

What's Good About Anger?

Putting Your Anger to Work for Good

Third Edition

Foreword by Dr. Rich Pfeiffer

by

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THIRD EDITION

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*To my lovely wife Lois, for her gracious patience and persevering love,
without which I might never have chosen to allow God to bring my
anger under his control.*

Ted Griffin

*To my husband, David, who has inspired and encouraged me and
demonstrated God's love to me for over 40 years.*

Lynette J. Hoy

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FOREWORD

by Richard Pfeiffer, MDiv, PhD

What's Good About Anger? keeps getting better and better.

It has always been about the transformation of destructive anger into something much more positive. With the addition of a new Emotional Intelligence chapter it has become even more helpful to those of us who suffer from never having been exposed to a healthy way to approach our angry emotions.

Suffering from anger management problems can frequently be a very discouraging plight. For example, one of the difficulties with mismanaged anger is that there is always something that triggers it. But when we are ineffective in managing our anger, we become the unacceptable focus of disdain, and the issue that generated it all often gets lost. It can sometimes seem rather hopeless. How can we move from a psychic reaction that is seemingly life-robbing and destructive to a method of responding to our feelings of anger that is more life-giving?

Lynette Hoy and Ted Griffin have created an anger management program that places an emphasis on hope. The What's Good About Anger? program successfully shifts the hopeless approach focusing on experiences and expressions of anger as "bad," to a method that says "let's learn how to use the benefits of anger for productive pur-

poses." So it is the modeling of an empathic approach to anger problems that allows participants to actually experience "empathy" and find new hope to grow and to develop higher levels of consciousness.

This new edition offers practical solutions to anger problems in the form of helpful skills, concepts, and techniques to help anyone deal with anger more effectively. The program increases awareness of emotions and discusses emotional intelligence in a positive way. The co-authors have touched all the bases of state-of-the-art anger management solutions, doing so in both a scientific and spiritually sensitive manner.

You are in good hands here, and as you take this program seriously you will find the benefits of decreased stress, shame, distorted thinking, and also a lessening of anger itself. You will discover the hope that you have "a moment" to make a choice between either destructive "punishing" or creative problem-solving. We can grow! We can develop to higher levels of consciousness.

Rich Pfeiffer, August 29, 2009

Richard Pfeiffer, MDiv, PhD, is the President of the Board of Directors for NAMA, the National Anger Management Association: www.namass.org, the Director/Founder of Growth Central, and the author of eight Real Solution Workbooks.

INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS

Welcome to the third edition
of What's Good About Anger?

It's hard to believe that there is anything good about anger, isn't it? As you read this book, we are hoping that you will discover, though, that you can learn to control your anger and use your anger for good purposes, with the help of your Higher Power. You can learn how to be good and angry.

This course is not only a book on anger management - it emphasizes the source of anger, triggers that provoke anger, and examples of how to express anger in healthy ways and shows you how to turn anger into problem-solving, assertiveness, conflict management, empathy, and forgiveness.

What's Good About Anger? is meant to assist people with differing experiences in all walks of life. People with "hidden" anger who might be feeling depressed. People with explosive anger. Even people who don't believe they have ever felt angry.

So take your time reading through this book and completing the questions and activities. We hope you will come to realize that anger can be a healthy emotion to motivate you to change.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE OF THE WHAT'S GOOD ABOUT ANGER? COURSE

- 1. Complete the Anger Survey.** This will help you assess when, where and how you get angry and your general provocation scenario (GPS). The GPS describes typical situations in which you are triggered to become angry. Be honest about your feelings and experience with anger. After all, this course-work is personal and is geared to help you get an understanding of how you can grow in tackling any problem you may be having with anger in your life and in your relationships.
- 2. Then read through the book, completing the questions as you progress.** Additional information is given on how to apply your general provocation scenario (found in the Anger Survey) to the section in the course on "Handling Anger Effectively."
- 3. Keep a weekly anger log and progress report** throughout the time you are reading this book. Each day think about and try one or two of the suggestions for handling anger. Especially apply the steps in "Handling Anger Effectively" to each situation. Write out your basic concerns, your options and requests.
- 4. Read "When to Take a Time-Out"** in order to make a plan for the situations that come up that cause your anger to escalate more quickly and make you feel like you are losing control. If you still find your anger escalating, then lengthen your time-out period (example: one hour instead of thirty minutes).
- 5. Read and apply the communication skills** taught in the assertiveness and managing conflict chapters. Complete the empathy and assertiveness inventories.

