

CHOICES

Scenario 12

The Anger Monster

Your friend Amy is really angry.

She has had a fight with her Mom and is taking it out on everybody.

"I hate her!" she says.

"What happened?"

"She says I can't go out with my friends Friday night."

"Why?"

"I haven't been doing my homework. And she says I talk back to her."

You look down.

"What? Don't tell me you agree with her?"

Amy storms off. You follow her.

"Nobody loves me. You're all being mean and horrible. And I hate you too!"

She bursts into tears.

What should you do?

A You say, "No one hates you. And your Mom is just trying to help."

What next?

You catch up with Amy, who is sitting on a bench, quietly sobbing.

You sit down beside her. You reach out to her.

She pulls away.

"Amy. Your Mom just wants the best for you. Of course she loves you. I do too."

She stops crying and looks at you.

"I can help you with your homework. It's Math, isn't it? I can get my big brother to teach you. He showed me."

She sniffs.

"Have a drink." You offer her your water bottle. "There's nothing that we can't fix."

She puts her head down.

"I'm sorry," she says. "I lost it, didn't I?"

You smile.

"Maybe. But I can cope."

You stand up and offer her your hand.

Think about it

Anger tends to occur when a person feels frightened, or threatened.

All that fear comes rushing out, like a monster. When we're really angry, we can say things – in the moment – that we don't really mean. We can lash out.

Everyone gets angry from time to time. It's part of being human.

But if you have a relationship with someone, and you want to keep that relationship going, it's best to try and ride out the anger.

And to offer solutions to whatever is making them so unhappy. That's what friends do.

Do you want to look at another scenario involving anger? (Go to 21)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 12)

B You say, "And you're a horrible person too. And I'm not going to be your friend ever again!"

What next?

You rush off, feeling awful.

Later, Amy approaches you.

"I'm sorry," she says quietly. "I was upset. I didn't mean what I said."

You turn away and fold your arms.

Let her beg. Let her plead. You're still angry too. She can suffer now.

At home, your Mom asks you what's wrong.

"Amy was horrible to me. I'll never speak to her again."

And you storm upstairs.

You take down the pictures with her photo from your wall and throw them in the bin.

"I hate her."

And you flop onto your bed in a misery.

Think about it

Forgiveness sounds like something religious. It sounds all high and mighty. But really it's something quite common. It's excusing someone - who has hurt you - and moving on.

Instead of nursing feelings of hurt and outrage, it means saying to that person,

"I have stopped being angry at you. Let's be friends again."

There is a very old saying: "To err (make mistakes) is human; to forgive divine."

Do you want to look at another scenario involving difficult friends? (Go to 14)

Do you want to try the scenario again? (Go to 12)