



Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

Wednesday Small Group (via ZOOM!)

Anger and Rage

Starr King Unitarian Universalist Church, Hayward, CA, 24 March 2021, 1:30 PM

CHALICE LIGHTING

0.5 min

May I be no one's enemy and may I be the friend of that which is eternal and abides. May I wish for every person's happiness and envy none. May I never rejoice in the ill fortune of one who has wronged me. May I, to the extent of my power, give needful help to all who are in want. May I never fail a friend. May I respect myself. May I always keep tame that which rages within me. May I accustom myself to be gentle and never be angry with others because of circumstances. May I know good people and follow in their footsteps.
Eusebius

SONG: The angels rejoiced (by the Louvin Brothers, performed by Nicolette Larson and Anthony Crawford)

2.25 min

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1i66YpYgV0>

OPENING WORDS

1 min

Anger is an essential part of being human. People are taught to deny themselves anger, and in this, they are actually opening themselves up to hate. The more you deny yourself the freedom to be angry, the more you will hate. Let yourself be angry, and hate will disintegrate, and when hate disintegrates, forgiveness prevails! The more you deny that you are angry, in attempts to be "holy" the more inhuman you will become, and the more inhuman you will become, the harder it will be to forgive.
C. JoyBell C.

MEDITATION / CENTERING

2 min

The first sound of the gong brings us to silence. Please take time to center yourself, and temporarily push aside whatever might be preventing you from participating fully in tonight's session. The second sound of the gong returns us to each other's presence.

CHECK-IN (2 ROUNDS)

40 min

Please share some thing(s) about your life since last we met.

INTRODUCTORY CONSIDERATIONS

5 min

From the Therapy in London website

Anger is a constructive emotion, telling you that something isn't right and that you need to change or confront an area of your life that you are not happy with. Anger is a positive, controlled and life-affirming response to a

situation, both emotionally and cognitively led. It allows you to assert yourself whilst establishing what you need and want in that moment. On the other hand, rage is an unyielding, explosive, and uncontrollable response to a situation. Rage is all the emotion, suppressed and built up inside of us, whether that is anger, frustration or sadness that we have been harbouring for however long. It does not respond to any emotional or cognitive response.

From the website of the College of Allied Educators:

Anger is an emotional state of aggression and hostility towards someone or something. Rage, best described as a fit of violent anger and fury, is the most extreme expression of anger. Anger can actually be good and lead to positive outcomes, either by acting as a motivator to perform and succeed or acting as a means to overcome some personal difficulties.

Rage is excessive anger that is often violent. It can drive one to physically attack another person, throw objects or destroy property, or to hurt other people emotionally. Some people have described it as “seeing red,” where conscious decision making goes out the window, and actions cannot be controlled. What exactly triggers rage is specific to the individual. Each person has a trigger that can lead to anger and rage.

Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED)

From the Cleveland Clinic: IED is a lesser-known mental disorder marked by episodes of unwarranted anger, where the behavioral outbursts are out of proportion to the situation. It is estimated that between 1 and 7% of individuals will develop IED during their lifetime. It usually begins in the early teens, but is seen in children as young as 6, and is most common in people under the age of 40. It is thought that IED is a long-term condition, lasting from 12 years to even a lifetime.

While the cause of IED is unknown, contributing factors include genetics (occurs in families), being exposed to verbal and physical abuse in childhood, brain chemistry (varying levels of serotonin), having experienced one or more traumatic events in childhood, and a history of mental health disorders. Nearly 82 percent of those with IED have also had depression, anxiety or substance abuse disorder

To be diagnosed with IED an individual must display a failure to control aggressive impulses, as defined by either of the following: (1) Verbal aggression (temper tantrums, verbal arguments or fights) or physical aggression toward property, animals or individuals, occurring twice weekly, on average, for a period of 3 months. This aggression does not result in physical harm to individuals or animals or destruction of property. (2) Three episodes involving damage or destruction of property and/or physical assault involving physical injury against animals or other individuals occurring within a 12-month period. IED is best treated by a combination of cognitive behavioral therapy medications.

