

What's Your Anger Type?
Revised Edition

with

Technological Rage:
Millennial Anger

Dr. Peter A. Sacco

**a chatty first-person tone blending the authority of a
psychologist with the educational approach of a
professor.**

Diane Donovan 'California Bookwatch

What's Your Anger Type?

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Edited by Thomas L. Law III & Wanda Tyler

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To learn more about Peter and his work, or to book him for a speaking engagement, please visit his website:

www.petersacco.com

Other Titles by Peter Sacco

Fast Food Dating Your 2 Cents
Why Women Want What They Can't Have
Penis Envy
Breast Envy
The Internet Apocalypse

Acknowledgements

Thank you to all of the individuals who I have spoken with over the 'decades' who have shared their insights and ideas about anger. Thank you to the news talk radio and television shows who have entrusted me to come on their shows and share my knowledge and wisdom over the last 20 years!

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FORWARD

I believe the time was right to re-release this book, adding a whole new section on “technological rage”. Since writing this book over a decade ago, it seems that destructive anger has not only grown worse, but it has evolved with technology. In the last five years, I have been contacted by many radio and television networks to appear on their shows as an expert to discuss anger, what causes it, why it escalates into rage, and what can be done to help those with severe anger management problems.

Each time you turn on the television, or see what is trending on Facebook, your stomach turns as you read about another school shooting, an act of domestic terrorism in some workplaces, or a violent act of terrorism perpetrated by an international terrorist organization. Are people really becoming that much angrier that they believe that they need to engage in acts of evil and murder? It really does make you shake your head and wonder! I have been asked on many occasions, "Can anger be addictive?" After working with individuals one on one in counseling and in groups for many years, I would definitely have to say “yes”!

There are people who get totally aroused, empowered and motivated by their anger. According to Hans Seyle, the

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creator of the “Fight or Flight” response phenomenon, people respond to adversity and emotions in one of two ways. They either run from it, or they stand up to it. If you keep standing up to conflict or seek it, you get aroused and release adrenaline. This hormone provides a rush almost like a stimulant or “upper”. After a while, some people get aroused by this feeling so much, they need it. You see it in sports where aggression is a requirement or by-product for success (i.e., football, boxing, UFC, hockey). They use their anger which moves them toward action.

I have found in clients I have worked with who possess this type of anger when they are not engaging in conflict or getting angry, they get bored and/or sometimes even depressed. I have had some clients with alcohol addictions tell me they go to bars on weekends hoping to get into fights. This provides them with both a sense of excitement and power. Just as drugs provide someone with excitement and power, anger can become the same kind of stimulant.

There are so many different types of anger and many reasons why people develop them. There are also many different types of addictions and many reasons why people become addicted to substances. There is, however, an underlying basic root or component which manifests something

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as addictive and why the addiction is maintained. That root is low self-esteem. To some degree, we all go through bouts of doubt in ourselves which can trigger feelings of low self-esteem. Most of us find ways to adapt and modify our self-concept so we can feel good again.

There are some people whose self-concept is so low they become depressed and stay in that mood/mindset. Some experts would assert that depression is actually anger turned inward. I would agree with this when an individual demonstrates masochistic traits and self-destructive tendencies. Those who display their depression outward and become aggressive may actually be masking their depression with anger. Anger becomes a coping mechanism. Just as some people use drugs and alcohol to cope, some people use anger the same way. This becomes their vice!

I could spend hours discussing the intricacies of anger, but here is what I think the two most important attributes of anger are to keep in mind: (1) Everyone gets angry as it is a normal and healthy emotion, and (2) You are not nuts or insane when you get angry.

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It is how you deal with your anger which is the most important factor going forward. Your response can be one that is controlled or one that is out of control and very destructive!

What can you do to change yourself? Practicing patience, seeking guidance/help and renewing the spirit of your mind is a great start! You also have to recondition your thinking and reacting. When we become conditioned to respond angrily, we develop a tendency to respond to most, if not all, similar situations the same way. In essence, you shortcut your thought processes and put your minds on automatic pilot. Rather than rationalize the experience before responding, you react in a conditioned manner. You have to become more introspective of your emotions and learn what sets you off. What are your triggers?

