

Anger:

Anger is an intense emotional state, in the form of strong annoyance and hostility towards somebody or something, that makes us feel wrong. It is very much required to control anger, as **Seneca calls** anger to be more dangerous than the hurt that caused it.

Manifestation of Anger:

Everyone manifests anger in a different manner. It can either be mental expression or physical or both. For some, it may involve shouting, showing emotional expression, loud voice while for others it may result in quarrel.

A worrisome situation is when people express anger physically, like breaking things, or even worse causing physical hurt.

Why is it a negative emotion:

Anger is a negative emotion, as it leaves people with unpleasant feelings.

Firstly, it leads to a sense of bodily discomfort, such as increased heart rate, high pitch voice, tears, and rising blood pressure.

Secondly, the state of anger affects us mentally, leaving with negative or even violent thoughts. Anger impacts our conscience and leaves it with guilt.

Stoicism calls anger to be **inconsistent with moral life**, as it disposes us to cruelty and vengeance.

Buddha has called anger as being in a situation where we are holding a burning coal, with the intent of throwing it at others. It is bound to impact us.

Modern psychologists have tried to explain anger in terms of normal human behavior, **even serving a utility function**. Plato called anger reasonable, and showing anger for the right cause at right time was called a virtue by him.

For example, a monarch punishing an accused against natural justice espoused justified anger from his subjects.

Examples of anger:

- An individual gets angry and may quarrel with people causing anger. For example Andrew Simond threw his cricket bat at Harbhajan Singh.
- Anger within a family may result in a family feud. Ex: The Ambani Business family split due to this.

- A society may see an upsurge of mass incidents, violent clashes, even riots, due to antagonism between sections. Ex: The Hutu Tutsi clash resulted into Rwandan Genocide in 1994.
- Even a country and its leadership can respond in a very hostile manner. Ex: The US actions in the Middle East, after the 9/11 incident.

Uncontrolled anger is a vice and it is unwise to give free reins to it. **Gandhi** has called anger to be an enemy of Ahimsa and advised for anger to be restrained.

Positive and Negative channelisation of Anger:

Plutarch has called anger to be a disease that needs to be cut away from the body. This can be done in a positive or a negative manner.

- Gandhi channelised the anger of the nation in a positive manner, leading a truly non violent struggle that brought the perpetrators, ie British, to its knees.
- Duryodhan, on the other hand, was angry at the verbal insult caused to him, and he led his clan into the **fierce war of Mahabharata**, leading to the destruction of Kurus.

How to manage anger:

An ideal person, **as per Marcus Aurelius**, will understand that anger and grief in long term cause more agony than the actual cause of anger. Pent up anger prompts negative response and hence it becomes necessary to manage anger. This can be done by

- Acceptance and forgiveness. As Gandhi advises to hate the sin and not the sinner.
- Releasing anger in harmless channels, such as positive physical activity, workout etc.
- **Yoga and Meditation** have been known to give an inner state of peace.
- Dialogue and discussion. Eg: Family feud in family courts.
- Taking legal recourse and seeking justice.

Sometimes, when things aren't under control, an individual may also seek support of a professional regarding anger management. It's indiscriminate expression has never been fruitful and hence rightly called a vice.