6. Evaluate your thinking with the cognitive distortions questions, and log your thinking patterns. This exercise will help you identify any false perspective you have about people or situations and challenge whether it is correct.

7. Read the new chapter on emotional intelligence, rate your level of empathy, and begin applying these important concepts. You will discover how growing in emotional intelligence is essential for redirecting anger into productive behaviors!

8. Finally complete the chapter "Plan to Change Your Life by Changing Your Thinking," and read the FAQs at the end of the book.

Additional aspects of this course will teach you to apply forgiveness, assertiveness, problem-solving, empathy, stress and conflict management skills, and foundational principles in order to put your anger to work for good.

GROUP GUIDELINES

The following material will help you if you are part of a group using this book (though it can be used individually).

Individual preparation: Spend time reading each chapter prior to each meeting and answering the questions. Complete any assignments.

Group rules for participation:

1. Keep whatever is said in the group confidential.
2. Use "I" messages vs. "you" messages.
3. Don't give advice unless it is requested.
4. You don't have to participate.
5. Avoid "I" statements.

Leader guidelines:

1. Ask the participants to agree to keep confidential what is discussed in the group. This will make the group a safe place for sharing and accountability.
2. Promote participation by drawing out quieter people and setting boundaries with those who tend to monopolize.

3. Open the first session by reading the foreword, introduction, and guidelines. Ask people to share what brought them to the group and what they hope to learn. Direct participants to complete the Anger Survey or part of it depending on time.

4. Begin subsequent sessions with a review of the previous week's material. Summarize or read the chapter you are covering, and lead a discussion of the questions. Share your own situations and feelings to provide a role model for group members.

5. Explore how to apply the coping skills, principles, and new concepts to specific situations people share. Ask: How can you personally apply this principle, technique, or concept to one of your situations/triggers this week?

6. Conclude each session by discussing the questions provided. Then review any upcoming assignments.

7. As a group facilitator be aware of the responsibility to report to authorities/family any revelation that indicates someone intends to harm himself or herself or others. Encourage that person to get professional counseling immediately.

1

ANGER SURVEY AND PROGRESS REPORT

Please answer the following questions as accurately and as completely as possible.

1. How often do you get angry? (Circle one that applies)

- (a) daily.
- (b) many times a day.
- (c) a few times a month.
- (d) several times a week.
- (e) very rarely.

2. What happens when you get angry? (Circle all that apply): *I tend to:*

- (a) feel tense.
- (b) withdraw.
- (c) exercise.
- (d) feel sick.
- (e) overeat.
- (f) distract myself.

Evaluate your angry response using the steps from the Handling Anger Effectively chapter, and apply your situations to the model given.

Log Your Anger:

Write down the situations when you get angry, and rate them:

1. When did you last feel angry?
2. What happened and with whom?
3. What were you thinking when this occurred?

ANGER MANAGEMENT PROGRESS REPORT:*

Week _____:

1. Anger Survey results (circle one):

Category I Category II Category III

2. Identify triggers:

3. Identify present coping skill use:

2

ANGER'S MANY FACES

Anger, though potentially harmful, can be transformed into a positive force accomplishing great good in our lives.

Ted Griffin and Lynette Hoy

Lynette's Story

I can remember the day one of my sisters came home with a suspension slip for throwing an orange in the lunchroom. My father dragged her upstairs to the attic. There were loud noises, yelling, and crying. She limped down the stairs, bloody and bruised.

I can remember the beatings in the basement with a board, my father's rage, the pain and the fear.

I can remember experiencing a "cold shoulder" for days when I would disappoint someone in my family.

I can remember my husband and I up in the attic of our secondstory rented flat, two weeks after our daughter was born, screaming at each other and throwing things. I don't remember what caused the anger or why it hurt so much. But I experienced anger's pain, inner wounds, and loneliness.

I learned that anger was something to be feared, that it was cruel, loud, cold, silent, resentful, and threatening.