You have to assume responsibility for your actions and reactions. Identify those certain people or situations that set you off and prepare to deal with them differently. There are excellent anger management tools to help you identify your triggers and how to respond differently. The key to change starts with your willingness to accept that you have an anger management problem.

The book *What's Your Anger Type?* has been published on four continents, used in colleges and universities as a text

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book, used in support groups, and has been read by thousands of people worldwide. Many people who have read this book and used the anger management tools in it, claim it has not only changed their lives, but has also saved them from embarrassment, legal problems, from getting fired at work, and even prevented their marriages/families from falling apart!

The purpose of this book is not to chastise you, or tell you what you are doing wrong. Instead, it is about how to make things right in your life when it comes to dealing with emotions that seem to be getting the better of you. My goal is to help teach you how to live a happier and more productive life.

May you move forward letting cooler heads prevail!

Blessings,

Peter Andrew Sacco Ph.D.

PRAISE FROM SOMEONE IN RECOVERY

What's Your Anger Type? is a very informative, enlightening, educational, and entertaining book that sheds tremendous light on the whole emotion of anger. I strongly recommend this book for anyone dealing with their own personal anger-management issues, or living with those possessing anger-management problems.

I am an individual who has dealt with her own fair share of anger issues, which were a bi-product of my addiction/use and recovery. The concepts and strategies in this book helped me not only with my anger-management and aggression issues, but also with my recovery for substance abuse. It helped me understand why I was angry, why I carried a chip on both shoulders and then to come up with ways for creating positive change in my life.

Whether you are young or old, male or female, Western or Eastern culture, this book will definitely help you if you apply the principles that Peter teaches. If you are a parent or a teacher, I would highly recommend this book if you have a short fuse around children. I know my anger types, now I hope you find yours and achieve something positive.

Good luck!

Andrea P.
Toronto, Canada

An Informal Introduction to Your Anger

In the beginning the universe was created. This has made a lot of people angry and been widely regarded as a bad move.

Douglas Adams

Do you have an anger-management problem? Is there something or someone around you, or in your life who is always getting under your skin? Do you just want to explode? Do you feel like you are at the end of your “anger control leash”?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, then this book can definitely help. It might even save you from detrimental situations!

Let's face it, everyone gets angry. Anger is a normal and acceptable human emotion just as happiness, joy, surprise, sadness, and angst. Unfortunately, most of the time anger is expressed in non-productive and unacceptable ways.

No one really complains about individuals who are happy all the time. Similarly, most wouldn't be insensitive to individuals who are experiencing bouts of sadness. Why then is anger looked at in a less productive light?

Perhaps it is due to the few isolated incidents that make the news and media because someone has behaved so badly when they were enraged. Maybe it could be due to the urban legends/myths of people becoming “superhuman” monsters during fits of rage!

Could it be how movies and television portray anger and vengeance for wrongdoings? How far will people go when they are angry? Could they really lose it mentally, psychology and emotionally when they become enraged? Have you ever experienced meltdown?

Interestingly, everyone has the ability to control all facets of how they act, including their anger, because we can all control the seeds that start the process – our *thoughts*!

Below is the flowchart I use with clients to explain how and why they become angry. I will explain it in greater detail later in the book. For now, just examine briefly the process of how our anger begins, flourishes and ends.

Think angry --- Feel angry --- Act angry --- Become angry

In short, thoughts determine your emotions, even anger.

What's Your Anger Type?



Throughout this book I will present 10 key points that I hope will assist you in your anger-management:

1. If we think it, we'll feel it, we'll act that way, and over a long period of time we may even take on that behavior and become it – an angry person.
2. Anger is a normal and healthy emotion. All people emote and are capable of becoming angry at any point in their lives.
3. Since we are all able to exert control over our emotions, we can determine how we choose to express our anger.
4. Anger is a secondary emotion. Some other emotion or thought process always comes *before* anger.
5. There are 12 types of anger and most of us possess some, even many, in different situations and periods in our lives.
6. Everyone possesses a distinct behavioral style for dealing with the world and people around us.
7. There are ways of managing and controlling your anger in more effective and productive ways if you are willing to work at it.
8. It's never too late to modify negative, destructive expressions of anger and replace them with optimal, acceptable alternatives.
9. The same rules for managing anger apply to everyone, even children.
10. It's okay to laugh at yourself sometimes.



