ANGER, RAGE, AND RESENTMENT

TIMOTHY B. WALSH, Licensed Psychologist; DPA Vice President
MINNESOTA ADULT & TEEN CHALLENGE
Treating Anger, Rage and Resentment
Anger/Rage/Resentment “Minnesota Nice” Style

• https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=4IRB0sxw-YU

AKA “Passive Aggressiveness”
Passive-Aggression

• “Withholds praise, attention or affection. May “forget” or fail to follow through on commitments. Withholds intimacy when upset. Engages in actions known to upset the other person. Chronic lateness”

• W. Robert Nay, PHD (2012). Taking Charge of Anger: 6 Steps to Asserting Yourself without Losing Control
Anger/Rage/Resentment Style: Sarcasm  (adapted from Nay 2012)

- Hidden in “humorous” statements
- Double-edged; Two meanings
- Embarrassing, Invalidating, Disapproving
Anger/Rage/Resentment Style: Cold Anger (ibid, 2012)

- One of the “Four Horseman of the Apocalypse” that destroys relationships (Gottman) NOT THIS
Stonewalling

• Withdrawing from the relationship as a way of avoiding conflict.
• Communication shutdown
• Conveys disapproval, disgust, icy distance, smugness
• Found in men more than women
Stonewalling

What does it look like?

• Stony silence; giving the “silent treatment”
• One word answers
• Changing the subject
• Walking away
• Avoid intimacy
• Refuse to deal with what is wrong

Resentment = extended anger.
Effron & Effron (2011)
Primal Fear and Aggression: cues to anger and rage

**Fight or Flight Response**

- **Saliva flow decreases**
- **Eyes pupils dilate**
- **Skin blood vessels constrict; chills & sweating**
- **Lungs quick, deep breathing occurs**
- **Heart beats faster & harder**
- **Bowel food movement slows down**
- **Stomach output of digestive enzymes decreases**
- **Blood vessels blood pressure increases as major vessels dilate**
- **Muscles become more tense; trembling can occur**
THE BRAIN GOES ON TILT

- EMOTIONAL OVERLOAD
Hostile Anger: What’s it Look Like?
Behavioral Cues

• Acting Stressed out
• Pacing; clenching your fist and jaw
• Staring
• Impatient of others
• Displays impatience and annoyance with others
• Acts like others do not live up to your expectations
Hostility & Contempt

• Criticism with intention
  – deeper, more personal attack on a person’s character or personality

• Includes
  – insults & name-calling
  – hostile humor & mockery
  – body language

• Results in decay of admiration or positive feelings for the other person in the relationship
Contempt: What’s it look like?

- Sneering, Rolling of the Eyes
- Condescending tone of voice
- Curling your upper lip
- Literally looking down on the other person
The Rage Response adapted from Panksepp, 1998 by Walsh

If we feel seriously threatened...
If we become fearful.....

If we feel that we are trapped and can’t escape...

If we want to dominate someone and they challenge our power over them...

If we feel hot, uncomfortable, crowded, hungry and tired....

When we lower our judgment and self-control by using drugs and alcohol....
"The core of the RAGE system runs from medial amygdaloid areas downward, largely via the stria terminalis [a bundle of nerve fibers] to the medial hypothalamus, and from there to specific locations within the PAG [periaqueductal gray] of the midbrain."

Anger/Rage/Resentment Style: Aggression

Behavioral cues

- Raising Voice
- Being Loud
- Using emotionally abusive language
- Aggressive Body Posture e.g. “Stepping up”
- Touching, pushing, blocking, hitting, restraining
Another source of Anger/Rage/Resentment: “wounds” to our Ego

✓ I am entitled; I deserve it
✓ It’s all about me;
✓ You did that on purpose; you did that just to piss me off
✓ I should get what I want; No one should frustrate me; things should go my way
✓ People should meet my expectations; I should be treated fairly at all times
✓ I am important; I should not be ignored; my needs should come first
✓ My efforts should be appreciated; I should be admired
✓ No one should be able to tell me what to do; things should be done my way
✓ I demand respect
✓ I am not the problem; you are the problem
✓ I am unique and special and people should realize that
• Well….enough about me…what do you think of me?
Anger as a defense: it masks other emotions. What was I really feeling?

