



## ANGER

Anger is one of the more challenging emotions given to us by God. Feelings of anger usually signal to us that there is something wrong in or around us. When anger raises its flag, it's usually a good idea to pay attention and deal with the problem.

**When was the last time you observed someone with an anger problem?** More often than not, people with anger problems are not aware of their anger. They deny their anger, or they will blame their problems on something or someone who "made them angry."

But people who have anger issues are not bad people. They usually have difficulty dealing with frustration. The angry words, behavior, or looks they give you are ways to let you know they are unhappy. Many people use anger to keep people at a distance. Why? Because underneath anger is a whole host of emotions that are more difficult to own, communicate, and deal with. **Think about a time in your life when you were full of anger. Underneath your anger, which of these feelings were you having?**

fear	frustration	anxiety	doubt	loneliness
disappointment	dread	confusion	hurt	sadness
worry	insecure	depressed	lost	grief
inadequacy	unmotivated	apathy	unloved	alone
hatred	bitterness	resentment	rejected	hopeless

**What would happen if we took the time to get to listen and get to know what is underneath the behavior of angry people?** Maybe if we understand them as "**hurting people**" then we may feel and show more compassion instead of judging them or giving them a hard time. More than likely you will discover that hurting people grew up around hurting people who hurt people when they were angry. And they have not yet learned positive ways to communicate their feelings when things are not okay. Maybe you will have some opportunities to help them learn more positive ways to soothe themselves when they are not okay so they don't push you and others away.

But anger problems are not always "out there." We all have some not so good moments when our anger and frustration get the best of us. Maybe we distance people with silence, looks, blame, shame, door slamming, threats, name-calling, or cussing. Sometimes we alienate people around us without even recognizing it. We get consumed by "what's wrong" and lose sight of the bigger picture.

Maybe anger and frustration wouldn't be such a big deal if we all realize these are difficult emotions to deal with and express in positive ways. It may also be helpful to realize that being angry isn't a sin. The Bible encourages us to deal with our anger in a prompt manner. We're encouraged to speak the truth in love. We are encouraged to be ministers of reconciliation instead of holding grudges or building walls between us. In fact, we have plenty of examples in Scripture where we find God Himself demonstrating His anger with people who defied or disobeyed Him.

So let's take a few minutes to identify some anger we are experiencing in or between us...

- **When was the last time you were angry with someone in our group?**
- **How did you handle it?**
- **What do you need when you're angry or hurting?**
- **What's the worst thing people around you can do when you're angry or hurting?**
- **What helps diffuse anger when people around you are blowing up?**

**"Health Talks"** are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.