

Seven Ways to Manage Your Anger

Center for a Positive Humanity

The Holy Scripture says, *Be ye angry and sin not* (Eph. 4:26). It is followed by the admonition of, *Neither give place to the devil* (Eph. 4:27). These passages make it clear that it is not anger that is the problem. In fact, anger is a natural emotion which has some very positive value. It is not anger but rather how we react when angry the causes the difficulty.

Some of us react with what we call rage. Rage is defined as a fit of violent anger, angry fury (Dictionary.com). It is this fury that we need to learn to manage and, in many cases, minimize. This article offers seven ways to control this fury and in the process hopefully offers you a more happy and rewarding life.

Tools

1. Find a Less Challenging Spot

While difficult in the heat of anger, it is a good practice to leave the anger provoking environment. Get away from the source of your anger. When you believe cooler heads can prevail, you can return to the issue and explore more productive ways to resolve the issue.



2. Focus on the Issue

Focus on the issue and not the person. Often it is the issue which is the source of our anger. Yet we chose to attack the person ignoring the issue. By separating the person from the issue we can often understand, not always agree, with the other person's position. When we understand the positions we are that closer to resolving the issues without destroying relationships.



3. Focus on a Happier Soothing Place

Focusing on a non-threatening place or event often will help us to separate the issue from the person. This allows your mind to retreat to a safe and positive place rather than engaging in an aggressive conflictual stance. We call this guided imaging. Substitute the impending rage with moments of comfort and peace. When you are ready you can return to focus on the issue



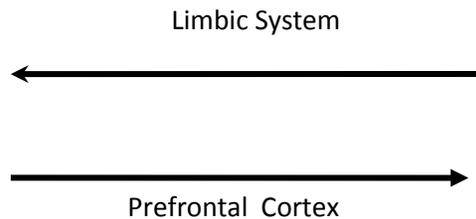
4. Learn to Recognize Your Triggers and Reactions

Our minds process our anger in the Limbic system and in the Prefrontal Cortex regions of our brains. The Limbic system is where our more primitive instincts reside. The Prefrontal Cortex is where the rational, higher thinking brain resides. Unfortunately, in most cases, the Limbic system reacts far more quickly than the Prefrontal Cortex.

There are certain stimuli that directly trigger the Limbic system for each individual. It is important one learn what these particular triggers are for themselves and learn to slow down the Limbic system.

When we think with the rational Prefrontal Cortex one is far more successful in avoiding destructive anger.

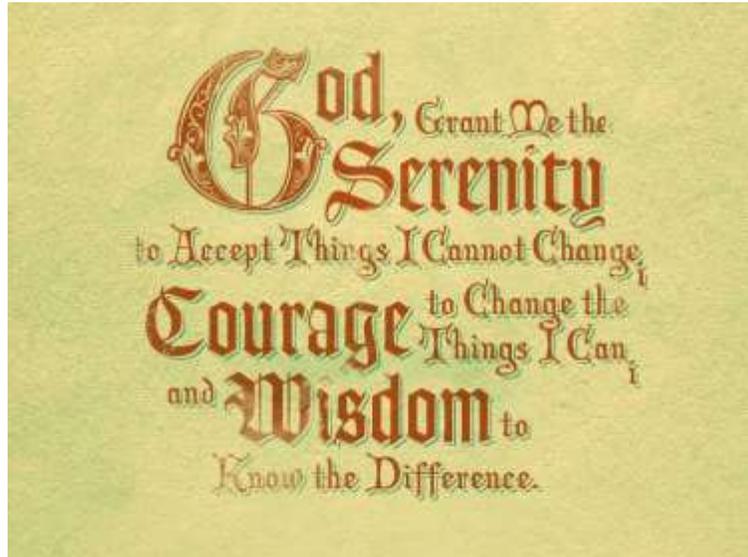
The goal is to;



5. Learn to Positively Use Your Anger

Anger, as we have said earlier, is not always a negative emotion. Anger can be a great impetus for positive change. Anger gives energy and incentive to increase growth. Again, it is not the anger but how we react to the anger.

Attacking another person, seeking revenge, or holding grudges are all wastes of time. They rarely lead to satisfying outcomes. In fact, these things inflict great costs to the angry person physically, emotionally, and relationally. These costs are almost always far beyond the benefit and the angry person can easily become trapped in a vicious cycle of anger and costly, negative results.



It is far better to learn to refocus the anger into opportunities for growth and learning. Ask yourself, what have you learned, what can you change, how can you grow in order to not confront the same thing again? How can you better insulate yourself from either unhealthy people or places?

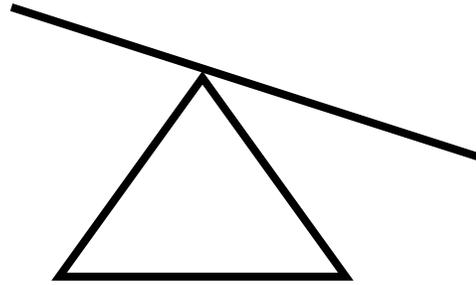
If you can gain this wisdom and/or from this experience you are much further ahead in controlling destructive anger from a proactive rather than reactive stance.

6. Understand the Consequences of your Actions

We all have had times when we allowed our anger to get the best of us. We all have regrets from past events or experiences. However, often we cannot change the past. At best, we can only learn from the past. Moreover, waiting until we are in another negative experience to recall the costs of a previous negative experience is not a good use of learning. The key here is to be proactive rather than reactive.

Learn to do a frequent cost benefit analysis of past behaviors/experiences. When we do this analysis we can anticipate expected results and more importantly we can;

Maximize the Positive



Minimize the Negative

A good adage to recite for ourselves is;

Proactive is the key

From the reactive we must flee

7. Learn to Practice More Healthier Alternatives



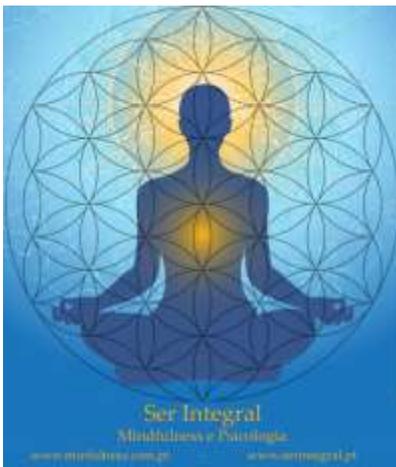
If we have a life where conflict and stress are ever present we have to expect to encounter anger more often than not. There is a symbiotic relationship between anger and stress. If we can develop routines for reducing our stress we can insulate ourselves from destructive anger.

Some of these routines may include;

- a. Developing a hobby in which you can release stress.
- b. Develop a regular exercise/workout program

- c. Develop a close friendship with another in which you can be open and honest about your feelings.
- d. Eat a healthy diet
- e. Get proper rest and sleep
- f. Consider learning and practicing a discipline of

MINDFULNESS BASED STRESS REDUCTION



Conclusion

Education about anger is the beginning towards learning to manage your anger. We offer Conflict Coaching at the Center for a Positive Humanity. Our goal is to help you have a more satisfying and happier lifestyle.

Contact us at

302.3722.5670

Or

www.cfaph.org