

Is everyone angry? Or is it really *anger*?

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If we just look at the protests and the violence, we might conclude those people are really angry, and for the most part, justifiably so. But there is something potentially more dangerous going on at a much deeper level.

More Americans are feeling seriously threatened than ever before in our history.

Some experts are saying we are very resilient, just look at WWII.

In WWII we had a common enemy, a common leadership, and a common agenda. Today, it appears we have none of those.

As an individual, a family member, a parent, an employee (or was), I have to ask who is looking out for me, my family, my friends, my company, and my country?

Apparently, no one. We are on our own and there is no one to help us find solutions for the big problems that need addressing.

My ability to feed my family, my way of life, and everything I have ever held dear is threatened, and that is also true about everyone I know and love.

I have only two choices, fold, or lash out. Fold is a term used in the card game of poker. It means to accept defeat, to recognize the cards I hold cannot win.

Judging from the huge growth in anxiety, stress, depression, drug and alcohol use, and suicide, fold seems to be the choice most people make.

But there is also a huge increase in the number of divorces and domestic violence.

Lashing out may look like anger, and the results may be the same, but there is a significant difference.

Both have their basis in anxiety. Both are aggressive reactions, but anger is about attack, and responding to a threat is about defense.

In anger the cause is external to us. Something is happening that is unfair, I did not cause it, and by opposing or attacking I can eliminate the cause.

Feeling threatened also recognizes something is happening, but it is happening to me, and the cause is obviously greater than my ability to effectively do something about it. I cannot eliminate it, so I must defend as best I can to limit the damage to me.

You can usually set aside your anger, but a significant threat to your individual wellbeing strikes at the very heart of your self-esteem, your ability to take care of your own life, and your ability to take care of your loved ones.

Now is NOT THE TIME to push everyone away and isolate yourself because you think you need to "fix" this by yourself, but know you don't know how. You are not the cause of the problem. Your loved ones are not the cause of the problem either.

NOW IS THE TIME to embrace the ones you love and care about. NOW IS THE TIME to open your heart to them. You are not the only one suffering, and if you have children, they are really having problems figuring out why you are all of a sudden not there, not available, not caring, and not approachable.

There may not be a way for you to fix this at this time. You are not alone. Many of us are in the same boat. We may all have separate lives and unique problems, but we all are having them at the same time. Recognize that simple fact.

While you wait for the opportunity that will surely come, prepare yourself by being learning to be flexible and emotionally healthy.

Get involved in an effort to make a future that will be tolerable, sustainable, and equitable. Focus on becoming part of a solution.

Get involved because the future is important. You are an important part of that future because of the effect your life will have on others.