

## The absolute tyranny of anger

There's no way to get around the fact that the dominant and most pervasive emotion in America today is anger. This is not your ordinary garden variety anger that happens when someone cuts you off in traffic. THIS anger is deadly and is everywhere and it can erupt at any moment and turn any conversation or encounter into a pitched battle.

It's the type of anger that fuels revolutions and that destroys relationships with friends and family and pits US against THEM. The most obvious place we're seeing anger displayed is in our political discussions, but it's not confined to planned or scheduled events. It can rear its ugly head when you're downing a cup of coffee at a restaurant, or standing in line at the supermarket, or daring to walk around with your N95 mask down.

Strangers feel perfectly free to chastise you for standing too close to them or to tell you that they hate your T-shirt slogan; that your bumper sticker is racist or that comment about school lockdowns is totally unwarranted and unwelcome and you should just shut up. Everybody is on a knife edge and people have no problem invading your space and telling you off. We're angry about literally everything, like feeling helpless. Our lives are being managed by governors who haven't a clue as to how their decisions are destroying our livelihoods. We're fearful that we can't meet our financial obligations. We're tired of being labeled as racists, homophobes, White supremacists and any number of other epithets that were totally out-of-bounds a couple decades ago.

If we're Conservatives we're branded as enemies of minorities and slaves to corporate America by the Left, by the media and by the everyday Democrat. If we say that Barack Obama did a lousy job as President we are bigots. Complain about government overreach and we're traitors to the collective. Buy a gun and we're suspect of being survivalists - reactionaries waiting for a chance to use it against the government. Speaking out against tyranny is okay as long as it is the tyranny of the Republican Party. Disagree with the Affordable Care Act and we're miserable extremists looking for an excuse to deny insurance to people with pre-existing conditions. Complain about illegal immigration and we're brown-skinned people haters.

There was a time when anger didn't totally dominate our politics or our lives, but it's getting harder to remember those times with each passing day because we're skating on the thin ice of an existential election, a binary choice election, where the 'wrong' winner can turn our world upside down and make us victims and sentence us to four-years of a diametrically-opposed ideology...and THAT will take our anger to DEFCON 1, the highest level of danger there is in military terms.

Sociologists and anthropologists are probably having a field day hypothesizing about the root causes of our anger, but while they do, it is growing, metastasizing like a virulent disease while we are all suffering under a clear and present real virulent disease that is pushing us beyond our limits of tolerance. Our Presidential election couldn't be happening at a worse time when half of America is at war with the other half and all of America is desperately in need of a vacation from the madness that is masquerading as campaigning.

Anger is fueling the political machine, and the pump that's delivering the fuel to the machine is the media. We're angry at them for lying to us, every single night. We're angry that no one is calling them out on their lies and that they pay no price for prevaricating. We're fed up with all the censorship that passes for 'true news' by social media organizations and the Left-wing partisans that run them and who rake in billions of dollars while enjoying the protection of Section 230 of the 'Communication Decency Act.'

We're angry that 'the other side' doesn't get what we on the Right are all about, that we are patriots and defenders of the Constitution, a document they see as nothing more than a glorified 'rules of the road' manual and that be changed as of the next printing.

We're angry that millions of babies are aborted each year without due process, that our ballots are 'misplaced' or discarded by the side of the road by ballot harvesters or Post Office workers. We're sick and tired of top-down government by elitists that think they know better than we do about how to run our lives. We're also angry that we've been relegated to demographic categories by virtue of our gender or our race and that politicians approach us as if just because we're White or Black or young or old we'll vote one way or the other.

Yes, Americans are angry, but do you know which anger is the greatest? It's the anger we feel about being angry instead of feeling at peace with ourselves and our surroundings. We know the root causes of anger. It comes from many sources: resentment, disappointment, rejection, fear and disenfranchisement to say nothing of lovelessness. What we don't seem to know is how to deal with it. In ten short days Americans will decide which political path they want for our country. Neither the choice of Donald Trump nor Joe Biden as President will assuage Americans' anger. The reason is simple. We are so divided as a nation and in so much disagreement on policy that our anger will increase, exponentially. Unlike the five stages of grief that are predictors of the healing process that go from denial to anger and then to bargaining, depression and finally end in acceptance, our anger will stop us from making any forward movement to acceptance.

To prove my point, we need only look to the massive shift from shock to denial to anger that characterized the Trump win and Hillary loss in 2016. We can expect more of the same from the Democrats if President Trump wins re-election, and we can expect a similar reaction from the Republicans should Joe Biden be victorious. There is one big question that remains, however. Given the increased tensions and profound anger we're all feeling, will we reject the impulse to lash out and embrace violence or will we move to a neutral corner and look for the balance that comes from the acceptance that no matter how noble or inherently true our cause we will never get everything we want?

The time for anger management is now, before we vote, not later.

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