

# **FREEDOM FROM ANGER**

## Men's groups and women's groups

### Recognizing the Problem

Every person has a "Pattern of Toxic Behavior" that can significantly damage the important and intimate relationships in his or her life.

Anger is one of our ten (10) basic, God-given, emotions. This emotion can be constructive or destructive, depending upon our response. The focus of this group is on giving Jesus a nano-second (just one billionth of a second!) to help us use all of our emotions according to God's design, for our lives, and to appropriately change our pattern of relating to others and our responsibilities.

When most of us think of an angry person we think of someone who destroys themselves and their relationships through uncontrollable outbursts of rage. We usually picture someone who goes around slamming doors, yelling loudly, and making life miserable for everyone, including themselves. Yet this is only one part of anger, as anger has many faces. Equally as damaging and destructive is anger that is suppressed, or "stuffed," as it will only continue to destructively influence our behaviors and attitudes. Ultimately, even suppressed anger erupts from deep within the heart.

Recognizing and accepting responsibility for toxic patterns of behavior is the first hurdle to overcome as one runs the race toward true freedom from anger. Walking through the recovery process with Jesus Christ as our Higher Power allows us to admit our powerlessness to control our anger, as well as trust that He will help us to overcome our destructive habits.

Breaking the old patterns that have kept us locked into destructive behavior takes time. What took years to bring about will take some time to change. But with Jesus Christ as our Higher Power, and the willingness to allow Him to change our life, real freedom from anger is possible!

Take a few minutes and complete a simple questionnaire. It may reveal more about your anger than you realize. It may also be the beginning of the healing that you're looking for!

## ANGER SELF EVALUATION

The following inventory can help you in the recognition process as you seek to determine whether your anger is reaching a destructive level in your life.

- I become impatient easily when things do not go according to my plan.
- I tend to have critical thoughts toward others who don't agree with my opinions.
- When I am displeased with someone I may shut down any communication with them or withdraw entirely.
- I get annoyed easily when friends and family do not appear sensitive to my needs.
- I feel frustrated when I see someone else having an "easier" time than me.
- Whenever I am responsible for planning an important event, I am preoccupied with how I must manage it.
- When talking about a controversial topic, the tone of my voice is likely to become louder and more assertive.
- I can accept a person who admits his or her mistakes, but I get irritated easily at those who refuse to admit their weaknesses.
- I do not easily forget when someone "does me wrong."
- When someone confronts me with a misinformed opinion, I am thinking of my comeback even while they are speaking.
- I find myself becoming aggressive even while playing a game for fun.
- I struggle emotionally with the things in life that aren't fair.
- Although I realize that it may not be right, I sometimes blame others for my problems.
- More often than not, I use sarcasm as a way of expressing humor.
- I may act kindly toward others on the outside, yet feel bitter and frustrated on the inside.

If you recognize 4-8 of the above, your anger is probably more constant than you would like. If you identified with 9 or more boxes, there is a strong possibility that you have struggled with periods of anger or rage, whether you are aware of it or not.

(Adapted from "The Anger Workbook," written by Dr. Les Carter and Dr. Frank Minirth)