

ANGER STYLES
By M. Rivest, Ph.D.
Counseling Solutions at SMI

Have you noticed that people get angry differently? Some people seem never to get angry while others blow up over every little thing.

If we use the five temperaments in “Temperament Theory” we can discover a clear picture of how different people get angry.

Can you find your anger style?

- I. Melancholy Temperament
 - A. Tend to internalize anger
 1. Thinks about getting even
 2. Can be angry for years
 3. Can misunderstand and become angry
 4. Tends to remember all negative events
 - B. Internalized anger affects physically, emotionally, spiritually
 1. Physically: loss of appetite, migraines, ulcers, back pains, etc.
 2. Emotionally: withdraw, become moody, relive events in their mind
 3. Spiritually: little time for God; may be angry with Him, too; loss of ability to forgive

- II. Choleric Temperament
 - A. Tend to internalize and externalize anger
 1. Internalized:
 - a. thinks of ways to get even
 - b. especially angry if not getting the recognition they think they deserve
 2. Externalized:
 - a. abusive language
 - b. physical lashing out
 - B. Anger will affect them physically, emotionally, spiritually
 1. Physically: go nonstop to the point of burnout to get revenge; become cold and calculating in appearance
 2. Emotionally: play ‘head games,’ cruel, abrupt language; no tolerance for anyone or anything; may appear “nice” on the outside but inside they retain anger
 3. Spiritually: little room for God; may continue to attend church, but their heart will not be there; no room for love or forgiveness

- III. Supine Temperament
 - A. Tend to internalize and externalize anger
 1. Internalized:
 - a. let people walk over them without saying a word

- b. will be personable and charming while keeping a record of what others have done
- c. do not want to make waves
- d. need to be included so they hold their anger in
- e. mask their anger by saying that their feelings are hurt
- 2. Externalized
 - a. after a long time they will be unable to keep their anger bottled up
 - b. they will explode
 - c. can express anger physically and verbally
- B. Anger affects them physically, emotionally, spiritually
 - 1. Physically:
 - a. migraines
 - b. stomach aches
 - c. ulcers
 - d. headaches
 - e. unable to tell that these symptoms come from anger
 - 2. Emotionally:
 - a. become withdrawn because they dwell on their “hurt”
 - b. lose their gentle spirit, become withdrawn, others avoid them
 - c. cry a lot
 - d. ignore others
 - 3. Spiritually:
 - a. little room for the Lord
 - b. little room for good thoughts
 - c. feel rejected by people and by God
 - d. focus is on their “hurt feelings” and “rejection”

IV. Sanguine Temperament

- A. Tend to externalize their anger
 - 1. hot tempered and explosive
 - 2. swing from happy to sad
 - 3. if someone tries to motivate them to be happy, they can become angry and explode
 - 4. forgets the reason for the anger soon after they ventilate it
- B. Anger affects them physically, emotionally, spiritually
 - 1. Physically:
 - a. tend to overeat
 - b. neglect their body
 - c. may hurt themselves
 - d. may punch or hit walls and other objects
 - 2. Emotionally:
 - a. mood swings to becoming down and depressed
 - b. cannot be motivated by others to feel better
 - c. others will not want to be around them
 - 3. Spiritually:

- a. little room for thoughts of God
 - b. deep into self and upset
 - c. think they need someone with “flesh” to talk to
 - d. need to learn to communicate with God
 - e. need to listen to Christian tapes, radio and/or television and interact with other Christians
 - f. no room for love or forgiveness while angry
- V. Phlegmatic Temperament
- A. Tend to not become angry, but will internalize it when they do
 - B. Become angry when someone is trying to motivate them to do something they don't want to do
 - C. Cannot be motivated to change once they become angry
 - D. This anger (which is minimal) will affect them physically, emotionally
 - 1. Physically:
 - a. they will try to motivate someone else to handle the situation
 - b. may try to negotiate a peaceful solution to avoid expending energy
 - c. will not expend much physical energy themselves
 - 2. Emotionally:
 - a. Show very little emotion
 - b. “feathers are not easily ruffled”
 - c. tolerate difficult people more easily than most
 - 3. Spiritually: anger is not intense enough to affect them in this area

Imagine if different anger styles were to confront each other!!!

At Counseling Solutions at SMI we have an excellent test that helps to determine your Anger Style.

For more information go to: www.MarriageCounseling.org.

**1606 Briar Lake Circle
Winston-Salem, NC 27103
Call for your appointment today!
336-760-1780**