In a Sentence or Two, What bothers you Most?

Before delving any further into this book, I'd like you to spend a few minutes, or longer if required, to make a casual self-inventory of your anger.

Pay close attention to all the specific people, places, situations, and things that contribute to your anger. List anything and everything you can think of, no matter how foolish or absurd it may appear.

Things that anger me most are...

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

Now that you have listed your top 10 anger precipitators, compare them with the most common irritants that people report. As you look through the list, see if you can pick out a common theme.

Common Anger Triggers:

1. Spouse
2. Children
3. Co-workers
4. Boss
5. Traffic
6. Rude people
7. Dogs pooping on your lawn
8. Bad weather (too much rain/snow)
9. Governments and politicians
10. Taxes
11. Long line-ups
12. Bad drivers
13. Inflation
14. Drunk people
15. Gossipers
16. Slow restaurant service
17. Congested parking lots
18. Messy kids/spouses
19. People who cheat
20. Sports teams you root for that always lose
21. Bad parents
22. Rules that make no sense
23. Racism/discrimination
24. TV/cable problems
25. Bad Internet service
26. People talking during movies
27. Obnoxious sports fans
28. People who let you down
29. Plans that fall through/disappointment
30. People abusing the social assistance/support system

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31. Tardiness in others
32. Self
33. When life treats you unfairly
34. Stupidity
35. Barking dogs
36. Babies crying uncontrollably
37. Hard to follow directions/instructions
38. People smoking in your space
39. Ban on smoking (for smokers)
40. People who stand/sit too close, invading your personal space
41. When someone wakes you up
42. Telemarketers
43. Door-to-door solicitors
44. When someone doesn't listen to you or understand you
45. Litter bugs
46. People who don't flush toilets/urinals
47. Road construction
48. Trains holding up traffic
49. Plane delays
50. Things/cars breaking down

How many “irritants” on the list were you able to relate too as “triggers” for your own anger?

Throughout this book I will use these two terms “irritants” and “triggers” to refer to those people, events or things you attribute to causing you to experience anger. Also, I will show you how nothing can make you angry unless you allow it that power. Even though something from the above list can attribute to your anger, it can't make you angry!

Nothing can make you angry on its own unless you let it!

When you look at the title of this book *What's Your Anger Type?* you're probably asking yourself is there more than one type of anger, and if so what type(s) of anger do I have?

Identifying what type of anger you possess is probably the best place to start. Once you identify your anger type, then you can identify your triggers/irritants and modify behaviors, situations and perceptions to create new ways of feeling.

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And Your Anger Type is?

The biggest misconception about me is that I'm angry and violent. But I'm a real sweetie.

Jack Nicholson

Want to Know What Your Anger Type Is?

If you want to know more about what type of anger you possess, it would be a good idea to complete the modified questionnaire below. It has been developed from hundreds of sample questions given to clients, patients, students, employee program participants, and general interest groups.

The outcome of the questionnaire will show you what types of anger exist and which one(s) you possess. In subsequent chapters I will provide explanations and descriptions of each anger type.

I have selected the best 36 questions that illuminate specific anger types. You will need a pen or pencil. On a separate sheet of paper, make a list from 1 to 36. For each question, write down the corresponding score that best represents how you are feeling, thinking or behaving in that particular situation.

- 0 - Does Not Pertain To Me
- 1 - Sometimes True For Me
- 3 - Often The Case For Me
- 5 - Always The Case For Me

When completing this quiz, it is very important to think about your answers in the present moment. Do not answer questions based on how you once behaved or how you wish you behaved.

The best way to determine your particular anger type(s) is to be as honest as possible and give yourself the rating that first comes to mind. Do not rationalize or think too much about each question.

