

Anger Elimination

**How you learn anger, why you do anger,
and how to get rid of your anger
forever**

By

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Dedication:

To my Father,
who is always there for me,
to help me become a better man of good character,
to help me become a better son, brother, husband, and father,
and to help me become a dedicated helper of the poor and needy.

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You are strongly encouraged to take full responsibility for all of your thoughts, emotions, and behaviors.

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INTRODUCTION

I am an anger expert.

First of all, although I am not happy to admit it, I am an anger expert, because I have spent most of my life practicing and refining my anger habits. Second, and amazingly, I am an anger expert, because I have learned how to successfully eliminate anger from my own life and from the life of anyone else who wants to get rid of his or her anger habits. I am grateful to say that in addition to learning how to eliminate anger, I have learned many other very useful things about how to improve human happiness through my training and my wonderful experiences as a developmental psychologist, author, and educator.

In this book, I have included various true stories about my own and others' anger issues and unfortunate anger experiences. My main reasons for including these stories is to illustrate for you, in a personal way, the actual situations that stimulate us to get angry and the very real costs of anger in terms of abiding unhappiness, heightened stress, loss of productive time, and diminished relationship quality.

The stories that I have included just for you are not happy stories, but they will certainly help you better understand anger and why the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of anger are worth eliminating if you want to increase success and happiness in your life and in the lives of your friends and loved ones.

As I mentioned before, during my life, I have come to understand many important concepts that are vital for human happiness. In addition to learning those things, I have been and continue to be someone who applies what I have learned in my own life and in the lives of others. I know that happiness is the result of living our lives in a state that is increasingly more positive and that includes choosing and continuing to live more positive thoughts, beliefs, emotions, and behaviors. I have personally learned how to eliminate anger in my own life, thus producing greater happiness. I have also learned precisely how to teach others, some of whom are much like you, to change their own emotional habits to increase their own happiness and strengthen their personal relationships. And I am confident that I can teach you these things too.

I recently made a commitment to my father that I would share what I have learned about eliminating anger with as many people as possible. That is why I have written this book. It contains the most important happiness producing emotional breakthrough that I have learned in the past 15 years. And when you learn and then apply these simple concepts in your life, you will realize exactly what I mean. Then, when your life has changed for the better, I

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sincerely hope that you will share what you have learned from me with the people that you associate with and/or love.

Brian L. Nowell, Ph.D.

A Human Developmental Work In Progress

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Chapter 1

What "Gets Up Your Nose"

Universal Anger Stimulants

While I was living in Germany in 2006, I met John, who had been a career police officer in the UK before moving to Germany to be near his children and grandchildren. We soon became good friends and enjoyed some meaningful experiences together. It was always fun talking with him about his personal experiences and about life in the UK in general. Once when I was talking with John about anger, he delighted me by stating “What gets up my nose is...”, which is a colloquialism that is common in the UK, and which as you see I have chosen as the title for this Chapter. What “gets up your nose” has to do with your Core Emotional Issues, which are the things that “make” you angry.

Each of us has **Core Emotional Issues** that stimulate or trigger our anger habits. These core emotional issues are about things that are the most emotionally important to us as individuals. Our **Core Emotional Issues** are about the key sensations, situations, or events that trigger our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors of anger. Although each of us has our own smaller “favorite” set of **Core Emotional Issues**, the list of core emotional issues in this Chapter is comprehensive.

So, following is a list of 20 “popular” core emotional issues that people commonly get angry about. In many cases, like in the true stories that are in this book, more than one core emotional issue gets violated in any given anger event or situation. And, the more important the relationship, event, or situation, the more likely that anger will result from a violation.

Core Emotional Issues that Stimulate or Trigger Anger

1. A personal moral or ethical trait, attribute, or strength being questioned or not believed. Many of us are very emotionally sensitive about certain moral or ethical attributes or strengths such as honesty, respect for others, conscientiousness, kindness, helpfulness, timeliness, etc. When these attributes or strengths are questioned or not believed by someone, it can very easily trigger our anger. In some cases this is because an individual wants to or has recently replaced the negative opposite of the attribute

(which is a weakness or moral/ethical failing), and so is still emotionally sensitive about it.

2. Being used, tricked, or deceived by someone. Examples of this include being the victim of fraud, scheming, or dishonesty. There are many different types of this from people that we don't know well and have to deal with, such as dishonesty by cab drivers, repairmen, insurance agents, automobile salesmen, etc. And, of course we can and at times do get victimized by those that we work with, those that we associate with, those that are our friends or family, and those that we love.

