



# Oak Journal

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Anger. It's an emotion that we all feel, and can be all-consuming if left unchecked. It's how we deal with and reflect on that anger that makes every difference, and learning how to do so at this age makes all the difference for future conflict and communication

We've been noticing (and hearing about) some big expressions of anger lately in our class; throwing, pushing, screaming. While these are all pretty normal reactions for a frustrated young

child, we decided it was time to explore further this important emotion with the class.

We began our first class discussion on this by asking the question: "What can you do to help yourself when you feel angry?" **Gretchen** immediately raised her hand and replied, "sometimes when I'm



angry my mom gives me my lovey". More friends raised their hands and offered the following suggestions:

**Millie:** have water or milk, and take a break

**Rohin:** push your hands on the ground

**Sailor:** go out and have some food

**Mackenzie:** take some space





We then discussed how it's important to learn what 'tool' will work for you when you are angry, and that different people will use different tools. Aria then demonstrated the brain by using her hand, explaining that if we place our thumb in the middle of our palm it's like the amygdala, which controls our emotions and can make us feel angry. If you fold your fingers over your thumb, it's like the prefrontal cortex, which is in the front of your head and helps you make decisions and solve problems. When you "flip your lid" (or get angry), then your prefrontal

cortex and amygdala can no longer communicate which means your problem solving and decision making skills are no longer easily accessible. Here's a picture to demonstrate:



The children practiced this with their hands, and we were impressed when the next day several children remembered the word for amygdala (prefrontal cortex is slightly more challenging). We came up with some more tools, and wrote them on the board:

- Laugh
- Hug somebody
- Breathe
- Play with a dog
- Build your own tower to knock over

We encourage you to practice these tools at home as you discover your own. While we continue to practice these tools and add to our toolbox, we wonder, how do you help yourself when you feel angry?

### Activities

Character Settings  
Sand & Writing  
Sand & Tools

### Materials

Loose Parts  
Kinetic Sand  
Sticks  
Rolling Pins  
Letter Stencils