 5.105

O ye who believe! You have charge over your own souls.

Islam. Qur'an 4.155

O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it concerns rich or poor: for God can best protect both. Follow not the lusts of your hearts lest you swerve, and if you distort justice or decline to do justice, verily God is well-acquainted with all that you do.

Wisdom Quotes

The world needs anger. The world often continues

to allow evil because it isn't angry enough.

— *Bede Jarrett*

Usually when people are sad, they don't do anything. They just cry over their condition. But when they get angry, they bring about a change.

— *Malcolm X*

Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host. But anger is like fire. It burns it all clean.

— *Maya Angelou*

I would not look upon anger as something foreign to me that I have to fight... I have to deal with my anger with care, with love, with tenderness, with nonviolence.

— *Thich Nhat Hanh, Being Peace*

If you try to get rid of fear and anger without knowing their meaning, they will grow stronger and return.

— *Deepak Chopra, The Third Jesus: The Christ We Cannot Ignore*

Anybody can become angry - that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way - that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.

— *Aristotle*

I say it in my own house, I say it on the streets. I say it on a record yo, and I say it on a beat.

I paint it on a wall yo, till everybody sees. When we all see justice, we all see peace.

— *Michael Franti, Same as it Ever Was*

Preparation for Teaching

Choose ONE of the Exploration Activities below. Then prepare for that activity, as needed, with the instructions here.

☐ (Activity One) Collect a basket or box with these items: cloth, sheets or scarves for simple costumes, 1-3 table cloths, a bowl and coins,

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

spices, rope, and any stuffed animals that fit the story - doves, donkey, lambs, goats. If you do not have these, children can act out the part of animals. It will also be good to have some 1-3 small tables or surfaces for the marketplace.

☐ (Activity One) You may wish to print a few double-sided copies of the script (below) to be shared among the cast members. Have your flip chart/dry-erase board/chalkboard ready for group brainstorming.

☐ (Activity Two) Dry-erase/chalkboard and dry erase markers/chalk or flipchart/other large piece paper for group brainstorming.

☐ (Activity Two) Optional. A few photos or YouTube clips (cued on device of choice) of the heroes/activists/characters you wish to highlight (see examples in Activity Two below).

☐ (Activity Two) You will need a sword (it can be real, a toy or a one you create using cardboard and aluminum foil). You may also wish to share a few images of swords in use by Knights and Priestesses (Western), or the vajra in use by depicted deities in Buddhism or Hinduism (search Google Images: vajra hindu buddhist deities)

☐ Select one Sacred Text or Wisdom quote from the collection above that, with some help from you, the children will understand. Write or print your selection on paper or a dry erase/chalkboard so the quote can be read during the session. (NOTE: Some of the Wisdom Quotes are intended for teachers and will be too difficult for the childrens' comprehension.)

☐ Prepare the Affirmation page for children to take home at the end of your time together. You can print out the full page Spiritual Affirmation art from the digital file or make copies from your handbook.

Music option: When children are entering, cleaning up or as a movement break.

Same As It Ever Was, by Michael Franti



<https://open.spotify.com/track/0L7BjvOx9V8t1nvcEh79hN?si=cc36bf2aa25e4315>

Opening the Lesson

Gratitude Circle (standing if possible)

We encourage you to begin each week with some moments of mindfully noticing where you are geographically and ecologically located with respect and curiosity. A simple way to do this is to acknowledge and give thanks for those who were living on the land before it was settled or colonized, and then by inviting everyone present to share something for which they feel grateful.

Additional ways to honor your surroundings include: *Do you know the name of the people who, long before you arrived, called this land home? Do you know the name of the watershed that brings fresh water to the faucets where you are right now? What season are we in? What is Earth doing now? What did you see today or this week that let you know what season we are in or what Earth seems busy doing?*

As appropriate, ask some follow-up questions about the "Fight for What's Right" lesson (17) and activities that may have continued as a result. Celebrate any successes. Provide encouragement where needed. Then, proceed to this week's lesson...



STORY: Elle
“Sometimes my light is fire!”

Age 11
Melbourne, Australia

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

TEXTS and QUOTES: Before reading the story for lesson, invite a volunteer to read the Sacred Text or Wisdom Quote you have selected. Ask the children for their ideas about what these words might mean. Then proceed to the story...