3. Prejudice and Discrimination. When someone is prejudiced about us, it generally means that he or she wrongfully believes that we are inferior to him or her in some important way or in several important ways. Discrimination generally means being treated in a way that is inferior to the way that other people are treated because of something that is different about us in relation to the person who is discriminating, and it happens for many different reasons including, but not limited to, age, gender, weight, race, or religion. I have personally experienced prejudice and discrimination for each of these reasons, both privately and in work settings. And the greater the importance of what was at risk, the more likely that I got angry about it.

4. Violation of Trust. I generally prefer to trust people or give them the benefit of the doubt rather than to mistrust them initially. Before I learned to assess individual trustworthiness, I made a lot of mistakes of trusting people more than they were mature enough to fulfill. And those violations of trust often led to anger. The more important the person or situation is to us the more likely that violation of trust will lead to anger.

5. Abuse of power. Being oppressed or made to feel diminished by those in authority can incite anger. I learned many years ago that most people, when they are given a little power that affects other people, tend to abuse that power. Since then, I have observed that this is true. I suppose that happens because those individuals have little other power or control in their lives, or that they have saved up a lot of bad emotions from being controlled or abused by others themselves. It is also at times related to the person’s low self esteem. That is, they try to elevate themselves by controlling or diminishing others.

6. Broken promises. Broken promises occur in buying and selling transactions, in business dealings, in work relationships, and in family settings. Anger over broken promises is often learned early in life when parents do not keep their promises to their children. The acutest anger over broken promises occurs in love and spousal relationships because those relationships are the most important to us.

7. Disrespect toward you, a friend, or loved one.

Everyone needs to be respected. To be disrespected is to be partially devalued or to be thought of as inferior at least in some small way. It hurts to be thought of as inferior by someone whose opinion we value, and if we see a friend or loved one disrespected, we naturally become angry in their defense.

8. Being physically, verbally, financially, sexually, or emotionally abused, bullied or cheated. Probably most of us were abused or bullied in some way when we were children. And so, that sets us up to get angry about it from the many and often more subtle forms of abuse that we encounter as adults. Many of us have been bullied or abused by our siblings, relatives, school bullies, or even our parents. As adults, many of us have been bullied or abused in some way by supervisors, bosses others who have some power or authority over us. If we have ever sold anything like our car to someone much more experienced, before we had much experience about people taking advantage of us, we may well have been financially abused by them. And certainly, there are many of us who have felt financially abused by the steadily increasing taxes that we are compelled to pay. If any of these things are so, we are then pre-programmed to get angry about abuse in the many and often more subtle forms that we encounter as adults.

9. A friend, loved one, or innocent person being threatened, harmed, or abused. Would you get angry if your child’s teacher punished her for smiling too much? What if your child’s coach humiliated him in front of his teammates for some sports mistake, or if a relative of yours was indicted or convicted for a crime that they did not commit? If your child was harshly treated by a truant officer or other school authority for something someone else had done? If a friend or loved one was repeatedly and cruelly sexually, emotionally, or physically abused by someone? Protective instincts can lead us to anger. What if a driver seriously threatened or harmed your family members from reckless or DUI driving? If you discovered that the spouse of your sibling or child was committing adultery? If many politicians of any major political party lie, lie, lie, conceal and deceive, just to get elected and thus hurt the citizens that they are supposed to protect and prosper?

10. Your property being carelessly or purposefully lost, damaged, or stolen. Have you ever trusted someone to buy something or care for something that you value, and they did a bad job of it? Have you ever let someone use something that you valued, and they damaged it? Have you ever had something valuable stolen from you? If you have had any of these experiences, was anger the result?

11. Being denied something that is very important to you Have you ever been fired or laid off from your employment? Been denied a loan for something that you needed? Tried to

get a desirable job, but not been hired? Applied to a school, but not been accepted? Tried to start a romantic relationship, but been spurned? Competed with your peers for what you believed was vital for you to have in terms of a relationship, an achievement, or recognition, but your peer got it instead of you? If you have, were you angry?

12. Being devalued by someone. There are many ways to be devalued. If you have ever been disrespected, that is a mild dose of being devalued. Prejudice and the resulting forms of discrimination grow out of devaluing someone else because of the group that they are part of (like age, race, religion, gender, etc.).