Also, do not get worried if you feel you are answering too many questions as "most of the time". The purpose of this quiz is not to diagnose but to identify anger patterns and types in order to make appropriate thought, feeling and behavior modifications.

What's Your Anger Type? Quiz

Q1. No matter what the situation is, I try to never get mad. To get mad would not be good.

0 1 3 5

Q2. Whenever my computer screen freezes up I pound on the mouse. I don't have time for this!

0 1 3 5

Q3. I like getting angry because it really pumps me up. I feel like I can do anything when I am angry.

0 1 3 5

Q4. When I get angry I stay angry for a long time. It's just so hard to let it go.

0 1 3 5

Q5. I tend to really lose emotional control when I get mad. I just can't think rationally.

0 1 3 5

Q6. In my relationships I tend to get jealous quite easily.

0 1 3 5

Q7. I tend to get really annoyed whenever I get stuck in traffic jams. I have no patience.

0 1 3 5

Q8. I find myself easily getting into arguments and debates with others over trivial things.

0 1 3 5

Q9. There is rarely a day that goes by in which I don't get mad.

0 1 3 5

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Q10. When I am angry I usually like to hide my feelings and pretend I am not angry.

0 1 3 5

Q11. I really get upset whenever someone puts me down or insults me.

0 1 3 5

Q12. I am most motivated whenever I am angry. My anger moves me toward action.

0 1 3 5

Q13. I feel very uncomfortable whenever I am faced with confrontations or conflicts. I try to avoid them.

0 1 3 5

Q14. I get so angry when I get pop ups on my Internet. I curse and swear. Damn advertisements!

0 1 3 5

Q15. Watching fights in sports, on television or in real life excites me. I actually get pumped up!

0 1 3 5

Q16. Forgiving others who have wronged me is very difficult. I just can't seem to forgive and forget.

0 1 3 5

Q17. The best way to describe me when I am mad is a time bomb. I get so angry I explode!

0 1 3 5

Q18. I tend to have a habit of putting people down behind their backs.

0 1 3 5

What's Your Anger Type?

Q19. Whenever someone cuts me off when I am driving, I curse them with fingers or fist gestures and yell at them.

0 1 3 5

Q20. I like to prepare for an argument with someone even though they have no idea it is coming. I argue to win!

0 1 3 5

Q21. I am angry most of the time throughout the course of a day. This seems to be a common feeling I experience

0 1 3 5

Q22. I don't get mad... I prefer to get even!

0 1 3 5

Q23. Whenever I discuss my personal beliefs or ideals, I find myself defending them aggressively. If people don't like what I think or believe, then to heck with them!

0 1 3 5

Q24. I find when I am angry I can get what I want much easier. My anger gets me what I want!

0 1 3 5

Q25. I have always been taught anger is bad and I should never show it.

0 1 3 5

Q26. Nothing annoys me more than telemarketers. What gives them the right to call my house?

0 1 3 5

Q27. Whenever I or someone around me gets angry, I get really excited. My heart races and I feel things getting out of control.

0 1 3 5

Q28. I tend to relive the wrongs people have done to me over and over in my head. I just can't shake these thoughts!

What's Your Anger Type?

0 1 3 5

Q29. When I get angry I punch, throw or break things.

0 1 3 5

Q30. I dislike people who get everything they want in life. Why does everyone else get the breaks?

0 1 3 5

Q31. When people in front of me drive too slow, I get angry. They shouldn't be driving if they don't drive the speed limit!

0 1 3 5

Q32. I tend to find fault with people and things in life. I just wish things would be more the way I would like them to be.

0 1 3 5

Q33. I have dreams in which I get into fights and come out the winner. I like these kinds of dreams because they make me feel good even though they are not real.

0 1 3 5

Q34. If someone has hurt me or wronged me, I will see to it they experience the same kind of hurt as well.

0 1 3 5

Q35. I can't talk about politics, religion or personal subjects without feeling myself getting upset or even angry. These types of topics should not be discussed as they only lead to disagreements.

0 1 3 5

Q36. I tend to work best under stress and pressure. I prefer deadlines because I seem to always get things done at the last minute.

