

## **The Problem – The Many Faces of Anger**

As someone who struggles with anger, we may not recognize that our anger has foundations in other basic emotions--usually fear, pain or guilt. Some of us do not understand that anger is a God given emotion and can be used in productive ways. Anger is a warning signal that something is wrong and can alert us to the potential for physical and/or emotional danger. It can provide the energy to make much needed changes, to resist or flee threatening situations, and helps us in our awareness of our own emotional and/or physical boundaries.

Some of us may have been abused or neglected as children, lost a parent or a loved one through death or abandonment, been repeatedly cheated on by a spouse, or suffered from other traumas causing deep-seeded fear and resentment issues. Some of us use anger to keep people from uncovering our secret life of sin, or getting too close to us emotionally.

Some of us may have come to believe that being angry meant that we were bad, at fault, ungodly, or not true Christians. These beliefs may cause us to minimize hurtful situations and/or suppress our anger. We may turn our anger inward engaging in self-loathing, or reverting to passive-aggressive behaviors.

Some of us may believe anger, aggression, and intimidation help us earn respect and get what we want. However, true power doesn't come from bullying others. People may be afraid of us, but they won't respect us if we can't handle opposing viewpoints. Others will be more willing to listen and accommodate our needs if we learn to communicate in a respectful way.

We may discover our anger is protecting negative traits such as pride, selfishness, control, or perfectionism. Maybe we feel angry because we are losing control of another person. In either case, if we deny our anger, we can't get to the source. Anger then, is helpful because it is a sign something is being protected, either good or bad.

When not properly expressed, anger can come out "inappropriately" in the form of road rage, hurtful humor, procrastination, illness, memory loss, chronic lateness, gossip, depression, desire for control, verbal abuse and/or physical violence.

We may have learned to express anger inappropriately from our parents, other relatives, or friends. We did not recognize that when we lashed out in anger, we were ignoring our fear, pain, or another deeper hurt, habit, or hang-up. Others of us did not realize we were struggling with anger because we did not express it, but rather, we stuffed it down and kept silent.

As our lives and relationships progressed we may have become addicted to the physical symptoms of anger such as a momentary euphoria, as the anger was released. Some of us did not recognize we were actually hurting our loved ones and ourselves in the process. In the heat of the moment, releasing our anger and finding relief from our fear, pain and/or guilt was all that mattered.

Some of us felt our anger was justified based on the object of anger's actions, i.e., "If he would help around the house, I wouldn't have had to yell at him" or "If she had not talked back to me, I would not have had to slap her" or "My husband deserves my wrath because he cheated on me."

Many of us may feel intense shame and guilt over the actions that we have committed during our unhealthy expressions of anger. We have vowed to never act that way again, only to find ourselves back in the same situations, unable to change it under our own power. We remain stuck using anger to get desired results from others, to hide our sin, or to self-protect.

## **The Solution:**

**Recognize Physical Symptoms:** notice physical symptoms such as feeling hot, a stiff neck, balled fists, clenched jaw, raised voice, rapid breathing. Give ourselves permission to feel the emotion of anger and make the choice not to react negatively, but to respond in a positive manner.

**FACE THE TRUTH – FIND THE ROOT:** Seek to remove the masks and face the things that happened or are happening in our life. Admit we are powerless to change on our own; realizing that until the root is identified and removed, it will continue to produce bad fruit. Practice the habit of asking clarifying questions such as: Why am I so angry? Why is this a trigger? Am I feeling a loss of control? Am I being harmed in some way? Am I angry at sin and/or truth being revealed in my life? Pray for God to reveal the root of our anger, and ask for help in its removal. Avoid alcohol, drugs and other medicating substances as you learn to identify and process your emotions, choosing to respond rather than react.

**Learn How to Express Anger in a Positive Manner & Confront in Love:** Learn not to leave anger unresolved. By using "I" statements express your frustration by being assertive but not confrontational. Do not use confrontation as an opportunity to blame, shame, seek revenge, or rationalize.

**Take a Timeout:** Practice Deep Breathing, vote with your feet (remove yourself from the situation), and/or reschedule a better time to discuss the issue.

## **Commit to a Daily Time in Prayer and in God's Word**

**Commit to Weekly Meetings:** Attend CR, join a Step Study, and/or Anger Management Classes to help identify the root and provide management tools. Seek out an accountability partner and support team of safe people.

**Begin the Process of Forgiveness:** Become willing to receive God's forgiveness and offer the same to others. Forgiveness is NOT forgetting, minimizing, denying, or excusing what has happened. Forgiveness IS giving up the desire for revenge. Forgiveness is a process not an event.

### Consider Professional Help If:

- You feel constantly frustrated and angry no matter what you try.
- Your temper causes problems at work or in your relationships.
- You avoid new events and people for fear of losing control of your anger.
- You have gotten in trouble with the law due to your anger.
- Your anger has ever led to physical violence.

\*Despite what many people believe, **domestic violence and abuse** is not due to the abuser's loss of control over his behavior and temper. Abusive behavior is a deliberate choice for the sole purpose of controlling you. If you are in an abusive relationship, know that couples counseling is not recommended—and that your partner needs specialized treatment, not regular anger management classes.

#### We Meet Every Monday

5:30-6:15 pm	Dinner in Hillside Café
6:30-7:30 pm	Large Group Meeting (Worship, Lesson or Personal testimony)
7:30-8:20 pm	Open Share Small Groups
8:30-9:00 pm	Cross Talk Café (Fellowship, coffee, dessert)

# ANGER ISSUES

## The Problem and Solution



# CELEBRATE RECOVERY

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT  
HENDERSON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH  
1100 E. I-35 Frontage Rd., Edmond  
405.513.7472  
[www.moj.com/recovery](http://www.moj.com/recovery)