

Controlling Your Anger
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Day 1

Does your anger control you? Or, do you control your anger?

(Musical theme)

Hello, I'm Dr. Gary Chapman, and you're listening to A Growing Marriage. "A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise man keeps himself under control." (Proverbs 29:11) I really want to be wise, but I must confess, sometimes I have been foolish. How about you? Uncontrolled anger is never good for a marriage. Guided anger can be very good.

Remember, there is nothing wrong with anger. The Bible says that God Himself gets angry every day with the wicked. All of us experience anger when we encounter what we believe to be wicked or unfair. The Biblical challenge is, "When you are angry, don't sin, and don't let the sun go down on your anger." (Ephesians 4:26)

The first step to controlling anger and getting rid of anger is to admit that you are angry. "Oh, I'm not angry, I'm just hurt." You are going to stew in your anger. You will never control anger until you admit that you are angry. Admit it to yourself, to God, and to the person with whom you are angry. Join us tomorrow as we continue talking about, how to control anger.

Day 2

Welcome to a Growing Marriage. I'm Dr. Gary Chapman. Uncontrolled anger can be very destructive to a marriage. Well managed anger can help a marriage grow. Admitting that you are angry is the first step in managing your anger. The second is restraining your negative response. Unbridled anger may result in harsh, cutting words, that are forever etched in the heart of your spouse. Ambrose Bierce said, "Speak when you are angry and you will make the best speech you will ever regret." Most of us have made a few of those speeches. Wouldn't it be better to restrain our negative response? But, how do we do that?

Count to a hundred, or a thousand. Take a walk around the block. Go water your flowers, or mow the grass. These are not escape mechanisms, they are methods of controlling our anger instead of letting the anger control us. Decide on a method of restraint, tell your spouse what you are going to do when you get angry, so they won't be shocked when you start counting. Then follow your plan. Now, this is not the last step, this is only the second. Join us tomorrow as I share the third step in controlling anger.

Day 3

Why do you get angry with your spouse?

(Musical theme)

Hi, I'm Dr. Gary Chapman and you're listening to A Growing Marriage. Almost always we get angry with our spouses because they disappoint us. They treat us unfairly. The key is to control your anger instead of letting your anger control you. On Monday and Tuesday we talked about: admitting that you are angry, and restraining your negative response. Today I want to suggest that step three is to locate the focus of your anger. Answer the question: Why am I angry?

"It's my birthday and there is no card, no gift, no nothing. Don't I have a right to be angry?" Well, let's grant you the right. Now, why are you angry? It's not the card or the gift that you really want, is it? Likely, it's the love of your spouse that you crave. You want him to love you and thus be thoughtful and get you a card or gift.

If you blast him for "no card, no gift" he will miss the whole point, and so will you. The more clearly you can locate the focus of your anger, the more likely you are to process it with your spouse in a positive way.

Day 4

Welcome to the Thursday edition of A Growing Marriage. I'm Dr. Gary Chapman. We're talking about controlling our anger. Earlier I've suggested that we must: admit that we are angry, restrain our negative response, and locate the focus of our anger. Today, I want to encourage you to analyze your options before you take action. What is the best possible action you could take toward the person who hurt you?

There are many negative options: cursing, screaming, throwing coke bottles, shaking or choking them. But, all of these would be sinful, and the Bible tells us not to sin when we are angry. Most of the time, the best option is to lovingly confront the person. Jesus said, "if a person sins against you, rebuke them, and if they repent, forgive them." The word "rebuke" means to lay the matter before them. Once you do this, they may deny it, explain it, or repent. If they repent, you can forgive them. If they explain it and you realize that you misunderstood the situation, you can let it go. If they deny it, you can commit them to God. He can handle them if they are guilty. You don't need to fret about it. Let your anger go, and let God be the judge.

Day 5

Controlling your anger, could save your marriage!

(Musical theme)

Hello, I'm Dr. Gary Chapman and you're listening to A Growing marriage. This week, our theme has been: controlling your anger before it controls you. Is it really possible to

control anger? I mean if you are really angry? The answer is “Yes” and the sooner you learn the better. Uncontrolled anger has destroyed thousands of marriages. It all begins by taking responsibility for your anger. You feel angry because you have been hurt. Someone has wronged you. Now, what are you going to do about it?

Blast the person? Tell them how terrible they are? What does that do? It engenders a battle and in a battle someone always loses. Actually, if it's your spouse, you both lose. Far better to lovingly confront your spouse. “Honey, I've got a problem. I am really angry, but don't worry, I not going to attack you. But, I do need your help. Is this a good time to talk?” This is a positive step in processing anger. The person who learns to lovingly confront will not be controlled by anger. It could save your marriage!