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Signs That Rage Has Turned Into An Addiction

By Newton Hightower

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All addictions have symptoms, which allow us to recognize these problems as addictive diseases. The signs of addictive diseases are self-stimulation, compulsion, obsession, denial, withdrawal and craving syndrome, and unpredictable behavior. Like alcoholism or drug use, anger meets many of the criteria.

Self-Stimulation

For those who are rageaholics, expressing anger is self-stimulating. It triggers the compulsion for more anger. For example, let's pretend that we are going to provide treatment for alcoholics. On the way to the treatment center we stop and buy a case of beer. When we get to the meeting, we tell the alcoholics in therapy that they just need to do a lot of drinking to get it out of their system once and for all. This is similar to when therapist tell men with rage problems, "You just need to express yourself and get it out of your system." It is just as absurd. The more alcoholics drink, the more they want. The more ragers rage, the more they want to rage.

Compulsion

Anger addiction or "rageaholism" is the compulsive pursuit of a mood change by repeatedly engaging in episodes of rage despite adverse consequences. Rageaholics continue to rage compulsively without regard to the negative consequences. Compulsion or loss of control is the inability to stop expressing anger once we have begun. The inability to control angry words is a certain sign of rageaholism. Loss of control—that is addiction.

Obsession

Rageaholics are frequently preoccupied with resentment and fantasies of revenge. Those thoughts sometimes rise powerfully and allow no other thoughts to enter. The force of anger is sometimes irresistible and followed by action. Therefore, the preoccupation with the "wrongs" of others and

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revenge continually leads to rage. Progressively, these thoughts crowd out all others until our life becomes chronically revenge-oriented. At that point, anger controls our thoughts.

Denial

Denial keeps anger addicts trapped. It is the mental process by which we conclude that the addiction is not the problem; it's "them." Ignorance of addiction and the inability to examine ourselves, work together to keep rageaholics stuck. Knowing no other way to live, we deny that there is anything wrong with us. This system of denial ensures that the process of rage and righteous indignation will continue. Righteous indignation keeps our focus off of ourselves. This is why ragers seldom are able to say, "I am wrong."

Withdrawal and Craving

As with any addiction, anger has a detoxification period. Craving is high during this time. Those who abstain from name-calling, profanity and yelling during this period report more depression than usual for the first three months. Typically, during the first 90 days of abstinence, ragers feel vulnerable and spend a lot of time thinking and hoping for a situation that will allow us to use violence for some heroic purpose. Afterward, however, if we have achieved complete abstinence and maintained it for 90 days, we find we no longer think in profane or disparaging terms. It may even become shocking when we hear others do it.

Unpredictable Behavior

Another definition of alcoholism is that when an alcoholic drinks, there is no way to predict his or her behavior. He may drink appropriately from time to time, just as the rageaholic may express anger appropriately from time to time. However, when the alcoholic starts to drink alcohol, all bets are off. No one knows what is going to happen. When rageaholics start to express anger, no one knows where it is going to go. The most likely think is that they will explode, rant and rave. Rageaholics would like to learn how to express our anger appropriately just like alcoholics would like to learn how to drink appropriately. While there are some exceptions, I encourage those with rage problems to abstain from the expression of anger for one year.

This plan is only for that small percent of the population who have rage or violence problems. The approach described here is not for everyone; but for those addicted to rage, it won't work to express your anger.

Newton Hightower is the Director of The Center for Anger Resolution, Inc. in Houston, Texas, and author of the new book "Anger Busting 101: New ABCs for Angry Men and the Women Who Love Them." Visit Newton's website for anger-busting ideas and a free email newsletter filled with guest articles and tips for husbands, wives, and therapists.

How To Reduce The Risk For Being A Victim Of Road Rage?

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By Christoph Puetz

Traffic in large metropolitan areas is growing fast. The traffic volume is outgrowing the roads faster than expected and traffic jams are pre-programmed. Large volumes of traffic on a non-sufficient infrastructure are some of the biggest challenges drivers are facing. Driving turns into a tedious task and is no fun anymore. Stop and Go traffic; traffic jams; accidents; noise; the feeling of being stuck – all these things drive up the stress level for drivers. The result can be experienced on our streets every day: Road Rage

How is road rage being defined? "Violent behavior exhibited by drivers in traffic, often as a manifestation of stress"

Pretty much every driver has experienced road rage at one point in his life. Being cutoff by a rude driver, getting the "Finger" shown, or being tailgated by a fellow driver are just the minor signs of road rage. More severe signs of road rage involve shootings, being followed and harassed by another driver or even pushed off the road. Road rage can result in injury and even death. The least thing that usually happens is that the driver being the victim becomes outraged and nervous and eventually starts to fight back which usually results in a much more severe situation with a complete different outcome.

How to deal with road rage and how to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of road rage? Drivers can do quite a few things to avoid road rage or to reduce the risk of becoming involved in such an incidence. Drive with the traffic flow when being on the left lane on a highway or pull-over to the right lane if you do not want to go that fast. Let the folks who are in a hurry pass – you'll see most of them again anyway as overall traffic flow in most cases does keep groups of cars within a 3–5 mile radius. Being tailgated? Again – pull over to the other lane and let other one pass. If you cut somebody off by accident forcing the other driver to hit the brakes hard or to pull away from you to avoid an accident – show signs of apologies. We all make mistakes while driving – but be fair enough to admit a mistake by apologizing. This will take out some of the stress factor in those situations. Use turn lights whenever make a lane change or turn. If the car behind you has to hit the brakes hard to avoid an accident because you made turn without using the turn lights can even result in an accident. Get a bigger car that is not as sporty as what you might have now. Bigger cars often avoid to give the driver the feeling that there is a need for speed. Cruising is more relaxing and a heavy vehicle just does not motivate as much to speed.

These are just a few suggestions of how to reduce the risk of road rage. Do not drive too defensive and slow. Going too slow and blocking the traffic flow is a bad thing to do. Try to imagine how you would feel driving behind yourself. Avoid doing things that you do not want others do to you, too.

Mr. Christoph Puetz is a successful entrepreneur and also an international book author. Websites of Christoph Puetz can be found at

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