

Tools for Life – Weekly Health & Safety Meeting

The logo for Apollo Mechanical Contractors, featuring the word "Apollo" in a white, stylized script font inside a dark blue oval.

— MECHANICAL CONTRACTORS —
Building People Who Build Great Things

Anger and Rage

May 2021

According to researchers, roughly 1 in 10 men suffer from rage or “intermittent explosive disorder”. While depression is mostly associated with sadness and hopelessness, it often manifests itself in fits of rage, unnecessary risk taking, and alcohol or drug abuse in men.

Look out for:

- Pounding heart
- Muscle tension
- Accelerated heartbeat
- Changes in breathing
- Body trembles
- Goosebumps
- Flushed face
- Clenched fists
- Loss of control over trivial issues
- Violent impulses
- Inability to face reality
- Jealousy and resentment
- Low frustration tolerance
- Unreasonable expectations
- Suicidal tendencies
- Melancholy and depression
- Dominating behavior

Causes - Anger is often caused by how a person thinks and interpret situations. The following are four types of thinking that can cause irrational anger.

Emotional Reasoning - People who reason emotionally are prone to confusing their own feelings with fact. Because of this, they'll interpret an innocent conversation or event as an attack on them. This can lead to misplaced anger.

Low Frustration Tolerance - Many things can cause frustration tolerance to lower. It can be stress. It can be fatigue. It can be the mother of all hangovers. Regardless of the cause, a low frustration tolerance can lead us to interpreting normal things as threats to our well-being or ego.

Unreasonable Expectations - People with unreasonable expectations expect the world to act how they want it to. If a person, or even an uncontrollable event, behaves differently than what's expected, it's easy for frustration and anger to set in.

People-Rating - People-rating is something we all do on occasion. When we label our boss an asshole or our brother-in-law an idiot, we are actually de-humanizing them and making it easier to get pissed off at them.

Anger could be Addictive - When you get angry, your brain triggers the release of cortisol, adrenaline and catecholamine into your blood stream. These chemicals give your heart the boost it needs to get you through dangerous situations. The effect of anger on the brain shares a similar intoxicating quality to methamphetamines. And like meth, if experienced too often anger can become addicting.

What can you do? Rage is dangerous. Not only could you damage property or explode on another person, you are also a hazard to yourself. And I'm not just talking about bloody knuckles and black eyes. Excessive anger has been shown to raise blood pressure and even cause heart attacks.

If you believe that you are dealing with dysfunctional anger, it's important that you seek professional help. A therapist will likely work with you to determine the source of your anger and provide you with behavioral techniques you can use to disarm the rage before you explode like a stick of dynamite.

HEALTH AND SAFETY REMINDER: “Don't dwell on what went wrong. Instead, focus on what to do next. Spend your energies on moving forward toward finding the answer”. Denis Waitley