Ted's Story

I have long feared anger-my father's and my own. My dad, an alcoholic who's drinking kept him from connecting with his family, had a quiet anger. He didn't beat us or yell at us for hours-he just sort of ignored us. My anger-which was really years' worth of bitterness toward Dad-became violent, abusive and dangerous, especially after my father died and I couldn't express my anger to the one I was really mad at because he wasn't around anymore.

Looking back, I am ashamed of many of the things I said and did at that stage of my life. And I thank God for helping me forgive my father and learn how to be kind to my family-a family I almost lost because of my rage. Not all anger is wrong, but when it's like mine was, only God can keep the individual and his family from going over the cliff. The journey hasn't been easy or quick, but God has sustained me every step of the way, and He continues to do so. Not everyone turns to faith to deal with their anger, but that is what made the difference in my life.

All of us have experienced anger. Some of us have cringed under the rage in our families, struggled with it in our souls, felt it toward our friends and loved ones. Some of us have shocked others with volcanoes of anger.

But anger is not just a personal enemy. The evidence abounds that we live in a mad, mad, mad world. Statistics from American Demographics tell us:

- 23% of Americans admit they openly express their anger.
- 39% say they hold it in or hide it.

- 23% say they walk away from the situation.
- 23% confess to having hit someone in anger.
- 17% admit they have destroyed the property of someone who made them mad.

We want to demonstrate to you that anger, though potentially harmful, is a complex emotion we can come to understand and a positive force that can accomplish great good in our lives.

What Is Anger?

When you think about anger, what words or pictures come to mind? Frustration? Rage? Anger can be defined as an aversive state ranging from annoyance to rage. Webster's says, "Anger is a strong feeling of displeasure and antagonism, indignation or an automatic reaction to any real or imagined insult, frustration, or injustice, producing emotional agitation seeking expression."

Let's look at the problem of anger in our society. Anger's effects are evident. There is rampant violence in schools, families, and neighborhoods. For example:

- Severe violence is a chronic feature of 13% of all marriages and generally 35 violent incidents occur before any type of report is made.
- Every twenty-five seconds someone is a victim of a violent crime such as murder, robbery, assault, or rape.
- Nearly a million children are abused by their parents annually.
- Adolescents represent 12% of the population but account for 39% of all violent crime.

Anger is one of the most troubling emotions! We sometimes hear blatant admonishments such as "we shouldn't ever be angry." So what happens to our anger? We end up feeling guilty for being angry, or we pretend we're not angry, or we numb our feelings or turn our anger into depression.

How do you feel when you're

Foundational Insights:

Anger is an energy or force which is often harmful. Anger is caused

Questions for Thought

1. Do you agree or disagree with the Foundational Insights?
2. What do these statements teach about the underlying motivations for anger?
3. How does this change or help
4. Do you ever get angry? What kinds of situations most often make you feel angry?

5. How do you really feel about your own anger? Do you see it as a friend you can trust or a foe that might destroy you? Why?

6. Why is it so hard to

What are you afraid might happen if you are honest or transparent about this?

What can you do to

7. How would your life be different if you were to respond to anger in a healthy way?

What would need to

3

THE POWER OF ANGER

*Anger is a great force. If you control it - it can be transmuted
into a power which can move the whole world.*

William Shenstone

Anger can actually be helpful. Anger is like a warning signal alerting you that something is wrong. It can provide the energy

Anger helps you overcome the fear of asserting your needs and facing conflict..

And yes, anger can be harmful. As someone has wisely stated, "A man is never in worse company than when he flies into a rage and is beside himself." As Will Rogers quipped, "People who fly into a rage always make a bad landing."

William Blake wrote:

Unexpressed anger is not only harmful to you physically, but it plays havoc on your emotions and your spirituality. When you don't talk about your anger and the issue that upsets you, you are

Harmful anger costs you too much physically. It yields the largest increases in heart rate and blood pressure of all emotional reactions. Anger results in

Signs indicating when anger is a problem:

Questions for Application

1. What is your perception of anger? Is it always wrong?
 2. How did you experience anger in your family of origin?
Was it expressed in a healthy or unhealthy way?
 3. In what kinds of
-

When Anger Wakes Up

To help you understand why it is hard to shake anger after it wakes up, you need to learn the physiological mechanism involved in anger arousal: When you perceive a threat or provocation, your internal fight/flight response is alerted. Within _____ your breathing and heart rate increases. Then a hormonal surge kicks in that lasts

Your long-term anger response can be

Who's responsible for your anger?

