

HARNESSING ANGER

Using angry energy in a positive way

"In your anger do not sin....." Eph.4:26 (Psalm 4:4)



THREE ASPECTS

1) Normalising & Naming

- *"emotions are upheavals of thought"* (Martha Nussbaum)
- **Giving it a NAME**
- **Giving it a PLACE:** where in your body do you experience it?
- **Giving it a SIZE:** How intense is the experience?
- **Giving it a SHAPE:** How does it develop/peak?
- **Giving it a STARTING POINT:** What's triggering me? (this lumpy feeling inside me is happening in response to what event?)
- **BACKGROUND** - what is "static"?; how vulnerable am I?
- **VISIBILITY:** Am I a Stuffer, Leaker or Splasher?

2) Looking for Meaning

"Anger is caused by a belief rather than an event; unrealistic beliefs + perceived catastrophic event = I-can't-stand-it-it is". (Albert Ellis)

"MAN'S anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires"
(James 1:20)

Get rid ofanger ("fierceness") and rage (e.g. Eph.5:31)

What causes fights and quarrels among you? Isn't it your DESIRES that battle within you? (James 4:1-2).

Anger As Secondary emotion:

Strategies

- Doberman
- Ostrich
- Shrek
- Bearded Dragon/Frill-necked Lizard

Anger as possible Primary emotion/energy

- Self-Respect, e.g saying no to abuse
- *Let people feel the weight of who you ARE - and let them deal with it* (Brent Curtis)
- Death (e.g. Jesus, John 11:32)
- Injustice

3) HOW DO I MAKE IT WORK FOR ME?

- Anger can be the passion and energy for justice, or energy to overcome a problem
- (godly anger is)...*"Passion tempered with reason"* (Thomas Aquinas)

"Do you have a RIGHT to be angry?" (God to Jonah)

Guidelines

- Avoid trigger situations
- Dissipate/work it off
- Sitting with it; letting other feelings surface and letting them have a voice/reflective
- Revisit past history to separate "water behind the dam"
- Get help to work out whats happening inside you
- What does the Best Part of me want to do?
- Using the Bottle of Hindsight...
- Awareness of what its like for others (inviting or allowing feedback - mirroring)
- Pray for transformation (*fruit of the spirit is.....patience, longsuffering, self-control*)
- Talk to God (or be angry with HIM.....read Ps.44:13-26)
- Harness the slow burn
- Negotiate/speak out; can bring honesty and intimacy
- Make changes, bring people to account

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Books

"How to take the GRRR out of anger" by Elizabeth Verdick and Marjorie Liskovski (Free Spirit Publishing 2003)

Dance of Anger - Harriet Lerner (good example of harnessing angry energy towards effective loving)

Who we are and how we relate - Larry Crabb