0 1 3 5

END OF QUIZ

What's Your Anger Type?

Please tally your score (the numbers you circled). Once you have a total, compare it with the following measures:

150 - 180 points	Severe Anger Management Problems
120 - 149 points	Moderate Anger Management Problems
80 - 119 points	Mild Anger Management Problems
30 - 79 points	Stressed/Frustrated Easily
0 - 29 points	Cool As A Cucumber



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If you had a score that was extremely high (the severe anger-management domain), don't fret. I will provide you with the necessary tools for dealing with your anger later in the book.

For now though, it's not your total score you'll focus on, rather the subset scores that match up to each specific category of anger.

There are 12 types of anger you were tested for. Your anger usually falls within one of these 12 types. In order to better understand which specific type of anger you possess, please re-tally your scores using the following method.

Add your scores combining the questions in the following groups:

Subgroups

1	Questions: 1, 13, 25
2	Questions: 2, 14, 26
3	Questions: 3, 15, 27
4	Questions: 4, 16, 28
5	Questions: 5, 17, 29
6	Questions: 6, 18, 30
7	Questions: 7, 19, 31
8	Questions: 8, 20, 32
9	Questions: 9, 21, 33
10	Questions: 10, 22, 34
11	Questions: 11, 23, 35
12	Questions: 12, 24, 36

For each subgroup, you will have a different score. Each score will represent a specific type of anger.

Once you have a score for each subgroup, please compare the score with the matching measures:

Measures

12 - 15	Very High
9 - 11	High
5 - 8	Moderate
1 - 4	Low

If your score for the 3 questions in each subgroup tallies "Very High" or "High", then you possess the characteristics for that specific type of anger. Generally, most people score highly in more than just one category.

The following subgroups of questions reflect a particular anger type:

Subgroup Anger Type

1	Resistant/Passive
---	-------------------

What's Your Anger Type?

- 2 | Internet/Computer Rage
- 3 | Addictive Anger
- 4 | Petrified Anger
- 5 | Compressive Anger
- 6 | Jealousy
- 7 | Road Rage
- 8 | Conflictual Anger
- 9 | Habituated Anger
- 10 | Passive-Aggression
- 11 | Moralistic Anger
- 12 | Manipulative Anger

Each of the subtypes of anger possesses an “anger component” at the core of the domain. However, there are different reasons for how the anger evolved and why it continues.

In the subsequent chapters, I will provide a working definition of each type of anger focusing on its beginnings, it's M.O. (method of operation) and its typical outcome.

Keep in mind, the type of anger you possess may change or shift depending on the events taking place in your life. Also, since most of us experience stress and frustration as a by-product of the busy lives we lead, it would be expected that we would experience some type of anger some of the time.

Let's now discuss each anger type in turn.

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Resistant and Passive Anger

If you kick a stone in anger, you'll hurt your own foot.

Korean Proverb

When you were a child, did your parents ever tell you anger is “bad” and you should never show it? Were you ever punished for getting upset and then banished to your bedroom, or if in school, to the corner? Perhaps your parents were of the mindset “children should be seen and not heard”?

If you scored “High” or “Very High” for the questions pertaining to resistant/passive anger, then you may have issues with anger as an emotion!

Resistant/passive anger is the type of anger learned from parents, role models and teachers who lack emotional expression or dismiss anger as a healthy emotion.

In fact, this type of anger is passed on from generation to generation by those who are averse to expressing emotions they view as negative. They also try to avoid all forms of conflict in their lives. They endorse an affirmation that “anger is bad” and should be avoided at all times.

Some families and cultures view the expression of anger as a weakness! They believe when one expresses emotions such as anger and sadness, they are revealing their psychological weaknesses.

Moreover, media (TV shows and movies) usually portray angry people as explosive and out of control. Some movies have gone so far as to depict anger as a mental health illness requiring committal to a psychiatric ward or serious on-going counseling. Is it any wonder some people avoid the issue of anger all together?

