

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

(OR HOW TO DISAGREE AND NO ONE GETS HURT)



I. WHAT IS ANGER?

- A. The dictionary defines anger as "a strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility" toward something or someone that hurts, opposes, offends, or annoys."
- B. According to psychological research, anger derives from one or both of the following internal fears:
 1. control- Internal fear occurs when one feels the loss of control or the desire to have more control. The desire to make ones own decisions and to lead their life as they choose is in all of us. When that control is threatened or taken away, the fear of feeling low self esteem takes over and comes out as anger. When two people conflict over who gets to make a certain decision or control over a situation then, one or both may feel they could lose their ability to control the situation, then anger erupts.



Example: Two are in the kitchen getting a root beer float. The bigger one takes all the ice cream, leaving the smaller one out of control and angry because he can't force the larger one to give it to him or share the ice cream.

2. approval- Internal fear occurs when one desires the need for approval and doesn't get it. This internal fear then comes out as anger in order to overcome the risk of feeling low self esteem.



Example: A wife is at home all day with the kids and has worked hard to take care of them, clean the house, and cook supper. The husband comes home and doesn't acknowledge what all she has been doing. The wife erupts in anger or suppresses her anger because the husband didn't give her the approval she needed.

II. IS IT OK TO BE ANGRY ACCORDING TO GOD?

- A. In John 2:13-16, Jesus was angry over the way people were defiling the temple of God. He took the time to make a whip and then proceeded to throw them out. He never hurt one of them, but drove them out and stood up for his convictions.
- B. According to Scripture it is ok to be angry, but there are some guidelines as to how we allow it to affect us. In Ephesians 4:26 it says, "*Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.*"
- C. In Proverbs 15:18 it says, "*A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel.*"
- D. In Proverbs 22:24 it says, "*Do not make friends with a hot-tempered man, do not associate with one easily angered, or you may learn his ways and get yourself ensnared.*"



III. IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET ALONG WITH OTHERS?

Yes! But the key is understanding that we are all individuals and we all have different backgrounds, cultures, childhoods, and meaningful circumstances like deaths, births, financial, and health issues that have affected us.



We must accept each others differences and attempt to understand where the other is coming from.

IV. HOW DO WE KEEP ANGER FROM AFFECTING US?

- Count to ten before you say or do anything.
- Step back and create some distance.
- Take a few deep, slow breaths.
- Remember that you want to act on your own values, not someone else's values. Show a Christian attitude especially if they are lost, so that you might win them to Christ.
- Be prepared for the words and actions that may be coming.
- Admit your anger and leave if you cannot calm down. You might say, "I'm too angry now to talk with you." But, make sure the quarrel is settled before sundown so that it doesn't fester.



- Admit to the other person who is angry that you have had similar feelings or behaviors at other times. You might say, "You know, I've done stuff like that myself..."
- Think of some part of the problem you can admit to like "I shouldn't have spoken to you that way".
- Show you expect that a positive outcome can be reached. "I know you didn't mean to do that, but..."
- Be respectful, even if the other person isn't.
- Suggest a mediator if you can't get the problem resolved such as your Pastor, Sunday School Teacher, or friend. Avoid family members as this may set your family up for future hard feelings.