"You are such a bright light," people at my church always tell me. "You are so kind," my mom often says. "I am so proud of how brave and strong you are," my dad said as he patted me on the back the other day. "Don't pay any attention to those bullies," my older sister said, "just lift your chin up. Smile and think about what Jesus would do." "Be the better person," the school counselor said to me. And so that's what I did— day after day, I showed up, ignored the hateful comments, ignored the mean looks, the lies, and the turned backs of the people who just a few weeks ago called themselves my best friends. I smiled, held my chin up and acted like my world wasn't falling apart. I held in my anger. I pushed down my sadness. I was strong and brave. I even acted happy.

I had been away for a week with my family on our annual ski trip. Right before we left, I learned I got the lead in the musical. My competition was my best friend, now former best friend, Meredith. I guess she really wanted the role and maybe that was why she decided to spread lies about me. Or maybe it was because I was friends with everybody. I wasn't into the clicks and social order of things like she was. I had no interest in the popularity contest. I was a bright light, it's true, kind and open-hearted to all. Maybe it bothered her at some deep level because she was incapable of that. Maybe it was her abusive father. Maybe she decided to take all the hurt and rage she felt about her father and turn it against me, someone sweet, trusting and innocent. Someone easy to push down.

I don't know what the reason was, but when I got back from our ski trip, no one would talk to me. On the first day back, I sat down at my normal lunch table with all of my friends and silently, they all got up and left. I was left alone in the middle of the lunch courtyard in shock. I stared up at the palm trees above the line of the school buildings

and tried to not cry.

Then little by little, as the days dragged on miserably, I began to hear stories and comments about me that weren't true. People started saying things like "I hate you" and calling me names. Soon, I found myself sitting in the principal's office with three of my ex-friends. I listened to them tell lies about me and I didn't even know what to do. I just sat there, quiet and shocked, trying to deny the lies. I could see the confused look in our Principal's eyes.

I went home that day after being in his office, smiled as I came in the door, lied to my mom and said my day was OK. Then I went up to my room and cried. I didn't want my parents to see how upset I was. I didn't want them to worry about me more than I knew they already were. I had shared a little with them about what was going on, but not everything. They didn't know how bad it really was. I was embarrassed and ashamed that I no longer had any friends at school. I mean, you hear about these things happening, but you never think it is going to happen to you. I sat in my room and cried. I hit my pillow a few times. I felt defeated and lost.

Days and then weeks passed and it kept getting worse. I felt so alone. I began to question who I was. But still every day, I went to school, held my chin up and tried to be kind and brave. I felt my light begin to fade. Thankfully I had church and my church friends and loving parents...but none of them knew what it was like to show up to school everyday and be completely excluded.

I felt my anger at the injustice of the situation bubbling up within me. But I did not know what to do with that anger. I felt scared of my anger. I did not feel comfortable with conflict or fighting. Whenever someone got angry at my house, they just went to another room and closed the door. We did not have conversations about anger. My parents did not get angry at me. They just got disappointed, which felt worse.

I thought about what my sister had said, that

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

I should think about what Jesus would do. Wouldn't Jesus turn the other cheek? Wouldn't Jesus forgive and forget even if the person had not apologized or seen the wrong of their ways? Wouldn't Jesus Love his enemies? I was trying to do all that, but nothing was getting better.

There are the stories of when Jesus got angry. In those stories, it seems his anger was the only thing that could speak to the hardened hearts. Though he was a teacher of love and forgiveness, there were times that called for righteous anger and standing up against injustice.

Like in John 2:13-22 when Jesus turned the tables at the temple because money changers were selling sheep and cattle. So "he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning God's house into a market!" Near the end of his ministry he did that again! (Matthew 21:12)

There is also the story of when Jesus called people out as hypocrites. (Matthew 23) He said, with anger, "The teachers of the law and the Pharisees do not practice what they preach." I can picture him, standing up to these powerful leaders who had such control over the people, and saying with strength, "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to." (Matthew 23:13) He called them "blind guides" and a "brood of vipers!" Whew! He must have been super mad!

So what would Jesus do in this situation?

I felt completely confused about what to do. And then I thought, "What would I do if the one experiencing the bullying was a friend of mine?" Then the answer became clear. I knew what I had to do.

The next day I raised my hand during morning announcements. I was shaking when I stood up.

My teacher raised his eyebrows at me. I was pretty sure he had a sense that something was coming and felt nervous on my behalf. My heart started beating rapidly and loudly in my chest. I was certain people around me could hear it. My palms started to sweat. I could feel sweat dripping down the back of my neck. I took a deep breath. I looked around the room. I saw expressions of hate, fear, guilt, boredom and curiosity.

