

FREEDOM FROM RAGE

A. What is Rage?

1. Rage is defined as excessive anger that tends to be destructive and can often be violent. It's explosive and unproductive and typically occurs when unprocessed emotions like anger, jealousy, pride and feelings of inferiority are allowed to build over time. Rage occurs when an individual has been pushed to the point where they cease to care about the repercussions of their actions.

Rage can be physically violent. It can cause someone to physically attack another person.

B. What is Anger?

1. Anger is a normal emotion experienced by everyone, even children and babies. Anger is a feeling a person experiences when they have been wronged. It is appropriate to express anger in a proper way. It is not a sin to be angry. Anger and rage are two separate emotions. Anger can be constructive; rage tends to be destructive.

2. Ephesians 4:26-27 "Be angry, but do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger..."

3. Ecclesiastes 7:9 "Be not hasty in the spirit to be angry; for anger resteth in the bosom of fools".

4. Psalm 7:11 "...God is angry with the wicked every day..."

C. Is Anger Good or Bad?

1. It all depends. There are times when anger is incorrectly associated with trivial matters. There are also times when it is associated with legitimate concerns, but is managed incorrectly. Balance is found when anger is linked to a reasonable issue and is communicated in a proper manner.

D. Emotions That Create Anger and Rage

1. Pride – an emotion that accompanies all inappropriate forms of anger.

(a) It is part of our inborn sinful nature – Adam and Eve succumbed to the sin of pride.

(b) Proverbs 16:18 "Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall".

(c) Proverbs 13:10 "Where there is strife, there is pride..."

(d) James 4:6 "God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble

2. Jealousy – feeling resentment for another's possessions, position, or efforts on their part to take what belongs to you (adultery).

- (a) Proverbs 6:34 “Jealousy makes a man rage; he’ll show no mercy on his day of revenge”.
- (b) Proverbs 14:30 “A peaceful mind gives life to the body, but jealousy rots the bones”.
- (c) Proverbs 27:4 “Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who is able to stand before envy”.
- (d) James 3:16 “...For where jealousy exist...there will be disorder and every vile practice.”
- (e) Song of Solomon 8:6 “...Jealousy is as cruel as the grave...”.

3. Inferiority Feelings – Feelings of little importance, value or merit when compared to others. When you compare yourself to others, you either feel pride, insecurity or jealousy.

- (a) 2 Corinthians 10:12 “For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves; but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves is not wise”.

E. Domestic Violence and Statistics

1. This is an example of rage where one person inflicts harm, physically, emotionally, sexually or psychologically on another. The discovery of infidelity by a marriage partner is cause for rage as a natural response to jealousy.

In America, there are between 960,000 and 3 million incidences of domestic violence reported every year. Nationally, nearly 20 people per minute are physically abused by their partners.

2. Proverbs 22:24 NIV “Don’t make friends with a hot-tempered man; do not associate with one easily angered”.

3. Proverbs 15:18 “A hot-tempered man stirs up dissension, but a patient man calms a quarrel”.

F Road Rage

1. Road rage is violent anger caused by the stress and frustration involved in driving a car in difficult conditions. It is also defined as a driver committing offenses that endanger other people or properties. Road rage is the extreme of aggressive driving, when behavior turns angry and violent.

2. Examples of Road Rage
 - (a) Cursing and rude gestures
 - (b) Throwing objects
 - (c) Ramming
 - (d) Sideswiping]
 - (e) Forcing a driver off the road
3. Psychological factors
 - (a) Displaced anger
 - (b) High life stress

G Managing Anger Before It Turns to Rage

1. Suppressing – not expressing your anger does nothing to eliminate it. It does not go away on its' own.
2. Exceptions: Avoidance and Escape
 - (a) Avoidance refers to anticipating problems and intentionally not joining in with people or situations that where you're likely to become angry. Escape refers to removing yourself from situations after problems have started, and you notice that your anger is building.
3. Open Aggression
 - (a) This category of anger includes explosiveness, rage, intimidation, blame, bickering, criticism and sarcasm. Open aggression arises from a focus that strongly emphasizes personal needs where there is a powerful insensitivity to the needs of others. Foul play is almost inevitable. People in this category are blunt and forceful and loud when anyone does anything to cross them or frustrate them. They have unwavering viewpoints which they repeat over and over again.
4. Passive Aggression
 - (a) Anger expressed through passive aggression involves preserving personal worth, needs and convictions at someone else's expense. It differs then open aggression since it is accomplished in a quieter manner.
 - (b) A passive aggressive person thinks when they are frustrated, they will become silent because they know it bothers other people.
 - (c) They are prone to sulk and pout
 - (d) When someone asks if they are angry, they lie and say that everything is fine. They complain about people behind their back, but refuse to be open with them face to face.

(e) This sly form of angry tends to keep this person in the driver's seat.

5. Assertive Anger

(a) This is defined as preserving personal worth, needs and convictions while considering the needs and feelings of others. True assertiveness is not abrasive, nor is it meant to harm. Consider again Ephesians 4:26 "Be angry, and sin not".

(b) Ephesians 4:15 "Speak the truth in love". There are times when it is healthy to express one's concerns about personal worth, needs and convictions. We should feel free to do this, not forgetting the needs and feelings of others and do it with love.

(c) Be aware that one's tone of voice can help create an atmosphere of respect for others

(d) Make sure the issues you address are not trivial. Instead, expend your emotional energy on things that matter.