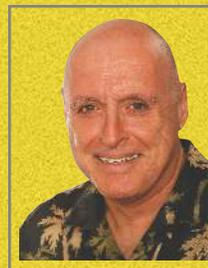


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



776 Breaking Down Anger — Part 2

Is there a way to process anger and channel it so we can be more productive? I'm Jerry Roberts, let's get into that question, next on The Extra Point.

Yesterday, we talked about the key factors in anger, citing research done by Ryan Martin, professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, and the author of *Why We Get Mad: How to Use Your Anger for Positive Change*.

Martin says there are three components to anger. 1. The provocation or trigger. 2. Our interpretation of what that provocation means to us, and the possibility that we could blow things out of proportion. 3. Our mood at the time this takes place. If all three align in the wrong way, we will have an outburst of anger.

How can we process our anger in a way that is more productive. To do this we're going to have to put ourselves on "time out," and go to our desk, car, restroom, outside — somewhere away from people and interruptions.

Martin says we need the answers to the following three questions, and this is really digging into that issue of emotional intelligence we talk about every once in a while. Essentially, us being in control of our emotions, not our emotions being in control of us.

1. Should I be angry? Was I really wronged or treated unfairly? Is somebody really out to get me? What are the consequences here for me? Or — wait a minute — was what happened unintentional?

This is the interpretation stage. We got provoked and now we need to process that to answer these questions. If we're not sure whether anger is justified, then why get angry? On the other hand, maybe anger is justified.

2. What happens now? Justified or unjustified,

think things through to figure out what you want to get out of this situation.

Stephen Covey taught, that "between stimulus and response is a choice." We hold the power in this situation. Whatever has happened, we now determine the next step. Will we yell or will we seek to reason with the other party? What is the ultimate outcome we're after?

3. What is my anger telling me about myself? George has been late to work three times this week. You tell him that it cannot continue or it will be an administrative issue. The next day, he's late again. You're upset. Why?

Is it because it's a bad example for others who come to work on time? That would make it a matter of fairness to all, and recognition that customers expect us to be ready to serve them at the time of opening. Or is it more that you feel personally disrespected? That's a self-esteem issue.

So what are we trying to accomplish here? Is it anger management? There are scores of books and courses about that, but I don't think it's the answer. What I want is anger reduction and eventually anger prevention.

Once we can effectively answer those three questions, in most cases we should be able to reduce the severity of our anger, and how often we're angry.

We also need to take responsibility for our anger. That means, whenever possible we should avoid situations which we know make us angry. Somebody puts up a very "triggering" post on Facebook. Do I respond in anger, or just close the app?

The restaurant gets my lunch order wrong. Does it blow out the rest of my day, or do I take a breath, be decent to the server, and just enjoy what I have? (Con't.)

Traditional anger-management strategies such as deep breathing or counting to 10 can help to reduce angry feelings in the short-term. If you need that, do it.

By the way, you can download Extra Points #775 and 776 at guamtraining.com, to work on all this.

I'm not suggesting you'll never get angry again, or won't ever have justification for anger. The main point is to understand that we are responsible for our anger, and need to work through it. The amazing thing is that once we gain even a little control over our emotions that have always led to anger, it's incredibly empowering. You can do this.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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For information on training and consulting services with Jerry Roberts, please click this link: guamtraining.com