I cleared my throat and spoke in my best, most confident stage voice I could muster. "There have been lies told about me by my former friends. I am hurt and angry that people who I care about, and who I thought cared about me, would do this. It is wrong what they are doing. And I will not put up with it. I have tried talking about it with them, but they are not open to hearing me. It seems they just want to hurt me. They are showing what kind of people they are. And it is not the kind of person with whom I want to be friends. And so, for the rest of you, it is up to you what kind of person you want to be. Do you want to be someone who spreads lies and hurts others? Or someone who is honest and kind?" I sat down to stunned faces and the rest of the day passed in a blur.

When I got home from school, my mom could immediately tell something was wrong. "Oh honey," she said as she pulled me into her arms, "what's going on?"

"Mom, I am just so angry! It's not fair what Meredith and Megan are doing. It is wrong and it is cruel! And everyone else is so afraid of the same thing happening to them that they are not standing up for me either! And I am angry that I am expected to show up to school every day and bear this alone! I need some help."

"Oh sweetheart, I am so sad this is happening to you. so sorry I gave you the impression you had to show up and be nice. I am so sorry you feel alone! That is not the case. You are not alone. Now, let's sit down and figure out what our options are. It is going to be OK." I finally felt some hope.

Later that night, I got a call from one of the girls

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

who had been ignoring me at school ever since Meredith and Megan had started those rumors. She said she was sorry and basically admitted she was scared of the same thing happening to her. She reminded me there would be new people to make friends with in seventh grade. I understood. It was easy to forgive her. It was easy to see that this was not about me, but about her and her own fears and insecurities. Probably just like the rest of them.

There will be new people in seventh grade, but whether or not I have 100 friends or just one solid, good friend, doesn't matter. Because I learned something about myself. Jesus was able to see through hypocrisy and greed. And so am I. He wasn't afraid to speak out even when he knew how much it would cost him. I learned I too could speak out against the injustices in the world and use my anger in ways that would create positive change.

I also know how strong I am. I will be ok. I know that now. I also know I will always be a bright light...even when that light needs to shine fiery red.

Discussion Questions

(Select a few)

1. *What did you notice about Elle and her story?*
2. *Is it ok to be angry? Why do you think Elle felt confused about whether or not it was ok to show her anger?*
3. *What do you do when you feel angry? How does being angry feel? What do you think about the way Elle expressed her anger? Would you be able to do that?*
4. *How might anger be a "good" thing? What could anger be letting us know?*
5. *Now that we have heard the story for this lesson, let's return to the Sacred Text and/or Wisdom Quote we heard a few minutes ago. Why are these words important? What do you think we should remember?*

Activity/Exploration 1

Theater Play

In today's scripture, we read a passage from the Gospel of Matthew about a time when Jesus became very angry. In the temple, he spoke his truth, which was also God's truth. Today we are going to act out a short play about that time. Read the passage again:

Christian Scriptures. Matthew 21:12-13 (NRSV)

Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers."

Let's think about other characters in this story. What might the money changers have been selling the temple? It was probably things like spices, animals, and foods. Why do you think Jesus was angry about this? It was probably because the temple, like our church, was a sacred place where people went to worship and to pray to God. Jesus saw people selling things in the temple and, even worse, they were charging too much money for the items. In essence, they were robbing the people who had come from far away. They were making money in a place that was supposed to be for worship.

Roles:

- Narrator
- Travelers
- Jesus
- Disciples
- Temple leaders (Money changers)
- Animals

Use the cloth and ropes to create simple costumes. Cloth can also be wings for birds. Make this fun and casual, allow the children to make their own costumes using things around the room or house. If the actors do not have their own copy of the script, ask the narrator to read the lines for those who have speaking roles. Then, those actors can then repeat the lines and act them out. If time permits,

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

you can use butcher paper to create a backdrop of the temple, with big square and rectangular stone structures and walls with a courtyard. If you have baskets of extra things people can carry, give those to the travelers. If possible, set up 1-3 tables or other small surfaces with tablecloths and other items that money changers will be selling. Make sure these are not breakable items. Be creative with what you have on hand. Place coins in a non-breakable bowl on the table.

Script

Narrator: This story takes place almost 2,000 years ago where Western Asia meets North Eastern Africa in the town of Jerusalem. It was the week of Passover, when Jewish people celebrate the liberation from slavery in Egypt. Jesus, his followers and many other Jewish people traveled to Jerusalem to pray at the temple.

