

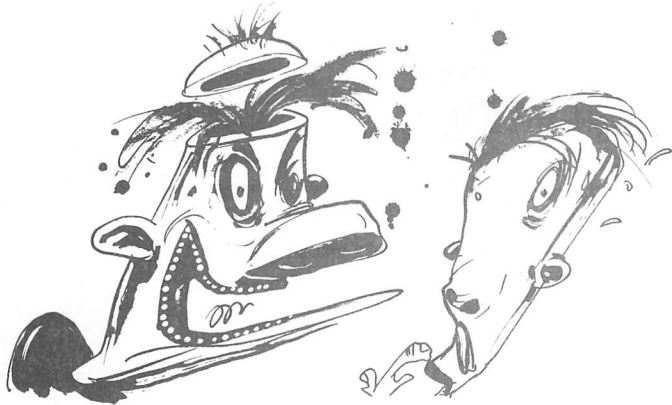
YOU MAKE ME SO MAD

1. List three things that make you extremely angry.

2. How would you finish these?
When my mom gets mad, she—

When my dad gets mad, he—

When I get mad, I—



3. What do you think—

Y (yes, I think so) or N (nope, I don't think so)?

- Some people get too violent when they're angry.
- There are positive and negative ways to express anger.
- I have a right to get angry when someone hurts me.
- I get angry often.
- People who lose their tempers are immature.
- Anger really isn't that big of a deal.
- Hiding anger is a good thing to do.
- Anger is a sin.
- Christians should express anger differently from non-Christians.

4. How would you respond to these situations?

- a. Someone swears at you.
- b. Your parents blame you for something you didn't do.
- c. The coach won't put you in the game.
- d. Someone steals your wallet from your locker at school.
- e. A teacher gives you a D on your term paper.
- f. You are angry with yourself.

5. Read each verse below and complete the sentences in your own words.

Proverbs 14:17 When I'm angry, I—

Proverbs 15:1 When I speak, I—

Proverbs 29:11 I can control my anger by—

Ephesians 4:26 If I'm angry I—

YOU MAKE ME SO MAD [a n g e r]

THIS WEEK

Anger is a powerful emotion and a difficult one to handle, especially for teenagers. It is said that, "Anger, like fire, finally dies out—but not before it leaves a path of destruction." Most young people don't know who to deal with anger. This TalkSheet gives your group a chance to talk about anger, healthy solutions, and how a Christian should handle it.

OPEN

Start off by breaking your group up into small groups and giving each group one of the following situations—

- Your parent or guardian grounded you for coming in ten minutes after curfew.
- Your girlfriend or boyfriend lied to you.
- The coach hasn't put you in for five games straight.
- A few of your friends went out last weekend without you.
- Your car stalled on the way to school, and you got a detention for being tardy.
- The teacher loaded you with homework—like you don't have enough to do!
- Your boss always gives you shifts on weekend nights.
- The college of your choice rejected your application.

Ask the small group to brainstorm and make a list of some different reactions to the situation. You can either have them role-play the situations as a group or discuss the different reactions with the whole group. What potential reactions are better—or more effective—than others? How would your kids handle these situations differently? Does anger pay off in these situations? Why or why not?

THE DISCUSSION, BY NUMBERS

1. Make a list of all the things that make your kids angry. How do they usually respond? Why?
2. Have the group share their completed sentences. There are often similarities between how anger is handled by parents and their children. Do your kids react like their parents? Why or why not?
3. Many young people have difficulty expressing anger. They either hold it inside or let it out in destructive ways. Anger is an emotional reaction—not a sin. It's what they do with the anger that counts. Discuss healthy ways to deal with anger—but don't gloss over the fact that it's okay to get mad sometimes. Especially if that anger can lead to positive outcomes, like fixing a friendship, mending a relationship, or understanding a situation better.
4. This gives your group the chance to examine appropriate and inappropriate ways to handle anger.

Let them share their responses to the situations. Are some responses better than others? Why?

5. Ask several kids to share their sentences with each other. You may want to point out that Jesus got angry, too (Matthew 21:12-13). Even God gets angry (Joshua 23:16)! Also, point out that God gives us peace and is able to take anger away. Challenge your youth to ask God to help them deal with their anger and ask him to fill them with his peace.

THE CLOSE

Norman Vincent Peale said, "The next time you feel a surge of anger, say to yourself, 'Is this really worth what it's going to do to me and another, emotionally? I will make a fool of myself. I may hurt someone I love, or I might lose a friend.'"

Challenge your group members to deal with their anger in healthy ways. Encourage them to take some time to cool off. Assure them their angry feelings are not sinful—it's the reaction that they need to control.

Also, you may want to discuss what happens when people let their anger go too far. Some of your kids may have abusive parents, broken homes, or substance abusers in their families. It's crucial to communicate that it is never acceptable for a parent, boyfriend, or other person to hit them out of anger. Remind them that if they or a friend is ever in an abusive situation, they must seek help from a trusted adult—a teacher, school counselor, or pastor. Assure them that you are there for them as a confidential source of support and help. For more information and links on physical abuse, check out the National Exchange Club Foundation (www.preventchildabuse.com) or the American Humane Association (www.americanhumane.org).

MORE

- Take some time to talk about the impact of anger in society. List some current situations in the news that relate to anger, such as examples of school violence, gang activity, rape, or other crimes. Communicate that we are a very pressured society—there are so many expectations that people can't deal with. What role can your kids play to be peacemakers among their peers and families?
- Have your kids surf the Internet for information on hate groups—skinheads, neo-Nazis, and white supremacists. You may be surprised at what your kids already know about these groups. Discuss the motives behind these groups, what issues they are angry about, and what your kids can do to deal with these groups.