

Understanding Your Anger

There are many events, which cause us to feel angry: people invading our boundaries, unexpected bills and in-laws arriving unannounced, to name just a few. We use words such as frustrated, bothered, irritated, annoyed, upset and furious to describe our feelings. However, anger is a *secondary* emotion. The *primary* feeling words would be:

Afraid	Discouraged	Incompetent	Rejected
Bored	Disgusted	Insecure	Sad
Depressed	Disrespected	Lonely	Unloved
Disappointed	Embarrassed	Nervous	Others? _____

Our belief system affects the way we think, feel, and act. It looks like this:



Scriptural References

1. Ephesians 4:31-32: You must put away every kind of bitterness, **anger**, **wrath**, quarreling, and evil, slanderous talk. Instead, be kind to one another, compassionate, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you.
2. James 1:19-21: Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters! Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, **slow to anger**. For human **anger** does not accomplish God's righteousness.
3. Galatians 5:22-23: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and **self-control**. Against such things there is no law.
4. Psalms 4:4-8: In your **anger** do not sin; When you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent. (Selah) NIV
5. Psalms 37:7-8: Wait patiently for the Lord! Wait confidently for him! Do not fret over the apparent success of a sinner, a man who carries out wicked schemes! Do not be **angry** and frustrated! Do not fret! That only leads to trouble!
6. Proverbs 14:29: The one who is slow to **anger** has great understanding, but the one who has a **quick temper** exalts folly.
7. Proverbs 15:1: A gentle response turns away **anger**, but a harsh word stirs up **wrath**.
8. Proverbs 16:32: Better to be slow to **anger** than to be a mighty warrior, and one who controls his **temper** is better than one who captures a city.
9. Proverbs 29:11: A fool lets fly with all his **temper**, but a wise person keeps it back.
10. Mark 3:1-5: Then Jesus entered the synagogue again, and a man was there who had a withered hand. They watched Jesus closely to see if he would heal him on the Sabbath, so that they could accuse him. So he said to the man who had the withered hand, "Stand up among all these people." Then he said to them, "Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath, or evil, to save a life or destroy it?" But they were silent. After looking around at them in **anger**, grieved by the hardness of their hearts, he said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

11. John 2:14-17: He found in the temple courts those who were selling oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers sitting at tables. So he made a whip of cords and drove them all out of the temple courts, with the sheep and the oxen. He scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold the doves he said, "Take these things away from here! Do not make my Father's house a marketplace!" His disciples remembered that it was written, "**Zeal for your house will devour me.**"

Scriptural Perspective:

1. It is possible to be angry without sin.
2. Not all anger is irrational and pointless.
3. Some anger is to be expressed to the person whose behavior provokes it.
4. Some anger is not to be expressed, but managed within ourselves.
5. Develop self-control in all things, especially in matters of anger.

Supporting Scripture

Couple Exercise:

Purposeful change occurs when we are aware of behavior that needs to be changed. The first step in changing how you handle anger is to understand it better. Complete these questions concerning your anger reactions. Be sure to identify the primary feelings associated with when you get angry. Share the results with your teammate.

I get angry with you when . . .

Primary Feeling

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Identify the primary feeling (before the anger) for each item above.

When I get angry with you, I usually . . .

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

When I become aware of your anger, I usually . . .

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Exercise 2.5 will help you apply these insights, creating a different approach for dealing with anger in your relationship.

We tend to focus on our feelings and on our teammate's behavior. Good teammates do just the opposite.