A major reason resistant/passive anger manifests in people is because they've been raised in dysfunctional families where fighting was a normal event. When you were a child growing up, did your parents and family members argue and fight all the time? Did the constant fighting give you butterflies and make your stomach upset? Did you worry someone was going to get hurt? Perhaps you? Did family members go to bed with anger weighing heavy in their hearts?

You might have felt so sad and helpless from the bickering and fighting that you just withdrew. You may have felt totally helpless and made a conscious promise to yourself never to get angry or disagree with anyone because it might lead to fighting.

The groundwork was laid and you trained your mind to avoid anger at all costs by keeping everything inside. This is not healthy! Did you know that anger turned inward and never expressed has the ability to take on a detrimental emotion called depression?

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If you keep everything inside yourself and never vent your frustrations, these feelings are going to fester inside of you like some old cheese left in the back of the refrigerator.

In the beginning you know what anger is. The more you keep suppressing it, however, you lose track of what it becomes. It develops into a kind of disfigured entity like moldy cheese, which becomes discolored and hard to discern anymore. The longer it stays in the tray and cultures the more difficult it is to clean.

Oftentimes people suffering from depression will describe their moods as gray or black. That is what depression feels like for many, a dark pit! They feel helpless, hopeless and hapless. They feel they have little or no control over their lives. They feel ignored and no one cares.

Why is that? Because they don't dare speak up for fear they might offend, challenge or make someone angry! According to this type of anger, you must avoid anger at all costs, even if that means making yourself feel ill.

Here are some examples where resistant anger is at its worst.



Scenario #1

Sandra is fed up with people using her. She feels like she is always giving to people but never getting anything in return.

One of her closest friends Amanda is the prime culprit. She feels Amanda takes advantage of her and uses her. She has a hard time saying “no” to Amanda’s requests. She worries however, that if she refuses her Amanda might like her less or not want to be her friend at all.

This really bothers Sandra, yet she has made a conscious decision to be strong and say “no” next time Amanda asks her to babysit her kids.

A friend from Sandra’s past calls and invites her to go to a concert this coming Friday night. Sandra is ecstatic and can’t wait to go.

The next day Amanda calls and asks her to babysit the same night as the concert. Amanda tells her it is very important; she has the “dream date” of her life.

Sandra can hear the loud “no’s” screaming in her head. Before she even knows what has happened, though, she has agreed to babysit Amanda’s kids, thus forfeiting the Friday concert. She is so upset with Amanda. She hates Amanda! She hates herself for agreeing!

What is the cause of Sandra’s anger? The inability to say no due to fear of rejection.

What's Your Anger Type?

What are the precipitating factors? Others know they can take advantage of Sandra. They know exactly how much they can get away with. Sandra is a pleaser. Due to her low self-esteem, she worries that others will stop liking her.

Do these friends actually like and respect her?



Scenario #2

Ivan asks Nick if he wants to see a movie Saturday night. Nick's response is, "Yeah, if you want too."

Ivan asks Nick which movie he would like to see. "I don't know, whatever you want," replies Nick.

"Do you want me to pick you up or do you want to get me?" Ivan asks Nick. Nick shrugs his shoulders. "Doesn't matter to me."

Ivan asks Nick if he prefers to see the early show or the late show. "Either one is okay with me," replies Nick.

Ivan starts to feel very frustrated with Nick's indecisiveness. Nick on the other hand, feels pressured by Ivan. Ivan wishes he had never asked Nick to hang out with him in the first place.

What is the cause of Nick's resistant anger? He doesn't know how to make decisions for himself. He tends to go with the flow, never being the initiator.

What are the precipitating factors? Nick has probably had others make plans and decisions for him in the past. It is a good bet Nick has never been taught how to be assertive. In fact, his parents were probably over-protective.

Ivan on the other hand becomes frustrated and annoyed over Nick's indecisiveness. Nick perceives Ivan's invite as a burden, forcing him to make a decision.



Scenario #3

Kelly was taught by her parents at an early age little girls should be seen and not heard. As a 25-year old lady, she now works for a firm as a secretarial assistant. She feels her boss and other co-workers place unrealistic workloads on her desk, demands she is unable to meet.

Her boss has asked her on occasion if she would like an assistant to help her. She has blatantly refused to have an assistant, stating, "Everything is under control."

