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?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unhealthy</th>
<th>Healthy</th>
<th>Healthy</th>
<th>Unhealthy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get it all out</td>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Redirect &amp; Release</td>
<td>Grin &amp; Bear It</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explode</td>
<td>Communicate</td>
<td>Discharge</td>
<td>Implode</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yell, Scream, Belittle</td>
<td>In person, phone, letter</td>
<td>Physically active or emotionally calming activities</td>
<td>Withdraw, silent treatment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. *When should I deal with it?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do I tend to run from conflict?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I tend to attack others during disagreements?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I take time determining if &amp; when I should deal with a conflict?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do I force others into confrontation before they’re ready?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any current conflicts I need to face but am avoiding?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Which timing do I favor? Now, Later, Never - Why?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

James 1:19-20 (NIV)
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”**

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

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

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

- 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”

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

• 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?