

# Anger as 'Energy'

By Mark Bradman, Essentially Men

I found myself this recently face-to-face with a very angry man. Understandably so, but very scary nonetheless for all of us within his vicinity.

The scary part for me was that we had no agreement between us as to what he might do with this anger, that is, no agreements such as I'd expect to be standard for any workshop, counselling session, etc.:

- 1 No self-harm,
- 2 No harm to others, and
- 3 No damage to property.

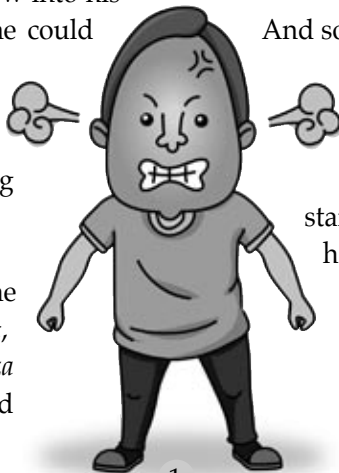
I wanted to place a pillow into his clenching fists so that he could thrash the stuffing out of it, but without such agreements as those above there was no telling what he might do.

I remembered the scene from the movie *Cabaret*, in which I watched *Liza Minnelli's* contorted

face as her relentless screaming was completely drowned out by the noise of a train passing on the overhead bridge under which she stood.

I wanted this man to feel the same sense of release as *Liza's* character had in the movie, but alas again there was no telling what else he might do from there on.

Even tears might have brought him some welcome relief (to us, included) as he stood across the room from his pregnant daughter, reflecting on the life of his 'baby girl'. But no, crying is what we men are trained not to do.



And so, as we all strived to help this man 'control' his anger ('act as adults' as I verbally tried encouraging him), he started 'behaving' as we all had wanted him to.

But as we left, hopeful that our support had averted more dire

consequences, I couldn't help but wonder what had become of the 'bush fire' that I'd seen scorch his life before me? Where had it gone? What would it take to re-ignite? Who will be there to help him douse those flames out next time?

This is one of the key moments on an Essentially Men / Men Being Real workshop when we create a safe

space for men to release pent up 'energy', some of which is so old they no longer remember what it relates to, or find words to describe.

It's worth attending the workshop for that reason alone as a means as getting 'old sump oil' out of our systems and preventing our 'engines overheating'.

  
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