

Steps to keep anger from taking over

Anger is a part of life. Anger can help us in times of emergencies. However, anger can also get the better of us.

A client, Jim, told me that all through elementary school he was picked on. He was ridiculed by classmates and neighbors until he made friends with anger. Anger was an answer to his prayers. He realized that the more he played and hung out with anger, the less people picked on him.



**EDWARD
CALLIRGOS**
IN THE FAMILY

However, he also noticed that hanging out with anger led to more trips to the principal's office and eventually trips to the county jail. Anger got in between Jim and his wife, between him and his dying father, between him and his son. The more Jim hung out with anger, the more isolated he felt and the more difficult it was to say goodbye to his protector and confidant.

Anger knew Jim's feeling of insecur-

ity, his pain, his feeling of worthlessness, and anger would cover up those feelings for Jim. Jim told me that he felt powerful and in control. Anger would remind Jim of that every time until he wound up in jail. There he met other men who knew anger and had ended up like Jim — alone, bitter and numb. What can we do to manage our anger?

- » Seek support from family, friends and, if needed, a professional.
- » Find ways to express your emotions in a safe and secure environment.
- » Think of the consequences of your actions. Is it worth it?
- » Pray, meditate, breathe or worship.
- » Have reasonable expectations for ourselves and others.
- » Increase our understanding of ourselves, family and environment.
- » Better understand forgiveness — not just forgiving others but also forgiving ourselves.

Reach Callirgos, a licensed associate marriage and family therapist and Mesa Community College communications instructor, at ecallirg@gmail.com.