SONG: Masters of War (written by Bob Dylan, performed by the Staple Singers)

5 min

<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0h5gjO6cOA>>

QUOTES ABOUT ANGER AND RAGE

10 min

Anybody can become angry — that is easy, but to be angry with the right person and to the right degree and at the right time and for the right purpose, and in the right way — that is not within everybody's power and is not easy.

Aristotle

I am awfully greedy; I want everything from life. I want to be a woman and to be a man, to have many friends and to have loneliness, to work much and write good books, to travel and enjoy myself, to be selfish and to be unselfish... You see, it is difficult to get all which I want. And then when I do not succeed I get mad with anger.

Simone de Beauvoir

Bitterness is like cancer. It eats upon the host. But anger is like fire. It burns it all clean.

Maya Angelou

The worst-tempered people I've ever met were people who knew they were wrong.

Wilson Mizner

The most savage controversies are those about matters as to which there is no good evidence either way.

Bertrand Russell

Anger is a great force. If you control it, it can be transmuted into a power which can move the whole world.

William Shenstone

Take no revenge that you have not pondered beneath a starry sky, or on a canyon overlook, or to the lapping of waves and the mewling of a distant gull.

Robert Brault

Nobody makes you angry by speaking the truth; only you decided to use anger as a response.

Anonymous

Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret.

Ambrose Bierce

Temper tantrums, however, the fun they may be to throw, rarely solve whatever problem is causing them.

Lemony Snicket

Only when a mosquito lands on your testicles, you will truly learn that there is always a way to solve problems without using anger and violence.

Confucius

Anger is like flowing water; there's nothing wrong with it as long as you let it flow. Hate is like stagnant water; anger that you denied yourself the freedom to feel, the freedom to flow; water that you gathered in one place and left to forget. Stagnant water becomes dirty, stinky, disease-ridden, poisonous, deadly; that is your hate. On flowing water travels little paper boats; paper boats of forgiveness. Allow yourself to feel anger, allow your waters to flow, along with all the paper boats of forgiveness. Be human.

C. JoyBell C.

Usually when people are sad, they don't do anything. They just cry over their condition. But when they get angry, they bring about a change.

Malcolm X

It is wise to direct your anger towards problems--not people; to focus your energies on answers--not excuses.

William Arthur Ward

Declare your jihad on thirteen enemies you cannot see--egoism, arrogance, conceit, selfishness, greed, lust, intolerance, anger, lying, cheating, gossiping and slandering. If you can master and destroy them, then you will be ready to fight the enemy you can see.

Al-Ghazzali

Transformation is my favorite game and in my experience, anger and frustration are the result of you not being authentic somewhere in your life or with someone in your life. Being fake about anything creates a block inside of you. Life can't work for you if you don't show up as you.

Jason Mraz

Conquer the angry one by not getting angry; conquer the wicked by goodness; conquer the stingy by generosity, and the liar by speaking the truth.

Siddhārtha Gautama

Guilt is not a response to anger; it is a response to one's own actions or lack of action. If it leads to change then it can be useful, since it is then no longer guilt but the beginning of knowledge. Yet all too often, guilt is just another name for impotence, for defensiveness destructive of communication; it becomes a device to protect ignorance and the continuation of things the way they are, the ultimate protection for changelessness.

Audre Lorde

I am convinced that the jealous, the angry, the bitter and the egotistical are the first to race to the top of mountains. A confident person enjoys the journey, the people they meet along the way, and sees life not as a competition. They reach the summit last because they know God isn't at the top waiting for them. He is down below helping his followers to understand that the view is glorious where ever you stand.

Shannon Alder

Sometimes I just want to go in a room and break things and scream. Like, it's so much pressure all the time and if you get upset or angry, people say, 'Are you on the rag of something?' And it's like I want to say, 'No. I'm just pissed off right now. Can't I just be pissed off? How come that's not okay for me?' Like my dad will say, 'I can't talk to you when you're hysterical.' And I'm totally not being hysterical! I'm just mad. And he's the one losing it. But then I feel embarrassed anyway. So I slap on that smile and pretend everything's okay even though it's not.

