

STUMMIN

SMALL GROUP
LEADER GUIDE

MIDDLE
SCHOOL
FOCUS

MOODS

JANUARY 13, 2021

Week 2 of a 4-week series
about emotions

BOTTOM LINE

Jesus frees us from being
controlled by anger.

SCRIPTURE

*Whenever you're trying to
look better than others or get
the better of others, things fall
apart and everyone ends up at
the others' throats.*

- James 3:16 MSG

*Where do you think all these
appalling wars and quarrels
come from? ... They come
about because you want your
own way, and fight for it deep
inside yourself.*

- James 4:1 MSG

*If you've gotten anything at all
out of following Christ ... then
do me a favor: Agree with
each other, love each other, be
deep-spirited friends.*

- Philippians 2:1-2 MSG

GOALS OF SMALL GROUP

To help students
differentiate between
constructive and destructive
anger. To invite students to
turn to Jesus to lead them
through destructive anger.



>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: It's much easier for a middle schooler to talk about feelings and emotions when they're not talking directly about themselves. Typically, it's not something they can always verbalize or even see in themselves. That's why asking them to think outside of themselves first helps the conversation. Encourage them to think about anger and how it motivates behaviors and responses in someone else—a character in a TV show or movie, someone on YouTube, a person on social media, or even a family member. Get them talking about how anger plays out in those people's lives first and then turn the conversation back to them. This will help them flex the muscle of self-awareness in this phase. And remember, any conversation should be underscored with this fact: Anger isn't a bad thing. It's important to reiterate that it's not the emotion itself that's unhealthy, but the responses and behaviors that it leads to that can be negative.

>> DURING GROUP

This guide is a suggestion, not a formula. Adjust the questions and activities as needed, and don't feel like you need to do, or ask, everything you see here.

DISCUSS THIS:

- Scatter the provided emoji cards on the floor in the middle of your group and ask your students to select one card to represent how they're feeling today. Then, go around the group and let everybody explain why they picked the card they did.
- Put the provided "Feelings Wheel" in the center of your group to use as a conversation aid. Lead a discussion about what words can be used to describe "anger." Then, ask the group to share about times they've experienced those emotions in the past. Is there anything going on in their lives currently where one of those words would appropriately describe how they are feeling?
- What's your favorite song to listen to when you're mad or angry?
- What's one way anger can be helpful? What's one way anger can be harmful?
- As a group, come up with a list of five different ways people might respond when they're angry. Are any of these constructive responses? If not, brainstorm a couple of constructive responses.

DO THIS:

Ask your group to think about a movie or TV show character who experienced anger. Pass out a blank piece of paper and pen to each student and ask them to write down the following: Name of the movie/show, the character's name, what they were angry about, and how they responded. Use these examples to lead a discussion about whether these characters 1) took a step back from the situation, 2) were honest with themselves about what they were experiencing, and 3) took responsibility for their actions.

- Which one of the three steps listed above is the most difficult for you when you're angry?
- What's one way you can practice one or more of these steps the next time you get angry?

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HIGH
SCHOOL
FOCUS

MOODS

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>> BEFORE GROUP

THINK ABOUT THIS: At this phase, high schoolers experience strong emotions but aren't always aware that they still have control of their actions, even when emotions are running high. You may hear them use phrases like, "I can't help it. They made me so mad," or "That's just what I do when I'm mad. It is what it is." As a leader, it can be helpful to teach them the skill of looking for what they can control when their emotions feel out of control. For example, they may feel enraged, but they can control their words, whether they stay in the room, choosing to pray, their breathing, or going for a walk.

>> DURING GROUP

Create meaningful conversations. Adjust the questions as needed and ask thoughtful follow-up questions as the conversation unfolds. Don't feel like you need to answer every question.

DISCUSS THIS:

- Use the Feelings Wheel to discuss the following questions:
 - Think about a scene from a TV show or movie where a character was angry (Squidward from SpongeBob, for example). What word best describes how they were feeling? Why do you think they got that angry?
 - Which of these feelings is hardest for you to admit you feel?
 - Take turns picking a "mad" or "disgusted" word from the Wheel. Share what you do when you feel that emotion.
- Share a story from your life when you let anger take control of you. How do you wish you would have handled the situation instead?
- Read James 4:1. How would you answer this question? How would most high schoolers answer this question?
- What percentage of your anger is caused by not getting your way?
- Have you experienced people around you blaming their anger on others instead of owning their own emotions? Why do you think it can be easier to believe that anger is caused by something or someone else rather than something inside us?
- If someone were watching you, what would be some clues or cues that you are angry? What could they do to help you?
- Jesus does not want you to be controlled by your anger. What are practical ways you can go to Jesus with your anger? How can this group help you control your anger?

TRY THIS:

- Encourage your students to be proactive in their anger. Say something like this: The next time you are angry, text someone and have them ask you "what kind of angry are you?" Then, ask them to help you work through and control that anger.