

As I thought about this month's newsletter, I found myself reflecting on fireworks. They are loud and beautiful and while I love them during a celebration, I'm terrified when they are randomly set off.

Musing about literal fireworks made me think about the figurative fireworks caused by people through anger-driven behavior. My mind wandered to these emotional "fireworks" because recently several people have talked to me about temper outbursts from physicians and other leaders and how it makes those who are exposed to the display feel.

My first response is usually that I understand the triggers present in our healthcare system and how they prompt anger responses. After I connect to the frustration, I worry about how this anger impacts the angry person, the people in their vicinity, and the system as a whole.

It turns out my worry is well-founded. A recent article in JAMA found that angry surgeons have more surgical complications. (<https://bit.ly/2FmA655>) In addition to the specific research, I am aware how anger impacts everyone exposed to it, even at small doses. Anger can make you feel unappreciated, hurt, stupid, and unsafe.

Let me give you a very simple example. Imagine you've just been told by a member of your support team that what's expected of you is changing. You don't like change, (no one does) so you react with anger directed at the messenger. You state things like, "This place never gets things right! Can't you do your job?"

Nothing positive is accomplished by your outburst. The person taking the brunt of your anger has zero power. Your anger also hasn't contributed to a larger discussion that could have created an understanding of your frustration or another option. What you did accomplish, however, was making a person who was just doing their job feel unsafe, meaning they will no longer want to have your back. Even if you felt better for a moment, your "fireworks" left you feeling just as angry.

QUOTES

What lens in your world today, if removed, would grant you greater freedom?

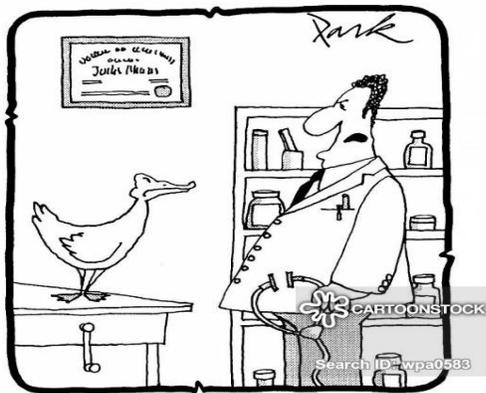
– LeAura Alderson

For every minute you remain angry, you give up sixty seconds of peace of mind.

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Just remember There's a right way and a wrong way to do everything and the wrong way is to keep trying to make everybody else do it the right way.

– Colonel Potter, M*A*S*H



"Call me that one more time and you can find yourself another doctor!"

If you are someone who believes you understand and can justify anger outbursts, I recommend the book, ***The Anger Fallacy: Uncovering the Irrationality of the Angry Mindset*** by Steven Laurent and Ross G. Menzies. The book's premise is that anger is never helpful and suggests that we "...not hate anger, but merely see it for what it is... Anger is...fallacies of judgement, and a kind of self-centered myopia... that Darwinian pressures demanded." The authors give concrete examples of mindsets that feed anger and offer suggestions to learn how to alter them through a dose of wisdom and recommended hard work. At the very least, the book gives you a new lens from which to view anger and to empower all of us to respond with dignity for ourselves and everyone we encounter.

Happy 4th and as always, thank you for all that you do! *Kathy*



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