- Feeling criticized or scolded;
- Feeling deceived or misled;
- Feeling devalued or disregarded;
- Feeling disagreed with;
- Feeling disrespected;
- Feeling ignored;
Anger as a defense: it masks other emotions. What was I really feeling?

- Feeling powerless;
- Feeling rebuffed, spurned rejected
- Feeling slighted;
- Feeling taken advantage of;
- Feeling treated unfairly or falsely accused;
- Feeling unappreciated or unloved;
- Feeling weak, inadequate or incompetent

Robert Puff, PHD and James Seghers, PHD (2014). The Everything Guide to Anger Management: proven techniques to understand and control anger
Another source of Anger/Rage/Resentment: The Negative Power Orientation. Payoffs for anger...

Do you size up everyone you meet?

Do you avoid situations in which you might lose a sense of power?

Is others being kind seen as a weakness for you to take advantage of?

Do you use sex for power and control versus affection and intimacy?

Does your idea of power revolve around money, possessions, being around certain people, and other external things?

Do you use threats to keep relationships?

Do you get "high" dominating others, verbally or physically fighting for something just to win regardless of the issue?
Exhibit 5. The Aggression Cycle

The Aggression Cycle*

**Exploration Phase**
- Violence
- Verbal aggression
- Uncontrollable discharge of tension
- Major destructiveness

**Postexploration Phase**
- Jail
- Termination from program or service
- Financial costs
- Loss of family or loved ones
- Guilt, shame, etc.

**Escalation Phase**
- Denial & minimization of incidents
- Increase in hostile self-talk
- Intimidating body language
- More frequent and intense anger

**Perception of Explosive Outburst**

The Anger Thermometer

Very Angry

Total state of calm

- Explosion
- Violence
- Loss of control
- Negative consequences
- You lose!

You have a choice.

Use your anger control plan to avoid reaching 10.
Managing Your Anger, Rage and Resentments

• Step #1: Acknowledge that you are Angry, Rageful or Resentful; Pay attention to the cues in your body and behavior.
• ➔ Take Responsibility
• Step #2: Stop, Pause, Calm, Reflect
• Step #3: Try to understand the source (Triggers) of your anger, rage, and resentments—what happened outside of you—persons, places, things
Managing Your Anger, Rage and Resentments

• Step #4: Think of a healthy, responsible, and moral way to deal with your anger
• Step #5: Get good counsel on what is the best option (legal, moral, and good)
• Step #6: Take Action!
How we cause our own suffering...

Recurrence/”Looping” aka Rehashing/Rehearsing

The Gerbil on the Wheel
SPIRITUAL PRACTICES WORK!

- Meditation
- Centering Prayer
- Ecstatic Worship & Prayer
- Practicing the Presence of God
- Apophatic Prayer
- Cataphatic Prayer; Imaginal Prayer
- Being Known by God & others (Curt Thompson, MD)
- Recollection; Remembering
- Contemplation; Contemplative Prayer
- Solitude; Stillness
- Fellowship, communion
- “Hidden-ness”
Changes the “Circuits” in your brain so you don’t do the 3 F’s (Emmons, 2010, 2006)
Spirituality and the experience of Peace (Jennings, 2013; 1 Jn 4:18)

Lowers the stress-out chemicals in the brain: epinephrenine and norepinephrine (Newberg, p.56)
Overcoming Addiction & other lesser gods

Meet Your Happy Chemicals

Feeling.....
Bonded
Connected
Loved

Loretta Graziano Breuning, PhD
author of I, Mammal and Beyond Cynical
Overcoming Addiction
(increase “connectivity” to PFC; decrease connectivity to reward/pleasure center)

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<th>LETTING GO (Aversion)</th>
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Helps you to hang on to the good stuff and let go of the bad stuff