

Controlling our anger and growing our patience

Objective: Constant and uncontrolled anger can take a toll on both your health and your relationships. The objective is to analyze when we experience anger and rage, and how we can practice patience at those times to diffuse the situation. How can prayer and just some quiet time with God help you recenter things and get better control on your life?

Song Suggestion: Prayer of St Francis

Bible and Catechism Readings:

Ephesians 4:1-6

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

James 1:19-20, 22-25

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it—not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it—they will be blessed in what they do.

Catechism 2223

Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by creating a home where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for education in the virtues. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery - the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the "material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones." Parents have a grave responsibility to give good examples to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them: He who loves his son will not spare the rod. . . . He who disciplines his son will profit by him.

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

Saint: [St Monica](#)

Saint Monica is often associated with patience. She was the mother of Saint Augustine of Hippo, a prominent Christian theologian and philosopher. Monica is celebrated for her unwavering patience, persistence, and prayers for her son's conversion to Christianity.

Saint Augustine lived a wild and worldly life in his youth, which caused great distress to his mother. However, Monica continued to pray and have faith that he would eventually turn to God. Her prayers were eventually answered, as Saint Augustine underwent a profound conversion and became a significant figure in the early Christian Church.

Saint Monica's story exemplifies the virtue of patience, as she endured many years of struggle and hardship, never losing hope and always trusting in God's plan for her son's life. For this reason, she is often regarded as a patron saint of patience and persistent prayer. Her feast day is celebrated on August 27th.

Vignette: – Jim was a hard worker and a good father, even though he was often grumpy or nasty. In the morning he would wake up before everyone else, shower and catch up on facebook while he ate breakfast. All the arguing and back stabbing dialogue that he read in the postings often put him in a bad mood and he would lambaste people with sharp responses. Next Jim would race to work, cutting in and out of traffic, eager to honk at or salute a driver who was in his way. At work, Jim was hyper-competitive, eager to beat out anyone doing a similar job, proud to be making the big bucks and have the biggest house. When Jim arrived home, everyone in the house would hide away, afraid to be the first to be seen if Jim had a bad day. Jim had it all, the dream job, big house, all the status symbols including the model family he was shaping—but he just didn't seem to be happy much of the time. Think about things that Jim could change in his life and find more happiness than his money could buy, do any of those apply to you?

Questions for Large and Small Group Discussion:

Did you lose your patience over something in the past week? If not is there a particularly memorable time where you lost your temper?

When you did lose your temper, did you later apologize to anyone who you might have hurt with screaming, hollering, or scowling?

Can you recognize scenarios where you seem to always lose control or get angry? Sometimes the news, talk shows, or social media can be triggers to set you in a bad mood.

Jesus did lose his anger on those occasions noted, but his love for us gives us forgiveness for our transgressions. He sets an example for us of unconditional love and patience. Do you set an example for your children of patience and forgiveness?

Action Plan:

Controlling anger and developing patience are essential skills for maintaining healthy relationships and overall well-being. Here are some effective strategies to help you manage and control your anger:

1. Recognize early signs: Pay attention to your body and emotions, identifying the early signs of anger, such as tension, increased heart rate, or irritability. Catching it early can prevent escalation.
2. Take deep breaths: When you start feeling angry, take slow, deep breaths to calm your nervous system. Focus on your breath and try to relax your body.

3. Practice empathy: Try to see things from other people's perspectives and understand their feelings and challenges. Empathy can foster patience and compassion.
4. Use "I" statements: Instead of blaming others, express your feelings and concerns using "I" statements. For example, "I feel frustrated when..." rather than "You always make me angry because..."
5. Practice mindfulness and prayer: Mindfulness techniques can help you stay present, reducing reactivity to triggering situations. Prayer helps you center your life on faith, and not so much on worldly issues that cause stress.
6. Set realistic expectations: Be realistic about the time it takes to achieve goals or complete tasks. Avoid setting overly ambitious deadlines that could lead to frustration.
7. Take a break: If you feel overwhelmed by anger, step away from the situation. Go for a walk, listen to calming music, or engage in any activity that helps you relax.
8. Learn to let go: Accept that some things are beyond your control, and trying to force a situation to change can lead to impatience. Let go of the need to control everything.
9. Exercise regularly: Physical activity can help reduce stress and anger by releasing endorphins, which are natural mood elevators.
10. Seek professional help: If anger is causing significant issues in your life or relationships, consider speaking with a therapist or counselor who can help you explore the underlying causes and develop coping strategies.
11. Avoid alcohol and drugs: These substances can impair judgment and make anger management more challenging.
12. Practice assertiveness: Learn to assert your needs and boundaries calmly and respectfully, rather than letting anger build up.

Remember, anger is a natural emotion, but how you respond to it can significantly impact your life. By practicing these strategies regularly, you can improve your ability to control anger and respond to challenging situations in a more constructive way. Patience and consistency are key, as learning new coping mechanisms takes time and effort.

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