

Marriage & Family

The Good & Bad of Anger

Anger's Positive Functions

Anger is an *energizer*. It gives us vigor, mobilizes the body's resources for self-defense, and provides us with stamina when a task gets difficult. It enables us to deal with conflict by supplying fuel for the fight.

Anger can be helpful in *expression* tension and communicating our negative feelings to others. The productive expression of anger is an important way to resolve conflict.

Anger gives us information about people and situations. It serves as a *cue* to tell us that there is something unjust, frustrating, threatening, or annoying going on. It can be a signal that tells us it is time to cope with the distress.

Anger arousal can *potentiate* a feeling of control. When a situation is getting out of hand, converting anger arousal into energy enables us to take charge and assert our will or interest.

Anger's Negative Functions

Anger can disrupt our thoughts and actions. When angry, it is harder to think clearly and evaluate options. It causes us to act impulsively without considering the consequences of our behavior.

Sometimes anger is a way to defend ourselves when it is not necessary. When we get hurt or embarrassed we can get angry as a way to protect our pride. It is easier to be angry than to be anxious. Anger used like this prevents us from recognizing our feelings and facing ourselves.

Anger can *instigate* or lead to aggression. When we become emotionally upset, we sometimes try to discharge or release our feelings through our behavior; we get angry and then try to take it out on something or someone.

Anger can convey a negative impression to others. It can cause contempt, fear, avoidance, repudiation.

Church of Christ Sermons Online: Copyright © Dr. Justin Imel