



Why Am I So Angry?

I'm so angry I could...

Go ahead, complete the statement. Anger is real and may be a major component of your grief. It is an emotion designed by God which can be activated when you sense injustice occurring in your life. Certainly the death of a child, spouse or loved one qualifies as an injustice. Death is not a welcomed guest in your home.

Even though anger is one of the most common reactions to grief, moving from being angry to accepting the injustice is the key. First, you need to determine what makes you angry. Is it God, or the deceased, or friends or others who have not suffered the same loss as you? Could it be the big or little events that happen in your life, or even yourself for being angry? Feeling helpless and frustrated may cause you to become angry. Anger can cloud your view of life. You do not have to remain angry forever.

Some parents have felt they didn't want to move beyond or through their anger. They may have felt the anger was the only thread connecting them with their child. But those who have chosen to move through have found it was not the only thread or even the strongest, the LOVE was always there.

God can help you move through the process as He did with Job. Job displayed intense anger toward God. Job had lost all of his children (10 to be exact), his material possessions, and his health. Job didn't feel that he was getting a fair shake from God so he confronted Him. That completely honest prayer led to a completely personal response from God. In Job 38-42, God answered Job by reminding him who He is. With that understanding, Job realized that God was sovereign and knew of his loss. He wasn't alone, God was with him every step of the way. God is with us if we allow Him to be.

Expressing anger in a healthy manner allows you to acknowledge it, analyze it and deal with it. Anger can become sinful when it is expressed in an unhealthy manner. Even though you may be angry, grief is not an excuse for sin if you misuse your anger or harbor sinful attitudes. Remember that discerning what is sinful about your anger will be harder because of your grief. Anger actually can help you with your grief by using it to fight against the feelings of depression, guilt and bitterness. You are the one who determines how you will manage your anger.

Healthy Ways To Deal With Anger:

- Verbalize your anger toward others you may be angry with by writing a letter (not to be mailed). Express how you feel and what makes you angry. You may find it helpful to read it aloud with a trusted friend who has been supportive during your grieving. Sometimes just the process of writing out your feelings toward another can resolve the anger. You may even want to compose a poem or a story about your anger.

- Seek out a trusted friend who is willing to hear you out through the power of your emotions.
- Take the energy that your anger generates and focus it into a cause directly related to the death of your loved one. For instance, if your loved one died as a result of a drunk driving accident, join a group such as MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) to further the legislation against drunk drivers.
- Take walks or exercise when you sense the anger building. Use a punching bag, hammer nails, build a desk, split wood!

There are no easy solutions to managing the anger that you are feeling right now. With God's help and the encouragement of others you will be able to redirect those intense feelings of anger into something positive. This will honor the one you have lost. You can move from anger to peace with God. We pray that you will move forward toward acceptance as Job did once he realized how much God cared about his suffering.

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*Handi*Vangelism Ministries International*
P O Box 122, Akron, PA 17501-0122