

# Anger

## What is it and How Can We Change?

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### The Christian And Anger: Ephesians 4:26, 31

Anger Can Be Appropriate and Right (v.26).

*Anger is energy aroused in defense of something good and released against something evil.*

Anger is Usually Tainted with Sin (vv. 26, 31).

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### Ephesians 4:31

Get rid of all bitterness, rage, and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

**Clamming Up: Internal**

- Bitterness (pikria): smoldering resentment.
- Malice (kakia): wishing ill will and probably plotting evil against someone.
- Anger (orge): settled and sullen hostility.

**Blowing Up: External**

- Rage (thymos): losing your temper.
- Brawling (krauge): raising voices in a quarrel, shouting, even screaming.
- Slander (blasphemia): speaking evil of others, especially behind their backs, and so defaming and even destroying their reputation.

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Indeed, anger is the most seductive of the negative emotions; the self-righteous inner monologue that propels it along fills the mind with the most convincing arguments for venting rage. Unlike sadness, anger is energizing, even exhilarating.

Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, pp. 59-60.

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### Anger Emotion Family

outrage, resentment, wrath, exasperation, indignation, vexation, acrimony, animosity, annoyance, irritability, hostility, aggravated, appalled, enraged, incensed, offended, disgusted, infuriated, repulsed, steamed, bitter, dismayed frustrated, revolted, troubled, cranky, horrified, furious, ticked off, upset, riled, nauseated, hostile, provoked, wary, vicious...

and, perhaps at the extreme, pathological hatred and violence.

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### The Goal: Anger and Wisdom



Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—that is not easy.

Aristotle, *The Nichomachean Ethics*

Pay attention to this. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry.

James 1:19

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### I. Anger and Your Body



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### Let's Start with Emotions What Are They?

- "A shift in our state of integration in the mind"
- A word about what I refer to under the rubric *emotion*, a term whose precise meaning psychologists and philosophers have quibbled over for more than a century. In its most literal sense, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines emotion as "any agitation or disturbance of mind, feeling, passion: any vehement or excited mental state." I take *emotion* to refer to a feeling and its distinctive thoughts, psychological and biological states, and range of propensities to act. There are hundreds of emotions, along with their blends, variations, mutations, and nuances. Indeed, there are many more subtleties of emotion than we have words for.

*Dan Goleman, Emotional Intelligence (p 289)*

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### Another Definition

All emotions are, in essence, **impulses to act**, the instant plans for handling life that evolution has instilled in us. The very root of the word *emotion* is *motere*, the Latin verb "to move," plus the prefix "e-" to connote "move away," suggesting that a tendency to act is implicit in every emotion.

Dan Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (p 6)

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## Your Brain: Where Emotions are Made

- Weighs roughly 3 lbs.
- Consists of millions of individual nerve cells or neurons plus millions of additional cells known as glia which are all connected via microscopic points of contact into a vast network of interlinking circuits and sub-circuits.
- Consumes 25% of energy intake and a steady 25 watts of power.
- Is responsible for our thoughts, mood, emotions and intelligence, as well as our physical movement, breathing, heart rate and sleep.
- Makes us who we are and facilitates almost every aspect of what it means to be alive.
- Neuroscientists have the daunting task of trying to understand how all these billions of neurons in the brain and nervous system work.

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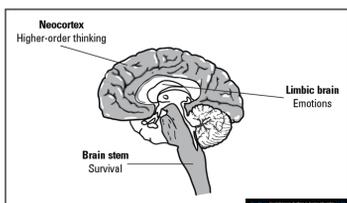
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### The Three Main Regions of the Brain and Their Function




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## Two Minds: The Emotional Brain and the Rational Brain

The Limbic Region: Feelings // The Frontal Cortex: Thinking

These two minds, the emotional and the rational, operate in tight harmony for the most part, intertwining their very different ways of knowing to guide us through the world. Ordinarily there is a balance between emotional and rational minds, with emotion feeding into and informing the operations of the rational mind, and the rational mind refining and sometimes vetoing the inputs of the emotions. Still, the emotional and rational minds are semi-independent faculties, each reflecting the operation of distinct, but interconnected, circuitry in the brain.

Dan Goleman, Emotional Intelligence (p 9)

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### The Emotional Brain and the Rational Brain

• **Emotional Mind:** Quick Pathway. Immediate perception: *We are feeling before we are thinking.* The emotional mind is quicker than the rational mind due to survival. This quick response can sometimes lead to wrong decisions.

• **Rational Mind:** Slower Pathway. Reflective Thought: *Sometimes we are pondering before we are feeling.* "That person just cut me off in traffic!" "This baby is adorable."

• The Past Imposed on the Present: Trauma and Triggers (Chapter 13).

Dan Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (pp 291-296)

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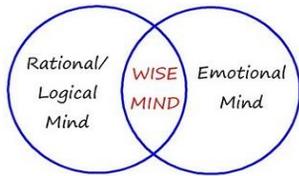
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### The Nervous System Plus Neuro-chemicals

Oxytocin: social behavior, increasing trust and generosity, touch, cuddle hormone, reduces fear

Serotonin: mood regulation, appetite, memory, sleep and learning, dampens irritability

Dopamine: excitement, pleasure, risk taking, our feelings of motivation, reward and attention

Estrogen: softness, receptivity  
Testosterone: aggressiveness

Noradrenaline: primes body for action elevates heart rate to increase blood supply to muscles; triggers release of glucose from energy stores

Cortisol: flight-or-flight response

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# The Importance of Slowing Things Down

-  Emotional Intelligence (EQ)
-  Diffuse Physiological Arousal or "Flooding"
-  The 30 minute Rule

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## II. Anger and the Heart



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The train of angry thoughts that stokes anger is also potentially the key to one of the most powerful ways to defuse anger: undermining the convictions that are fueling the anger in the first place. The longer we ruminate about what has made us angry, the more "good reasons" and self-justification for being angry we can invent. Brooding fuels anger's flames. But seeing things differently douses those flames. Diane Tice found that reframing a situation more positively was one of the most potent ways to put anger to rest.

Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*, pp. 59-60.

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**Getting Below the Surface of Anger**

*What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but you don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not ask God. When you do ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

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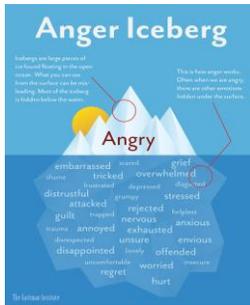
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Getting Below the Surface: Not Always Sin but Also Suffering



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**The Gospel and Anger**

*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the Spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."*

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James 4:7-10

**Engaging in Deep Repentance: Getting Rescued From Yourself!**

*Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*

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James 4:11-12

**Love: Others Getting Rescued From You!**

Brothers, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against his brother or judges him speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgement on it. There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?

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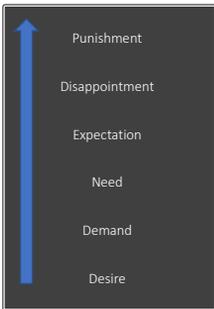
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Warn—Encourage—Help  
I Thessalonians 5:14

Seek to Serve: vv. 11-12

Other Awareness: I Peter 3:7

Gospel Repentance: vv. 4-10

Self-Awareness: vv. 1-3




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