[WEARY TRAVELERS WALK SLOWLY TOWARD THE TEMPLE. THEY ARE TIRED FROM WALKING FROM SO FAR AWAY.]

Traveler 1: I am so tired from our long journey!

Traveler 2: My feet ache! I am hungry and sore.

Traveler 3: We don't have the proper offerings and we are out of money, what will we do?

Traveler 4: We have been travelling for weeks and weeks and we have finally arrived!

Narrator: The Jewish writings taught the people they were supposed to bring an offering. Every family was responsible to bring an offering based on what they could afford. Because the Jewish people had been forced from their homes by Roman soldiers, they had to travel from far distances. Longer than traveling from one side of the United States to the other. It was very hard to travel with all of their things. So people often waited until they got to Jerusalem to find their offerings. The people had to buy what was being sold.

Traveler 1: We can buy something near the temple, maybe we can trade our chickens for offerings.

Narrator: The temple leaders and others knew people would arrive empty-handed and decided they would sell items for offerings. Because the leaders were greedy, they sold the items at a more expensive price.

Temple Leader 1: We are going to be rich! All these people coming from so far, many of them will need to buy their offerings.

Temple Leader 2: We can charge extra! They will be desperate!

Temple Leader 3: I can hear the clang of coins filling my pockets now!

Narrator: Many of the people who were coming to worship were not able to buy an offering. Everybody knew the closer you got to the temple in Jerusalem, the more expensive these items became.

[JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES ARE JUST OUTSIDE OF JERUSALEM. THEY ARE ALL SEATED AND JESUS IS TEACHING.]

Jesus: My brothers and sisters, as we are nearly to Jerusalem, it is important to remember, God has said, "My house is to be a house of prayer for all people, not just people who can afford expensive things or people who have many houses or people who can afford a maid or servant." When we get to Jerusalem, it will be necessary for me to speak out against the injustice there.

Disciple 1: But Jesus, you will put your life at risk for speaking out against the money changers!

Disciple 2: Yes, they may try to kill you!

Jesus: I am not afraid.

[JESUS AND HIS DISCIPLES WALK TOWARD THE TEMPLE.]

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

Narrator: Jesus arrives at the temple and he sees family and his friends going to worship. He sees the faces of his community who have come from various parts of the region. He feels warmth in his heart because he understands the love God has for these people.

[JESUS EMBRACES FELLOW TRAVELERS.]

Narrator: But that love turns into anger when Jesus sees these people who want to connect to God are being turned away by the temple leaders because they do not have the appropriate offerings or cannot afford to buy offerings from the temple leaders.

Jesus: Where are the money changers who are taking advantage of these people who have traveled so far to come and be with God?

[TRAVELERS POINT TO INSIDE THE TEMPLE WHERE THE MONEY CHANGERS ARE.]

[TEMPLE LEADERS ARE STANDING AT THE TABLE(S), LAUGHING AND POINTING, AND MAKING FUN OF THE TRAVELERS WHO HAVE NOTHING. TRAVELERS ARE GIVING THE MONEY CHANGERS ALL OF THEIR COINS OR BEGGING TO TRADE THE CLOTHES ON THEIR BACKS.]

Narrator: When Jesus finds the money changers,, he sees them laughing and being mean to people and cheating them out of their money. These people could have been helping the travelers connect with God, but instead they were interested in making a profit from their suffering. Jesus decided he had to do something! He had to take action to show what the money changers were doing was wrong and unjust.

Jesus: STOP!

[TEMPLE LEADERS MAKE LOUD NOISES, LAUGHING, YELLING ABOUT THE THINGS THEY ARE SELLING. RATTLE COINS TOGETHER, ETC.]

Temple Leaders: Doves! Lambs! Spices! Oils!

Narrator: The money changers did not hear Jesus over the noise of the animals and money clanking in their bowls. They laughed at him. Jesus became so angry, he grabbed their tables and turned them upside down!

[JESUS (CAREFULLY) TURNS THE TABLES DOWN AND PULLS TABLECLOTHS OFF THE SURFACES SO COINS AND ITEMS FALL TO THE GROUND.]

Jesus: How can you come between God and the people? Why do you think it is ok to make money from someone else's misery?

[JESUS POINTS TO THE TEMPLE LEADERS.]

Jesus: You are a brood of vipers! You are a den of thieves and robbers! God's table is open to everyone but you have made it hard for people to be with God. Why would you do that?

