

Introduction: How to make anger work for you

- Get a picture of anger: It's like a wild stallion out of control or under control.
- Our anger holds powerful potential for good and evil; it must be harnessed!

The A,B,C,Ds of anger:

A – Acknowledge (admit and accept) the anger

B – Backtrack to the primary emotion

C – Consider the cause

D – Determine how best to deal with it

The practical process: How to deal with your anger

1. At whom am I angry? Myself? Someone else? The situation? God?
2. What should I do? Express directly or release indirectly? (Confront or conceal?) Will my plans make matters worse or better?

3. How do I deal with the situation? In person? On the phone? Through a letter?
Engage in anger-discharge activities?

Continuum of Ways to Express Anger			
Unhealthy	Healthy	Healthy	Unhealthy
Get it all out	Express	Redirect & Release	Grin & Bear It
Explode	Communicate	Discharge	Implode
Yell, Scream, Belittle	In person, phone, letter	Physically active or emotionally calming activities	Withdraw, silent treatment

4. When should I deal with it?

Do I tend to run from conflict?	Yes	No	Sometimes
Do I tend to attack others during disagreements?	Yes	No	Sometimes
Do I take time determining if & when I should deal with a conflict?	Yes	No	Sometimes
Do I force others into confrontation before they're ready?	Yes	No	Sometimes
Are there any current conflicts I need to face but am avoiding?	Yes	No	Sometimes
Which timing do I favor? Now, Later, Never - Why?			

God would like us to turn the nemesis of anger into a friend

¹⁹My dear brothers, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, ²⁰for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

James 1:19-20

God's 3-step training method to bridle anger:

Step #1: "Be Quick to Hear"

- Our **immediate response** to God, others, circumstances, and our anger is to be "receptive listeners" not "reactionary responders."
- **Key Question** = What is this anger telling me?

Step #2: "Be Slow to Speak"

¹⁹When words are many, sin is not absent, but he who holds his tongue is wise.
Proverbs 10:19

³He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin.
Proverbs 13:3

²⁰Do you see a man who speaks in haste? There is more hope for a fool than for him.
Proverbs 29:20

- Our **interim response** to God, others, circumstances, and our anger is to "think before we speak."
- **Key Question** = What must I do to prevent a "verbal reflex response?"

Step #3: “Be Slow to Anger”

⁹Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.
Ecclesiastes 7:9

- Our **life changing** response to anger begins when we replace “reaction” with “reflection.”
- **Key Question** = What root issue (**injustice, hurt, frustration, or insecurity**) is behind this anger? (ABCD Method)

Summary:

- **Remember** – Anger is a choice
- **Remember** – Anger is a secondary emotion
- **Remember** – It’s not wrong to feel angry, it’s what you do with it.
- **Remember** – The A,B,C,Ds of anger

Discussion Questions:

1. Share some practical steps you can take to follow James’ 3-step approach to diffusing anger. (Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger)
2. What was most helpful to you from this passage and message? Why?