



I gotta say that as I write this, I have the appropriate amount of anger. I mean, if I'm being honest, I'm a little miffed I'm not devoting this whole article to the Masters and/or Arnold Palmer. I've only been wanting to write an article on my Super Bowl for over a year and even arranged with my friend and column partner Katherine Brown to have this writing slot to have an article come out during the first full week of April.

Alas, the best laid plans, right? I suppose I'll just have to get the eff over it. But what if I don't get the eff over it? What if I'm not able to get past life's irritations, big and small? Like, this past moment, I had to drop my special writing pen (I'm a self-admitted pen snob) to deal with an internet issue so I could see something very important, albeit disappointing. This represents a moment in my life that can provide some much needed scar tissue or a moment I could allow to crush and consume me. (You'll see this reflected in my new biography.)

Not trying to get all Yoda, Star Warsy on you, but it is true that anger leads to fear and fear leads to hate or however that line goes. Lemme go out on the olive branch here and propose that anger and forgiveness, or rather the art of doing it safely, as our Creator intended we learn for ourselves, are kissing cousins. What do I mean by that? I don't exactly know. The analogy just came to me. The way I'm seeing it is if we forgive properly, then every time something or someone triggers the anger response, it either doesn't make us angry or we're able to dissipate the anger fairly quickly without it consuming us in a lake of fiery rage that festers over the course of years, decades, or even a lifetime. Most, if not all of us, can come up with something from a long time ago that still gets our goat. I, for one, don't want my goat gotten, especially by the Ghost of Christmas Past.

The concept of forgiveness is so misconstrued by me and many others that it's no

wonder many have anger issues. I know I naively adopted this skewed forgive and forget concept in childhood, as did many others. In addition, and staying on the target of this piece, I bought into the fact that my anger was shameful and therefore not pretty. Damn right, it's not pretty! It's not effin supposed to be! I'm now 43 and have always been a thoughtful, mindful person and I've only just come to this conclusion. Sure, I've been bouncing around these issues and working on these bucket list items for years. I feel we should expand our concept of bucket list from jumping out of airplanes and such before we die to include karmic items like anger as well. That said, keep in mind, anger or any of life's bugga-boos will always spiral back around if not handled to our higher self's satisfaction.

So, how do we find, say the "appropriate amount" of anger for a certain situation? I was appropriately angry when Sergio Garcia's petulant a** won the 2017 Masters, but I digress. A serious, real world example came into my life a couple months ago during a rare tiff with my wonderful wife. Did I enjoy this anger? No, I would have rather continued watching a rerun of *Dallas* without the conflict. Do I seek reasons to be angry as some do? No, I don't feel I'll ever seek nor enjoy being angry and would worry about myself if I did. I do not find drama a turn-on. What was the break through with this flare-up that led to anger preempting my azalea-focused article on Augusta? I don't regret my anger that evening. I'm not embarrassed by it either. I mean, I still feel a bit of embarrassment for a fit of anger I had nearly two decades ago when I was condescended to. What's that about? In the moment of the tiff with my bride, I perceived a line being crossed and I reacted in a HUMAN way. Whether a line was crossed or not is irrelevant. Also irrelevant was the fact that the argument, as are most disagreements, was sparked by something silly. What is pertinent is that I allowed my anger to bubble up rather than seethe and morph into passive aggressiveness or something more sinister. We eventually calmed down, talked it out, and didn't break our thirteen year marriage rule of never going to bed angry. By the way, I think this is one of the cornerstones that has built an enduring marriage for us. (Thank you to my wise friend who offered this piece of advice before I went down the aisle. You know who you are.)

In meditation leading up to writing this article, I had an important download that revolved around mercy. No doubt, anger is a part of our spectrum of human emotions. In other words, it's a fact of life. Own it or it will own you. Wow, that was powerful for me to type those last couple of sentences. Something released just then. Anger must be tempered by mercy. If we can keep in mind that mercy for others ultimately ends up being translated into mercy for ourselves we're doing our part in spreading kindness.

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