

PERSONAL ANGER ASSESSMENT

The following assessment is designed to help you understand how you manage your anger. Read each of the twelve hypothetical scenarios and check the box associated with the statement that most closely matches your response. It is possible that none of the three statements are a perfect match, but select the one that is closest.

CHOOSE THE STATEMENT THAT MOST CLOSELY DESCRIBES YOU.

- 1 I have serious arguments with my loved one, sometimes for no reason. **(A)**
 I think most people would think I handle my anger well. **(B)**
 When I am angry with someone, I am quickly and respectfully able to tell him or her why. **(C)**
- 2 I'm very good at being quick to talk to someone who offends me so we can work out the issue. **(C)**
 I fly off the handle quickly. **(A)**
 Sometimes it takes me longer than I'd like to get over being angry. **(B)**
- 3 I occasionally feel regret about how I express my anger. **(B)**
 I simply let bygones be bygones. **(C)**
 I find it very hard to forgive someone who has done me wrong. **(A)**
- 4 Little things don't bother me very much. **(C)**
 I wish I had some better strategies or ideas for taking care of the anger I feel. **(B)**
 I take frustration so badly that I can't put it out of my mind. **(A)**
- 5 I've been so angry at times I couldn't even remember some of the things I said or did. **(A)**
 I consistently find appropriate outlets for my anger. **(C)**
 I'm usually able to figure out what it is that makes me angry. **(B)**
- 6 I don't generally like being angry with others. **(B)**
 I have said malicious things about others to get back at them when I am angry. **(A)**
 I rarely if ever raise my voice in anger. **(C)**
- 7 I've had trouble on the job because of my temper. **(A)**
 My temper has caused problems with loved ones, but we usually seem to work it all out. **(B)**
 If I have anything to do with it, I don't let unresolved issues hang in the air with those I care about. **(C)**
- 8 I don't tend to get in many arguments. **(A)**
 Some people are afraid of my bad temper. **(B)**
 I've blurted things out in anger that I knew I needed to apologize for right away. **(C)**
- 9 Though it doesn't always happen, I usually recognize when I'm angry. **(B)**
 I have control over how I express my anger in the vast majority of situations. **(C)**
 I often break things when I'm angry. **(A)**
- 10 After getting angry, I'm still able to act lovingly toward those around me. **(B)**
 I sometimes feel like arguments with my loved ones just lead to more arguments and difficulties. **(A)**
 My anger tends to come out suddenly in strong bursts that often appear uncontrollable to others around me. **(C)**
- 11 I just keep it to myself when I'm angry. **(A)**
 I am quick to forgive others who have offended me. **(C)**
 I'm usually able to resolve arguments with other people. **(B)**
- 12 After an argument, I often find myself wishing I had thought of a better way to respond. **(B)**
 People tend to think I overreact when I'm angry. **(A)**
 I work hard to have all the facts before acting on my anger. **(C)**

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NOW LET'S SEE HOW YOU DID!

Go back and count how many times you checked each of the individual letters. Then transfer those totals to the appropriate columns below. For example, if you checked A eight times, then write the number 8 in the blank above the A symbol below.

_____ A _____ B _____ C

Multiply the total number in C by two and add the total number in B.

_____ + _____ = _____
C x 2 B TOTAL

IF YOUR TOTAL SCORE IS:

19–24

You Know How To Handle Anger

7–18

You Are Doing Well,
But Can Improve

0–6

Your Anger Is Handling You

WHAT DOES MY SCORE MEAN... AND WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?

19–24 YOU KNOW HOW TO HANDLE ANGER

Your responses indicate that you generally have a good handle on your anger. You are likely aware of what makes you angry, and tend to be intentional in processing your feelings of anger. You likely don't experience too many difficulties from anger-related issues in your personal or professional life. There's always room for improvement, however. Consider the following possibilities for future action:

Action Steps

1. Is there someone that you need to reconcile with? Perhaps you had an issue or conflict some time ago and you haven't taken the initiative or effort to repair your relationship. Assuming it's within your power and you can't foresee any significant and/or unintended negative consequences, prayerfully consider reconciling and rebuilding a relationship with this person. Dr. Chapman highlights some biblical strategies for reconciling in chapter three of this book.
2. Even though you're doing well in handling your anger, none of us are perfect. Maybe you have some unexamined anger that you haven't considered as it relates to your spouse, your kids, your family of origin, your self, or perhaps even God. Take some time to examine your inner life and ask God, as the Psalmist did, to "Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me, and know my anxious thoughts." (Psalm 139:23 NLT) Dr. Chapman has some great words of wisdom for you in chapters 9-12 to figure out new ways of handling these kinds of anger.