When I was attending graduate school, I once witnessed the custodian of a certain church building, who was also a graduate student, share his thoughtful religious ideas with the two religious leaders who taught at the building. Something happened that he did not expect. The two religious leaders, minimized his ideas and treated him as an inferior, probably because he was working as the custodian. I have also witnessed and heard accounts of men and women being devalued by their spouses, who thought themselves to be better than the spouse devalued. This was at times in the form of a wife devaluing her husband because the husband was not as skilled in his parenting as she thought she was. The wife actually prevented her husband from improving his parenting, because she kept interfering with

his discipline of their children (Chapter 18: Roger’s Anger Over The years).

And finally, I have observed many of my professor peers often subtly mock and devalue the few of their peers who are knowledgeable and faithful Christians in addition to being competent scholars. It is probably true that honorable people worldwide who quietly and honestly live their good religious or spiritual beliefs and who do not devalue other people are devalued by people around them who do not like their religious or spiritual beliefs. There are many ways to be devalued, and I have only included a few. Being devalued by those who believe themselves to be superior is highly offensive and, in many cases, leads to anger for the victim/target of the devaluing.

13. Someone wrongfully taking credit for your idea or achievement. This occurs in many different types of organizations when someone selfishly steals the work and ideas of another (Chapter 4: Takers, Balancers, and Givers). Sadly, this has also happened with many of the notable inventions of our modern world. Would you get angry if it happened to you?

14. Personal failure in something that is very important to you. I know of two main examples of this. One involved a graduate student who was rejected for admission to the doctoral program of his desires. He became very angry and

bitter, and was unhappy for as long as I still knew about him. The second example is about a man who was trying to learn about stock market trading, but just could not master enough of it to be successful at that time. Although he was not wealthy or even well off financially, over the course of several years he lost about \$250,000 of his own and probably an amount equal to that of other’s money (associate’s and family member’s) that they had entrusted to his care. Because he had a good moral foundation, this was a horrible strain on him, and he was distressed and exceedingly angry (at himself) about it for much of the time.

15. Dishonoring or ignoring of instructions given to a subordinate or one’s children, and the same neglect or opposition from one’s spouse or coworker, when fulfillment of the instruction or request is appropriate. The effects of dishonoring, ignoring, and neglect of requests and instructions seem to be much worse in the close relationships of family than in the hierarchy of work relationships and can cause great deal of family sadness, upset, and anger.

16. Passive or active sabotage by someone of a task or project that is important to you. I have seen this core emotional issue violated in both family settings and in work settings. Anger often feeds very well on this.

17. Anything that you consider to be meaningfully unjust or unfair. This is a broad type of core emotional issue.

There are many types of unfairness in the world every day, and most of them generate anger in people who believe in fairness.

18. Anything that frustrates, hinders, or blocks something important to you--a high personal need for control. Please see Chapter 18, Roger’s Anger Over The Years for prime examples of this anger stimulant.

19. Abuse of your time. Unfortunately, there are many people in the world who are selfish abusers of others’ precious time. This time abuse can occur in a variety of obvious and subtle ways. Chapter 4 about Takers, Balancers, and Givers will provide a better understanding of this.

20. Having someone identify, point out, or tell you about your true faults, weaknesses, failings, wrong behaviors, etc. For most of us having this done, is often deeply emotionally painful, so in as an emotional defense, many of us get angry when this happens to us, especially when it is repeatedly done by someone we care about. (Reading about the Anger Habit Path in Chapter 6 will give you a better understanding of the internal process involved).

It is our individual personalities combined with our life experiences that determine what will be a Core Emotional Issue for each of us. Often there are times when more than one of our core issues is involved in a given life situation. When one or more Core Emotional Issues are violated, almost all of us get angry about the event or situation, immediately and automatically. The more important the relationship, event, or situation, the more likely it is that we will react in anger as a result of the violations.

In the following Chapters, I have included true anger stories to illustrate the universal anger stimulators listed above. Each situation that I share with you was costly to the participants in some way. It diminished their better humanity and needlessly harmed the others involved in the situations. Although the stories are true, I have changed the names, genders, and some details about the individuals involved to respect their privacy. As you read the stories in the following Chapters, you may find that some or even all of the anger stimulants will be very familiar to you, either because you have personally experienced them for yourself or because you have observed similar situations and their anger results in others.

The following Chapter explores anger as a habit.