

How Your Anger Effects Your Child

by Ernesto Segismundo, M.S., Licensed MFT

Anger is a powerful emotion that is often more destructive if not expressed productively. There are two ways anger is expressed unproductively—implosively and explosively.

Explosive expression of anger is like a bomb exploding—you can hear it, feel it, sense it, etc. Experiencing a bomb explode can also make others feel a high level of anxiety and fear. This is analogous to explosive anger. Implosive anger is quite the opposite. Implosive anger is quiet, meek, and most of the time unnoticeable.

It is like the lava boiling within the volcano which eventually will flow from within, burning anything in its path. An individual with implosive expression of anger normally contain the anger at the core of the self. They avoid outward expression of their anger for fear of being judged by others and or avoid the consequences of explosive anger (jail, physically hurting others, etc). People who express anger implosively are more likely take out anger on themselves. They are the cutters; the depressed individual; they are the drug and alcohol abusers and the lonely individual. Children, who grow up in a home where a parent expresses their anger explosively, usually express their anger implosively.

This is because children cannot compete with the explosive parent. A child who bully other children in school are likely acting out the behaviors they see from a parent or caregiver who has explosive anger. Implosive anger can cause moderate to severe depression. Depression is marked by irritable moods, sadness, isolation, lack of energy, difficulty sleeping, and lack of appetite and feelings of hopelessness.



Everyone has a breaking point and it is just a matter of time when implosive anger turns into explosive anger. In other words, if not expressed productively, anger will manifest itself outwardly eventually. It is analogues to a parent who patiently directs her son to clean up his room and son takes his time or completely ignores his parent. After repeated requests to clean his room, the parent then explodes due to frustration.

It's difficult to get out of quick sand and it's the same when one is in the state of anger. Prevention and a plan of action is the key to ensure that anger is not expressed unproductively.

FIRST - Identify Your Angry Triggers.

Knowing what triggers your anger can help you avoid those situations that will spiral you into a state of anger.

SECOND - Know Your "Automatic Thoughts" in Certain Situation.

Identify your pattern on interpreting events, situations, and behaviors. Anger and anxiety are related. What this means, is when you're angry you are also anxious. Anxiety has a lot to do with your perception of certain events and situation. For example, mother ask son to clean room. Son does not clean room. Mother interprets the situation as defiance from his son when they could be other explanation as to why son did not clean his room. But mother's, automatic thought is that "my son is being defiant towards me." Her thought and belief, then causes anxiety in mother—triggering an angry response towards his son. The more negative your outlook on life, the more likely you will interpret situations, events and behaviors of others as negative.

THIRD - Take Care of Yourself.

People are often overwhelmed with life in general. People forget that simple things in life can help one control their anger (i.e. walking, going to the movies, working out, attending church, date night, physical activities, dancing and dieting etc.). When you don't take care of yourself, mundane situations may trigger an angry response.

FOURTH - Apply Boundaries with People.

Understand your limits. Say "no" when you don't have to do things for others. Being a "people pleaser" may not be a good thing. You may have a lot of friends because you're a "giving" individual. However, you may be building up resentment towards others for taking advantage of your kind hearted service.

FIFTH - Surround Yourself with Positive and Supportive People.

Negative people are contagious. They poison you with toxic ways of relating to others. Before you know it, you become that which you hate—a negative person. Positive people are contagious also. Unlike negative people, they help you to increase confidence, self-esteem and self-worth. Positive people are motivating, encouraging, and fun. Sometimes just being around them helps remind you that life does not have to be a burden.

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