Libba Bray

Each person who has changed the world for good in history are the ones who has managed to use their anger wisely.

Ozan Kulcu

Lingering, bottled-up anger never reveals the 'true colors' of an individual. It, on the contrary, becomes all mixed up, rotten, confused, forms a highly combustible, chemical compound then explodes as something foreign, something very different than one's natural self. *Criss Jami*

To take good care of ourselves, we must go back and take care of the wounded child inside of us. You have to practice going back to your wounded child every day. You have to embrace him or her tenderly, like a big brother or a big sister. You have to talk to him, talk to her. And you can write a letter to the Little child in you, of two or three pages, to that you recognize his or her presence, and will do everything you can to heal his or her wounds.

Thích Nhất Hạnh

Sarcasm is a manifestation of anger, and anger can make you the puppet of your opponents.

Wayne Gerard Trotman

Being nonreactive to destructive or hostile behaviour does not imply passive acceptance of it. Rather, it means we need to deal with it, take off our blinders and see the unacceptable. To redirect the destructive energy, we must dance with the shadow, not kill it. When we can achieve this stance, we learn to confront maladaptive or nonproductive behaviour matter-of-factly, without becoming embroiled in the heat of our own emotions. This

nonreflexive style of being in the world is potent.

Adele von Rust McCormick

If the heartbeat is a vital sign of physical health, anger is the vital sign of emotional health. Anger protects the self in all relationships. It is rage that is damaging.

Sue Parker Hall

Just by breathing deeply on your anger, you will calm it. You are being mindful of your anger, not suppressing it ... touching it with the energy of mindfulness. You are not denying it at all. If we know how to handle our anger, it can be very positive.

Thich Nhat Hanh

Grief allows you to let go of something you have lost only when you begin to accept what you now have in its place. As our mind clings to the familiar, to our established expectations, we can become trapped in feelings of disappointment, confusion, anger, that create our own internal worlds of suffering.

Daniel J. Siegel

When I am angry I can write, pray, and preach well, for then my whole temperament is quickened, my understanding sharpened, and all mundane vexations and temptations depart.

Martin Luther King

PREPARATION FOR GROUP REFLECTION

1 min

Read the questions for reflection, one by one

BREAK

5 min

Concurrent with Song: Killing In The Name Of (written and performed by Rage Against The Machine)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8de2W3rtZsA>

GROUP REFLECTION

50 min

Two rounds. Or, we can respectfully discuss the issues as they come up, with each participant having their "first round" say, followed by discussion of what was said, then proceeding to the next participant. Spend this reflection time speaking about anger and the role it has played in your life. You may, if you like, respond to one or more of the following questi

- ◆ What role has anger played in your life?
- ◆ What are *your* anger/rage triggers?
- ◆ How do you normally express your anger?
- ◆ Tell us of a time you were really angry. How did you express it, and what was the result?
- ◆ Can you imagine ways that anger can be used for good? Describe one or two.
- ◆ Tell us about a time when you used your anger for good, or it motivated you to change your life circumstances.
- ◆ Which of the quotes resonated with or surprised you, and why?

SESSION FEEDBACK AND FUTURE PLANS

5 min

- ◆ for you? How did today's session go
- ◆ changes would improve the session for you? What, if any, session format
- ◆ for Reflection Topics for the future? Let's hear some suggestions, and let the group come up with a list of topics from which the facilitators can choose the topics for the following sessions (perhaps two months' worth—four topics). Do you have any suggestions
- ◆ any changes to the integrated covenant for the combined group? Table further discussion? Would you like to make

CLOSING SONG: LOVINGKINDNESS (A version of the Plum Village song, music by Karen Drucker, performed by Monica Max West)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7zFQ_Ld7-nw

EXTINGUISH CHALICE / CLOSING WORDS

0.5 min

Anger and tenderness: My selves.
 And now I can believe they breathe in me
 As angels, not polarities.
 Anger and tenderness: the spider's genius
 To spin and weave in the same action
 From her own body, anywhere –
 Even from a broken web.

Adrienne Rich