Anger Triggers

Factors that predispose anger arousal in individuals include the following:

Aversive bodily states actually
all lower the threshold
of reactivity to an event that can precipitate anger.
can actually contribute to
aggression.

Another common bias is:

Irrational Beliefs

While biases affect how input is weighed, generalized beliefs that you may hold will see provoking input even when there is no intentional provocation. You may think that people must or should act in a certain way and when they fail to meet these standards, you get angry. (McKay et al., 1988)

Common anger-inducing beliefs include:

-

The important aspect about irrational beliefs is that

Impulsivity

Skill deficits

Substance use:

What is involved at the level of thought when anger goes bad?

Foundational Insights:

Anger is a response to

What Happens in the Process of Anger?

Questions for Thought

1. When have you been angry and discovered later there was no legitimate reason for your response?

Dr. Paul Hauck outlines six levels of thought people move through in getting angry:

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Lynette J. Hoy is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor in the state of Illinois, a National Certified Counselor and a credentialed Anger Management Specialist-1V, Diplomate, Supervisor and Consultant with the National Anger Management Association. Mrs. Hoy is also a Board Certified Professional Christian Counselor, a crisis counselor and domestic violence advocate. Lynette has counseled and trained hundreds of clients, couples, and students in anger management. She has trained and certified hundreds of counselors, professionals, and leaders in anger management. Lynette presents various classes, workshops, and marriage seminars. She and her husband David have been married forty years and have one married daughter. Lynette's experience of growing up in an abusive home and then counseling clients struggling with anger has provided the motivation for writing the *What's Good About Anger?* books, various anger management articles, workbooks, and training manuals. Lynette's faith in God gave her a foundation for loving and forgiving her father.

Ted Griffin worked as Senior Editor of Crossway Books, a division of Good News Publishers, for thirty years and is currently retired. He has authored numerous gospel tracts, including the best-selling *You're Special*, and is working on several books. He is a mentor, small group facilitator, and adult Sunday school teacher at Calvary Memorial Church in Oak Park, Illinois. He and his wife, Lois, have been married for over 40 years and have two grown children and five grandchildren. Having grown up under an alcoholic father, he has personally struggled with and has extensively studied anger issues.

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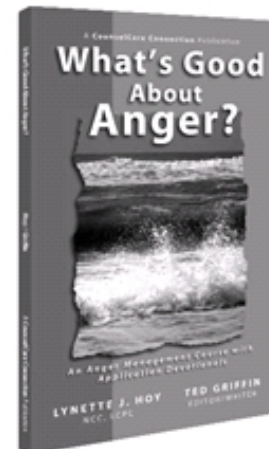
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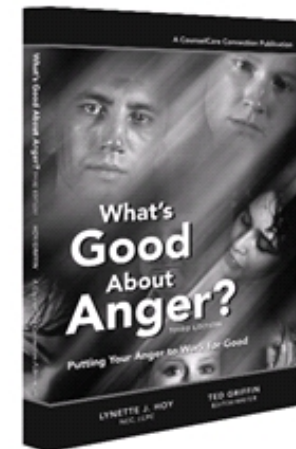
Lynette Hoy and Ted Griffin

1. What's Good About Anger? first edition - for Christians and those seeking a faith-based approach to anger. Look for the expanded faith edition coming soon.

2. What's Good About Anger? third edition - *Putting Your Anger to Work for Good*. (for a general readership)



First Edition



Third Edition

3. Anger management certificate courses for individuals needing personal growth or who are required to fulfill court or employer orders for anger management.

4. Anger Management Trainer Certificate Courses and live Workshops: Intermediate and Advanced home-study courses for counselors, law enforcement or probation officers, educators, professionals, lay leaders and group facilitators. Faith and Community models. Includes adult and adolescent curriculum, assessment tools, power point presentation, DVDs, leader's guides.

5. What's Good About Anger? DVD with Lynette Hoy and Steve Yeschek, Anger Management Specialists.

Visit the Anger Management Institute site for resources and the shopping mall at www.whatsgoodaboutanger.com for ordering information. Contact Lynette Hoy at 630.368.1880, ext. 1 or counselor@hoyweb.com.