

Steps to Take When I Feel Angry –Charity Toward Our Self and Others (including Disciples’ Tools for Addressing Angry or Difficult People)

PRAY: “Lord, help me with my anger. Help me understand what is going on in my heart. I often want to fight anger with anger but I know from my own experience that doing so is unproductive and doesn’t help solve the problem. Help me move from anger to sorrow over the sins of the world.”

- a. Am I afraid?
 - i. Am I in physical danger? Help me to be wise and extricate myself from this person or situation immediately.
 - ii. Is my fear based on my insecurities? Help me to be sure of your love and forgiveness and not let another person’s judgments distract me from your love.
 - iii. Am I afraid to admit my wrongdoing? Give me courage to be humble and truthful and ask, “What may I do to undo the damage that has been done?”
 - iv. Am I being accused of something unjustly? Help me to be patient and find the right time and manner to explain the situation more fully.
 - b. Is my current adversary putting me down, judging or ridiculing me? Let me not give this person power over me and play on my insecurities. Instead make me confident in your Love for Me and trust that his or her anger is more about their fears and insecurities. Remind me that fear and anger most often occur when we forget or negate your love/ forgiveness for us--including our fear of change.
 - c. Am I being taken advantage of? Help me to claim my right to not answer my antagonist’s questions and not to make any agreements until I have more time to examine the situation.
 - d. Is it pride that makes me angry? Help me to see that my life is not about me but always about You. Instill in me the truth that You intend the salvation of the world—a plan that involves me to live according to your will, not mine.
2. State what you OBSERVE about the other person –NOT WHAT YOU HEAR.
- a. “I see that you are very angry and upset. This matter is very important to you. Help me understand what you are going through.”
 - b. Now listen carefully to what the other says. If his or her emotions are still high, respond by sharing what is going on within you. (Next Step)
3. Next state what’s going on within you. Examples:
- a. “When you act this way, I am frightened. Are you aware that you are frightening me? May we address this issue in some other way? Or Take “Time Out.”
 - b. “Your strong emotions bring up feelings of my own angers that are tied to thoughts that you don’t understand me or know me the ways that I thought you did. Or maybe it is I who don’t fully know or understand you. How may we understand one another better without rancor?”

4. Introduce New Levels of Logic: “What do you think is really going on here? Sometimes we think LOVE means that we must do what the other person wants us to do? Isn’t there a better logic than this?” Will praying together help us now – or do we need more discussion first?

5. When Communication Breaks Down: " When I say, “We have a communication problem, “that statement is not a judgment on you. It's a problem to be solved." What logic do you use to maintain that saying this becomes an accusation against you? Do you not believe that every human being needs to work on improving his or her communication skills without thinking that they are a loser or something worse? There's a wonderful saying. " Perfection is the enemy of the good." Only God. is perfect. Let’s acknowledge our imperfections and work on addressing your feelings and mine with patience and charity.”

6. Keep in mind this response: "There's a certain way of thinking, a kind of logic that you hold on to that causes you great pain and anxiety. It also brings heartache to all who Love you. If you are to ever have the peace you need and want, you must seek different ways of thinking so you can love yourself. We all need to love ourselves because we are Children of God. Life is about learning to accept Love as it is offered, not as we think it is supposed to be offered. Therefore, HOPE is a matter of lowered expectations as far as people are concerned. You must change your way of thinking if you ever want to be happy. I can’t do that for you. But I know this: As you learn to be kinder to yourself, you'll find yourself more patient and kind toward me and to others. Meanwhile, I’m going for a walk because I have great difficulty with the ways you express anger. (And I don’t want to treat you the way you’ve treated me.”)

7. Here's another one: " I understand that you are very angry. And, of course, this is an important issue. If I have done something wrong, I am willing to take responsibility for it. But, remember, Jesus says "Stop condemning! Stop Judging!" because these responses prevent us from solving our problems. So, ask yourself “Do I want help extracting myself from the blaming game, or not?” There are more productive ways to deal with our hurts and fears and angers. Shall we explore these together or do you need to do this on your own? At some point, I trust we will be able to work together to solve this problem.

REMEMBER: THESE ARE TOOLS –NOT GUARANTEES inspired by Jesus is teaching “Love your enemies” and “Turn the other cheek.” We now interpret these instructions to mean that we are not to let others take our God-given self-worth and dignity from us. Standing firm in God’s constant love/forgiveness for us, we remind our adversaries of our common humanity. Jesus does not want us to accept their abuse. Luke 6: 27 ff **If you just need to VENT –Pray Psalm 109**