The stress from work is really getting to her. She rarely sleeps, eats and is miserable most of the time. She has grown to hate going to work. She resents her boss more each day.

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Noticing her recent discomfort and unhappiness, her boss requests a meeting to discuss her mood swings. She assures her boss everything is fine and that it's a woman thing, not to worry.

He suggests bringing in an assistant and she argues she doesn't need one. In fact, she requests more work to take home for the weekend as she claims this is her passion. Her boss gives in to her requests.

Weeks later, while leaving work late one afternoon, she notices she has left her keys inside the car and the doors are locked. Kelly picks up a large brick and starts bashing in the driver's window before smashing all the windows. She cowers to the ground and begins to break down.

What is the cause of Kelly's anger? Being stressed and over-worked.

What are the precipitating factors? Kelly's main problem is that she doesn't know how to do things in moderation. She doesn't seek help when she needs it and refuses it when offered. She has learned to keep everything inside and not burden others.

Most importantly, Kelly does not have an outlet for her stress, thus leading to her emotional breakdown. She needs to learn to release the emotional garbage before it festers inside of her.



Have you ever heard the term “nervous breakdown”?

Clinically speaking, there is no such thing. Perhaps the best way to refer to this loosely slung, slang term is to view it as mental burnout. The precipitating cause is persistent or escalating stress in one's life, which leads to unceasing frustration. Eventually, you get to the point where you can't take it anymore and reach meltdown.

Here are some of the signs and symptoms to look for with this type of anger:

- Chronic fatigue
- Nausea/vomiting
- Constant colds
- Small aches/pains
- Feeling tired and run down
- Loss of appetite
- Sleep disturbances/insomnia
- Mental flashbacks
- Frequent crying spells
- Suicidal thoughts
- Social isolation/withdrawing
- Drinking/drug use
- Pessimism
- Irrational fears

What's Your Anger Type?

- Depression

Interestingly, depression seems to be the most common by-product of resistant anger. The individual is so pre-occupied with not being angry that they become highly focused on the emotion unconsciously.

Consequently, the anger is turned inward and manifests itself in the form of depression. Rather than expel the negative feelings that are building inside, you hold onto them and try to extinguish them inside. Sure the anger gets watered down; however, it becomes diluted into a more “acceptable” emotion – depression.

Think about it for a moment. What emotion is more likely to receive greater empathy and sympathy? Anger or depression?

If you're angry, people avoid you because they perceive you as dangerous. On the other hand, if you are depressed, you are perceived to be less of a threat. In fact, people will start to feel sorry for you and actually enable your depression. So you in fact become more readily “accepted” for being depressed.

Have you ever been around someone or know someone who constantly complains all the time? Are they always complaining about some ache or pain? Does it feel like pulling teeth whenever you ask them to make a decision or commit to something?

This resistant type of anger allows a person to engage in a passive, helpless mindset where they rely on others to make their decisions for them.

Some individuals with resistant anger could be classified as possessing a “sodomasochistic” personality. In fact, the only time they feel alive is when they are “in pain” or complaining about something.

From my work with clients, these are some of the behavioral attributes individuals with this anger type display:

- Allowing others to make decisions for them
- Feeling used and unappreciated
- Frustrating others by showing no initiative or assertion
- Saying yes when they want to say no
- Being in situations they don't want to be in
- Blaming others for their unhappiness
- Constantly seeking other's approval
- Feeling like every situation is the same

The bottom line with this anger type is they *never feel good about themselves*. The world is always unfair to them. They were dealt a bad hand of cards. There is a conspiracy going on and everyone is against them. They just don't understand why things are the way they are.

What's Your Anger Type?

These people have developed a method of self-defeating thinking and have trapped themselves in a lazy, irrational, stereotypical way of perceiving the world.

I once spoke with Dr. Robert Schuller. He taught “possibility thinking” through his books and television show, *The Hour of Power*. I asked him what he thought were the most important needs a human possessed.

He told me: self-esteem.

Bottom line: People with resistant anger require assertiveness training and self-esteem growth.

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