7–18 YOU ARE DOING WELL, BUT CAN IMPROVE

Your results are indicative of someone who likely handles your anger well in many situations, but there are still times when your anger is handling you. Recognize the areas where you are doing well in handling your anger, but also be cautious that your anger is not getting out of hand in other ways.

Think about the situations where your anger comes out most often. Is it with loved ones? At work? What happens when you react angrily? Are you a shouter, or do you turn your anger inward? What words do you tend to use? What feelings tend to come out when you're angry, and how do those feelings find expression, in good ways or bad? Consider the following possibilities for future action:

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Action Steps

1. You would benefit from better understanding the distinction between good anger and bad anger. Definitive (or “good”) anger, as Dr. Chapman describes it, is a normal response to genuine wrongdoing, injustice, or mistreatment. Distorted (or “bad”) anger, on the other hand, is our response to others when we have incorrectly perceived a construed wrongdoing, injustice, or mistreatment. We don’t have all the facts correct in distorted anger. Learn some other key differences between the two responses in chapter four of this book.
2. Some people look like they have it all together on the outside and rarely appear out of control due to anger, while underneath the façade they tend to simmer with unexamined anger. This “implosive” anger can be characterized by brooding or withdrawal, among other expressions. Dr. Chapman identifies key strategies to deal with implosive anger in chapter six of his book.

0–6 YOUR ANGER IS HANDLING YOU

Your responses indicate that how you are currently handling your anger could use improvement. You likely have many difficulties stemming from how you express your anger and how you relate to others during times of conflict. Your angry responses in many situations are likely exaggerated and create additional problems for you. You also may not understand why you respond angrily in certain situations, or from where your anger is stemming. These difficulties likely demand further attention from you to either heal some broken relationships or to move ahead in a healthy way in other personal and/or professional situations. Consider the following possibilities for future action:

Action Steps

1. Your angry responses are likely driving people away quicker than you realize or want. It’s important to take a serious look at your anger and how it is affecting your life. You will likely benefit from learning techniques that help you change your anger responses in the heat of the moment. While learning some of these techniques, however, you would also benefit from understanding what anger really is. In chapter one Dr. Chapman helps you define what anger is and where it comes from. Later in chapter three you will learn a unique and manageable technique for managing your anger responses.
2. Proverbs 29:11 (NLT) says “Fools vent their anger, but the wise quietly hold it back.” Perhaps you’ve given vent to your anger for so long and in so many situations that it’s hard to remember what it’s like to keep it under control. Dealing with the long-term effects of anger can be difficult. You’d do well to make yourself very familiar with the specific anger management techniques Dr. Chapman highlights in this book. It may also be very beneficial for you to understand and identify the effects of long-term anger as it relates to your emotional well-being, something that’s explained in greater detail in chapters seven and twelve.

LEARN MORE

Anger can erupt in a flash or smolder for a lifetime. It can spread like wildfire or engulf an individual. Sometimes anger is appropriate and other times it’s irrational, but the fact is that the emotion of anger needs to be a part of a healthy human experience.

Some suggest that anger is merely an evolutionary reflex to danger. However, anger, understood within a Christian worldview, is much more complex. It’s essential that we learn to deal with anger well and, in some cases, use it productively. Anger does not need to control us.

In *Anger: Taming a Powerful Emotion*, Dr. Gary Chapman, author of *The 5 Love Languages*®, offers insight to the often surprising reasons behind our anger. He also guides you in learning helpful techniques for managing this intense emotion with reflection questions included in the book and a downloadable 13-session discussion guide that’s perfect for small groups, workplace studies, and book clubs.

For more information or to take this assessment online, visit www.5lovelanguages.com.