Hasn't God been gracious to you? Aren't these your brothers, sisters and family members? So why do you cheat them?"

[JESUS FREES THE ANIMALS -- BIRDS, SHEEP AND GOATS. ALL THE ANIMALS MAKE NOISES OF THANKS!]

[TRAVELERS AND PEOPLE CHEER AND HUG JESUS AND THANK HIM.]

Traveler 3: Thank you, Teacher, for standing up for us!

Traveler 4: Thank you Jesus, for speaking the truth!

[DISCIPLES GATHER AROUND JESUS IN PROTECTION AND SUPPORT. TEMPLE LEADERS SHAKE THEIR FISTS ANGRILY. THEY TALK TO EACH OTHER QUIETLY ABOUT HOW THEY WILL GET REVENGE.]

>> Lesson 20:

It's OK to be Angry

Narrator: This action made the temple leaders so angry. They wanted to find ways to kill Jesus because they lost their business for the day. No one wanted to buy from them. So they began to conspire about ways they might have Jesus killed.

[JESUS, DISCIPLES AND TRAVELERS ALL SIT TOGETHER IN SILENT PRAYER. THE ANIMALS RUN AND FLY FREE.]

THE END

At the end of the play, encourage everyone to clap and congratulate each other on a great job! Everyone helps to clean up the stage. See music option above to play during clean up.

Activity/Exploration 2

Sword of Clarity

Let's brainstorm a list of people or characters we know who have been angry. Think about activists, superheroes, characters in books/movies/myths, local government leaders, all of them!

(NOTE: Disney, Pixar and Marvel provide excellent, larger-than-life examples of anger expressed in harmful ways and productive ways! Think about "Ursula" in *The Little Mermaid*, or the character, "Anger" in Pixar's *Inside Out*, or Batman redirecting the Joker.)

Use the dry-erase/chalkboard to make the list visible. Be sure to include 2-3 examples of historical figures who have expressed their anger in ways that have provided education or other forms of transformation to a community. This includes contemporaries like muralists and hip-hop artists who speak out about racism or police brutality, and climate activists who perform civil disobedience that disrupts daily activities. It includes women, like Rosa Parks or Anita Hill, who spoke their truth to unwilling ears (Ms Parks to the bus driver, Ms Hill to the Supreme Court), and spiritual teachers, like Jesus who challenged the money-changers and upset the marketplace

that had overtaken the temple.

Now that we have this great list and some ideas about when anger can be good, I want to bring out the Sword of Clarity (Show sword). What do you think the Sword of Clarity is? (Invite responses). In myths and fairytales, the sword almost always symbolizes clarity. It is not a weapon of destruction, but rather a tool used to cut through ignorance, confusion and wrong-doing.

We have seen this in Harry Potter and Star Wars and other epic-style stories. In Great Britain, when a person is knighted, they are not being praised for being violent and angry, but for their ability to be truthful and wise, even when it is difficult.

In religious traditions and spiritual practice from the East, we see pictures of gods and goddesses (Dakinis) holding swords. The gods and goddesses are not using their swords as weapons for hurting others, but to cut through lies and other thoughts that keep us from the Truth. We saw this in today's story with Elle. Remember how Elle's former friends got so caught up in lies, gossip and "fitting in" that they forgot what was true? Elle was trying so hard not to be angry (because she thought it was wrong) that she nearly made herself sick!

When we find ways to cut through confusion or wrongdoing around us by using our anger, we are using the Sword of Clarity!. Let's stand up and take turns with this sword. Giving each person at least three feet of physical space, we will each make three sword cuts through the air in the space around us. With each slash of the sword, make a loud exhale. When you are done, I will "knight" you by saying your name and these words, "May you express your anger with clarity and bring about greater truth."

Closing the Lesson

Summarize — *Any time we feel angry, it is important to find safe ways to let the anger come out. It is especially important to listen to what our anger is telling us so we can speak up, ask for what we need, and voice our truth. When we express our anger in healthy ways, we show others how to do the same. Together, we begin to shape a more just and safe world.*

>> Lesson 16:

Brave Love

Hand out the Spiritual Affirmation Page if you have printed it or open the book to that page. Read the Spiritual Affirmation out loud to the children, then have everyone repeat it together, three times... joyfully!

Spiritual Affirmation for the Week:

I express my anger in healthy ways.

Next Time:

When we get together next time we are going to talk about Black Lives Matter and how all of us have important jobs to do in creating an anti-racist world that functions from equity, opportunity and love.