

SPRING 2016

ANGER - IT ONLY TAKES A SPARK



It Only Takes A Spark To Get The Fire Going.

Anger is an important matter. Road rage, conflict in the home, broken relationships, divorce, injustice and abuse are the results of anger. We all, in one way or another, will wrestle with anger.

Anger In The Body - Physical reactions to anger can include muscle tension in the lower back and neck, racing heart rate, shaking, cold hands, red face, headaches, stomach upset, fatigue, crying, raised voice, lashing out verbally. Anger that is turned inward and repressed may lead to anxiety and a greater risk of heart problems, and other physical diseases. (*Maté, G., When the Body Says No, 2004*).

Anger In The Mind - Anger may be the cause for some people to feel victimized, discounted, dismissed or ignored. A persistent sense of helplessness drives many to seek justice or revenge in a destructive way.

Anger In Families - In families where expression of anger was not allowed, ignored or processed in an unhealthy manner, children learn to express anger through whining, pouting or being clingy. If these anger patterns are not resolved, they are typically replayed in adult life in hurtful ways.

"I Am Not Angry - I Am Spiritually P.O.ed" - What is at the root of our irritation, displeasure or irritability? What triggers my annoyance, ill temper and your sarcastic humor or frustration? What is it that I want and do not get? Why am I ticked off when I get what I do not want?

Anger is not always recognized for what it is and consequently, responses to anger triggers are often not helpful but hurtful.

Anger Defined

"Our anger is our whole-personed active response of negative moral judgment against perceived evil." (*Jones, Uprooting Anger: Biblical Help for a Common Problem, 2005*).

This definition encompasses 5 key ideas:

1. **Active response:** Anger is an action, something we do, not something we have. The Bible is full of stories of people who do anger, not who own or harbor anger.
2. **Whole-personed:** Scripture depicts the reality of anger as involving our entire being and engaging our whole person.
3. **Response against:** It does not arise in a vacuum or appear spontaneously. It's causal core lies in our active hearts that respond to people and events in daily life.
4. **Negative moral judgment:** Our anger postures us against what we determine to be unacceptable. It casts negative mental votes against unjust actions. Jesus taught that anger is the moral equivalent of murder.
5. **Perceived evil:** our moral judgment arises from our personal perspectives. In anger we perceive some action, object, situation, or person to be evil or unjust.

When In Anger - Do Not Sin: Taking Angry Thoughts Captive - Grace Based Counselling is effective for identifying anger triggers, taking ownership of ineffective responses to dealing with old anger patterns, replacing distorted thinking and irrational core beliefs with new ways of thinking that are God-honoring, neighbor loving and contributing to healthy minds, marriages, and communities.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF GIVING AND RECEIVING INPUT

Let's face it. Most men don't really like the idea of counselling. I should know, I am a couples, families, and individual counsellor. So I would like to address men specifically in this article.

Recently I was leading a couple's workshop. In that workshop, there is a section where I split the men from the women in order to discuss the idea of "accepting influence from our spouses." One fascinating concept that came up as the men were discussing this idea, was that often times, men don't feel like they have a strong opinion about 70% of the things that go on in the home. Think back to your wedding...the male typically just wants to get married, that's most of what he is thinking about. He typically is not as concerned with the style of invitations, types of flowers, or flavor of cake, etc.

One problem with this thinking is that when men do have an opinion on something that is in the 30%, we (here I include myself) tend to think that we deserve to get our way. After all, we rationalize that our spouse is getting her way 70% of the time!

However, there are two main fallacies in this type of thinking. The first is that our spouse is generally genuinely seeking our input on the 70% of things we deem as being unimportant. Thus we are not fully participating in the relationship if we do not engage her on these things. The second is that our spouses definitely have input about most of the things in the 30% that we deem important. Thus they want to be included in our decision making process. This comes down to mutual respect and good communication.

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WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS

Several of our counsellors have made themselves available for workshops and/or presentations that can be held at any of our supporting churches. These workshops could be used by many different groups. One workshop on Mental Health has already been held in mid-April at Trinity Christian Reformed Church for their Youth Group. Other groups that might benefit from a workshop would be the Seniors' Groups, Ladies' or Men's Bible Study Groups or one or more Small Groups joining together for a Seminar.

One of our counsellors has experience presenting workshops on relationship issues such as: Couples Communication; Handling Conflict Among Couples; Enhancing Connection for Couples and Essential Skills for Couples. Other topics that can be considered include, Abuse Awareness Training; Self-Management of Anger; Mental Health Awareness. Other counsellors are also available to deal with issues relating to marriage, depression, anxiety, support for parents of children with anxiety, and overcoming anger.

Some groups may be interested in learning how to Solve Problems before they become conflicts, and how to Speak up Effectively - Avoiding the Pitfalls of Passive and Aggressive Communication.

Please call our office if you are interested to work out further details to accommodate your schedule and interest.

REFUGEE HELP - Many churches have begun the process of sponsoring a refugee family. As these families come to us out of very difficult situations in war-torn countries, they may be suffering from personal and family losses, or even from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). In such situations, the services and counsellors of Cascade Christian Counselling Association are available to help. Please call our office if there is a need or situation where our professional services may be useful.