

Hope-Filled Hints to Help You Handle Your Anger

During the worst of my daughter's prodigal years, I never had any reassurances from God that her problems would resolve the way I wanted them to.

An all-consuming dependency on alcohol and drugs plus the complication of mental health issues and self-injury threatened her life daily. Grief, fear and anger consumed every waking moment.

Would she survive or become another statistic? There was no way to know if I would get the happy ending I prayed for.

The Bible says we are given no signs from God ... none of us knows how long this will be ... why do you hold back? ... But God is my King ... He brings salvation on the earth (Psalm 74:9, 11-12).

Some of you have walked in my shoes. You're in them now—walking through the middle of your nightmare, struggling with grief, fear and anger.

The Stress and Strain

You understand how difficult it is to let go, not knowing the outcome.

You fully comprehend the difficulty of fearing the worst, struggling to accept what God may allow. Oh, how the heavy burden smothers your soul, sapping your strength.

The strain is brutal on your emotions. The stress suffocates your sense of well-being. You've grieved your child's possible death countless times. Rivers of tears have been shed. Thousands of prayers have been prayed. Your throat is parched. Your knees are calloused, so is your heart.

Grief Can Turn Into Anger

With no answers in sight, I wondered where God was. *What are You doing, Lord? Where are You? If you're so powerful, why the delay? What are You waiting for? I thought You loved me. Don't You know this is urgent? Please hurry up and do something!*

Sometimes our grief can turn into anger. If this happens to you like it did to me, I encourage you to find healthy ways to express those feelings. Repressed anger can turn into depression, affect our health and damage our relationships. The important thing is to not hold our angry feelings inside, but to release them.

Four Possible Ways to Release Anger

1. **Be honest.** Share your struggle with a safe person who is a good listener.
2. **Write a letter** to God or your child, then destroy it.
3. **Express yourself creatively** through art or music.
4. **Plan a temper tantrum.** Choose a time and place when you'll be alone. Shout, yell, stomp your feet, pound your fists on a pillow.

Dear friend, God sees our pain. He understands.

God cares far more about our struggle than we can grasp. He knows what we're going through, but sometimes He lets us walk by faith. He has much to teach us and grow in us. Seeds of faith planted long ago in the soil of our hearts need to develop deeper roots.

"Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong" (Col. 2:7a, NLT).

As we choose to keep growing, we can persist in the face of great odds stacked against us. One day we'll flourish into strong, beautiful, fruit-bearing trees. Close your eyes and

imagine yourself like that. Strong. Flourishing.

But God

We can learn to trust God in the dark, you and I, where answers are unseen—where we cannot see His face or feel His hand. The unknown is frightening and we don't like this place . . .

But God is still our victorious King.

But God is still our sovereign Savior.

But God.

What powerful words. Plant them down deep in your heart and joy can be restored.

Prayer: King Jesus, help me resist the urge to turn away when I'm angry and disappointed. Keep me from looking to anything or anyone other than You for my strength. I'll persevere through every dark valley when I see no sign of You working. You're the only one who can bring save my beloved child. Please bring redemption today and restore my joy.

In the name of Jesus, by whom all can be saved. Amen. {eo}

Dena Yohe is the author of *You Are Not Alone: Hope for Hurting Parents of Troubled Kids* (2017). Co-founder of *Hope for Hurting Parents*, she is a blogger, former pastor's wife and CRU affiliate staff. She and her husband, Tom, have been guests on "Family Talk With Dr. James Dobson," "Family Life" with Dennis Rainey" and "Focus on the Family" with Jim Daly. A proud mom of three adult children, she loves being Mimi to her grandchildren. Find out more at .

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