

Growth Guide For Individual Study

In the first month the whole Israelite community arrived at the Desert of Zin, and they stayed at Kadesh. There Miriam died and was buried.

² Now there was no water for the community, and the people gathered in opposition to Moses and Aaron. ³ They quarreled with Moses and said, “If only we had died when our brothers fell dead before the Lord! ⁴ Why did you bring the Lord’s community into this wilderness, that we and our livestock should die here? ⁵ Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to this terrible place? It has no grain or figs, grapevines or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!”

⁶ Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance to the tent of meeting and fell facedown, and the glory of the Lord appeared to them. ⁷ The Lord said to Moses, ⁸ “Take the staff, and you and your brother Aaron gather the assembly together. Speak to that rock before their eyes and it will pour out its water. You will bring water out of the rock for the community so they and their livestock can drink.”

⁹ So Moses took the staff from the Lord’s presence, just as he commanded him. ¹⁰ He and Aaron gathered the assembly together in front of the rock and Moses said to them, “Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?” ¹¹ Then Moses raised his arm and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out, and the community and their livestock drank.

¹² But the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust in me enough to honor me as holy in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this community into the land I give them.”

Numbers 20:1-12.

How true to life is this story when applied to the consequences of rage?

1. How do you normally handle anger? Look at the five styles of anger management and identify the one(s) that fit how you manage anger
 - Accommodating – you allow the person to win and get their way.
 - Avoiding – you ignore it, run from conflict situations or evade getting into conflict.
 - Compromise – you seek middle ground, both parties make concessions.
 - Compete – you believe you are right and you do not back down or give in.
 - Collaborate – you look for a win-win situation.
2. Does your way of handling anger work in the short term? Does it work long term? In what situations do each of these styles work best?
3. What are the consequences to how you handle your anger? How have those consequences helped you get better control of your anger?

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4. React to this statement: "The consequences of losing your temper are disproportionate to the seriousness of the sin." How have you seen this to be true? In light of that, how seriously are you taking your anger and what steps have you taken to manage it better?
5. What triggers your anger? What can we do to put a safety on each trigger so our anger doesn't explode and do damage to ourselves and others?
6. What are the underlying reason(s) or cause(s) for your anger? What attempts have you made to change? How have you been able to "cage the rage?"
7. What attempts have you made to change and are they working? What has worked?
8. How long does it take you to simmer down and regain control? How do you feel after the fact? Do you hurt people and if so, how do you make amends? What have you learned from your mistakes?
9. Have you ever experienced someone's anger? What was it like? How has it affected you? If you've been traumatized by someone's rage have you sought out help to find healing of the wounds you carry? If not I encourage you to do so.
10. How do you handle angry responses or angry people?
11. "For man's anger does not bring about the righteous life God desires." James 1:20. What righteous goals do we think anger will help us accomplish? Does it work? What are the costs? What's a better way?
12. What high stress times tend to produce the most conflict in your family? Share a time it got ugly. What have you been able to do to "cage the rage" so it doesn't ruin future family gatherings?
13. Read the following passages and reflect on them. Proverbs 14:29; 15:1-2, 4, 7, 28, 33
Galatians 5:16-23; Ephesians 4:26-32; 6:4.

If anger is doing damage to your life, consider this exercise:

The next time you get angry ask yourself the following questions:

- A. What actually occurred? What was the issue or event? What was I responsible for and not responsible for?
- B. How did I respond? (i.e. Blame, honesty, loving, character assassination, control, hurt due to disrespect etc.)
- C. If you need to make amends, what could you do? (i.e. Apologize, ask for a fresh start, communicate what hurt you and why) Sometimes no one is at fault and no injury

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occurred, we are just being overcritical and the problem is in our head. Let go of the guilt because it is false guilt.

- D. What steps can I make to change? (i.e. Time out to cool off, empathy, analyze the “Why” –Why did I get hurt or get angry?, tone it down, be more reasonable or less demanding, counseling/intervention)
- E. What are the underlying issues? Are there any repeat issues that keep causing your anger?

NOTE:

If your anger is extreme or chronic. If you feel like harming someone or yourself, if you have “lost it” and are physical in any way, then I encourage you to go get help. You are out of control and you need to stop living in denial and start moving toward healthier ways to manage your anger.

You will always get angry. Anger is part of life. You can however control it and use it for good and not for harm. If you have lost a relationship or a job due to an angry response, go get help!

A good website that includes a lot of good resources and programs to help people handle anger in more healthily is: <http://www.whatsgoodaboutanger.com>

Remember: Energy plus irrationality is a dangerous mix. Think of all the people you know or stories in the media or examples from history where this dangerous mix destroyed people’s lives and let it motivate you to take your anger seriously and work to get it under control!