

HDC ONLINE ANGER MANAGEMENT—LESSON 4

LONG TERM ANGER (STORED ANGER) & HOW TO DEAL WITH IT

Long Term Anger—Two Main Types

1. Many people throughout their lives, from childhood on, have suffered a lot of _____ (from moderate to severe) and a lot of _____ experiences. Generally speaking, here's what often happens:

◆ When we are wronged _____ is the natural emotion that arises within.



◆ We often _____ confronting and resolving the issue or experience unhealthy conflict resolution which often causes more hurt and resentment.



◆ By not processing and resolving the anger and hurt in a healthy way, we begin developing a *reservoir of stored anger*. This often fuels the development of _____ and _____ in our lives.



◆ When we experience a series of wrongs and hurts over a long period of time that _____ go unresolved, our emotional ability to _____ these experiences is often stretched beyond our capacity (“buried damage of a bruised spirit”). There are two fairly common issues that arise from this:

⊗ We express this stored anger not toward the _____ who perpetrated it through the years, but toward the people in our _____ setting.

⊗ Another manifestation of stored anger is the beginning stages of _____ (“anger turned inward”). The

emotional heaviness of all the stored anger can lead to lethargy, withdrawal, and increasing depression.

LOVING WARNING: *Many other behaviors can be linked to stored anger as well—drug and alcohol abuse, over-eating, over-spending, low self-esteem, abusive relationships, and various forms of self-destruction. Such issues usually require professional counseling and HDC has a preferred list of references we use.*

2. Some people live a life of _____ toward others (family, friends, co-workers etc.) and thus experience years of storing up unresolved disappointments, grievances and grudges. this can lead to the same kinds of behaviors listed above. A key “un-virtue” of this type of stored anger is _____, which can lead to sinful actions that are punitive and revengeful toward others.

HOW TO DRAIN STORED ANGER—A RELEASING TIME WITH GOD

In his book, *Anger* (subtitled *Handling A Powerful Emotion In A Healthy Way*), Christian author, Gary Chapman shares deeply helpful insights regarding the healing of long term or stored anger with a client he was helping (pages 100-102):

ALONE WITH GOD

“Now here is what I want to suggest,” I said, looking directly at Mike. “As soon as possible, I want you to take this legal pad and get alone with God. I want you to read each name and each offense to God; read it aloud. Then say to God, ‘You know what my father did – this and this and this and this. And You know how wrong it was for a father to do these things to a child, and You know how much they hurt me. They’ve been inside all these years. But today, I want to release my father and all these wrongs to You. You are a just God, and You are a loving God. You know everything about my father. I don’t know what motivated him to do these things. You know his motives as well as his actions. And so I want to put him into Your hands and let You take care of him.

“Do whatever You wish, whatever is good, whatever is loving. I put him into Your hands and I release all of these wrongs to You, knowing that if he confesses

them, You will forgive him. If not, You will deal with him on these matters. But I release them and give them to You today.”

“I want you to go through your whole list, everyone’s name and everyone’s actions and release them to God one by one, wrong by wrong,” I told Mike. “Release them to God. Once you’ve done that, I want you to thank God that all of these things are now released to Him. And I want you to ask God to fill your life with His Holy Spirit and give you the power to be the man He wants you to be in the future. And also ask Him for the ability to process future anger experiences when they occur. People will continue to do you wrong. Even Julie will do you wrong, and your children may do you wrong. But we are going to talk about how to process that anger in a positive way, and that’s what I want you to learn.”

“So you are going to ask God to teach you how to process your anger. Then as a symbol that you have released all these things to God and they are no longer in your life but in His hands, I want you either to burn or tear up and destroy these lists.”

Two weeks later, Mike and Julie returned. Both were smiling. Mike had shared with her what he had done. “It’s been a good two weeks,” Julie said. “This is one of the greatest things that has ever happened in our lives. I feel like I’ve got a new husband.”

“It’s been a good two weeks,” Mike said. “The process of sharing those things with Julie was hard; sharing them with God was easier. But I feel like a load has been lifted.”

“He hasn’t been critical a single time this week,” Julie said.

“Well, the anger is gone,” Mike replied. “There’s no need to be critical, and I’m beginning to feel excited about life again.”

KEY POINT IN HEALING LONG TERM ANGER—Long term anger needs to be processed and resolved so a person can “heal damaged emotions” and break destructive anger patterns and expressions. This is vital for a person who wants to reach his/her potential in their spiritual growth and service for God.

Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

PREVENTING STORED ANGER (PREVENTATIVE MEDICINE!)

1. Don't let hurt feelings _____ and _____.

***Ephesians 4:26-27** In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27and do not give the devil a foothold.*

The longer you wait, the longer and harder it can be to resolve!

2. Learn to overlook many of the everyday _____ (some of us need to honestly ask ourselves if we are too “thin-skinned” and overly sensitive), realizing we all have bad days and we all commit our fair share of wrongs. We have to honestly realize that not everything is _____ done to hurt us.

***Proverbs 19:11** A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.*

***Matthew 7:3-5** Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? 4 How can you say to your brother, "Let me take the speck out of your eye," when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? 5 You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

***Colossians 3:13** Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.*

3. Take the high road in learning how to deal with _____

***1 Peter 2:19-24** For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. 20 But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. 21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22 "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." 23 When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*

24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.

Romans 8:17-18 Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. **18** I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Romans 12:17-18 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. **18** If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

4. Respond to hurts and wrongs with _____.

Psalm 42:5-8

5 Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God. **6** My soul is downcast within me; therefore I will remember you from the land of the Jordan, the heights of Hermon—from Mount Mizar. **7** Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me. **8** By day the LORD directs his love, at night his song is with me—a prayer to the God of my life.

2 Corinthians 12:7-10

7 To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. **8** Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. **9** But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. **10** That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

See also—Romans 5:3-5; James 1:2-4—Learn through prayer, fellowship, and accountability to treat life’s difficulties as opportunities to

_____ into

Christ-likeness, instead of throwing _____ (which no one likes to attend!).

5. Respond to hurts and wrongs with _____. Seek godly counsel to help gain wisdom and third party objectivity because, quite frankly, we all have blind spots and our understanding of situations can be clouded by our own _____ and ability to rationalize.

Proverbs 19:20 Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.

Proverbs 20:9 Who can say, "I have kept my heart pure; I am clean and without sin"?

Jeremiah 17:9 The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?

Hebrews 4:13 Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

Psalms 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. **24** See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

6. Learn to respond to hurts and wrongs with Christ-like _____ and _____.

Luke 23:34 Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing."

Acts 7:59-60 While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." **60** Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

Ephesians 4:32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Ephesians 5:1-2 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Colossians 3:13 Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

Food For Thought...

“Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea, until they have something to forgive.” C.S. Lewis

“Forgiveness is God’s invention for coming to terms with a world in which, despite their best intentions, people are unfair to each other and hurt each other deeply. He began by forgiving us. And he invites us all to forgive each other.”
Lewis B. Smedes

"To forgive is to set a prisoner free and discover that the prisoner was you."
Phillip Yancey

FINAL THOUGHT:

Don't expect these action steps to be _____. Our enemy wants to get a foothold in our lives and destroy our relationships (and therefore our witness to our *oikos*). This is spiritual warfare!

Ephesians 4:26-27

26 *“In your anger do not sin”*: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry,
27 and do not give the devil a foothold.

Ephesians 6:12

For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

1 Peter 5:8

Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

It really doesn't matter if the person who hurt you deserves to be forgiven. Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself. You have a life to live and you want to move on.

If you have any questions about his content or series feel free to email me at: tim@highdesertchurch.com

(In our next session we will deal with the role of the Holy Spirit in our anger management and spiritual growth.)