Characteristics of People with Anger Problems

- **Low frustration tolerance** - You do not tolerate even the most minor frustrations well. You are easily irritated. You have a short fuse. Some people with low frustration tolerance fume quietly, some explode verbally, and some resort to physical violence when provoked.

- **Judgmental and critical reactions** – You can feel and react quite judgmentally and critically at times. You can be very competitive and may try to win at all costs in a conflict or debate. You may be adversarial and don’t easily recognize the importance of other people’s needs, feelings or opinions. You believe strongly that you know the way things are and expect other to agree.

- **Perfectionism** - You can feel like what you accomplish is never quite good enough. You can put off actions or projects waiting to get them just right. Or there are aspects of your life where you feel you must give more than 100 percent or else you will be mediocre or worthless. If so, rather than working toward success over time, you may sometimes try to be perfect. You may also expect others not to make mistakes.

- **All or Nothing Thinking** – This is the basis of dysfunctional thinking which leads to anger problems. It sets you up from the start to fail. And it is actually a childlike way to move through life. You see things in black or white categories, either right or wrong, which is what we are taught in childhood. But adult reality is not so clear cut…there are a lot of gray areas especially when it comes to relationships and lifestyle differences.

- **Possessiveness** - Possessive behavior is a sign that you lack trust or are somewhat insecure. When you act possessively you are sending a clear message that you do not trust the other person and that you are handling that mistrust by being controlling.

- **Poor communication** – You may have trouble staying focused on what someone is saying and it may be difficult for you to listen carefully. You may not believe that communicating with others is effective or you’ve given up on discussing things. Or, you may simply be a quiet person and have never developed your communication skills.

- **Punitive behavior** – You may often feel like punishing others for various reasons. You have a belief that people ‘should’ do things the right way and if they don’t, they ‘should’ be punished. You may also have been punished quite frequently as you were growing up.

- **Addictive Personality** – You may have a tendency toward substance dependence, or once you ‘start’ it is difficult to ‘stop’. This may include gambling, food, pornography, exercise, work, and even relationships. This often implies impulsive behavior and difficulty in delaying gratification.

- **Use Anger as a Way to Feel More Powerful** – You automatically use the defense of your self-identity (ego) by becoming angry to avoid feeling vulnerable or ‘small’. You cannot feel angry and ‘small’ at the same time; so you find yourself automatically feeling anger when you are challenged in some way.

*Remember “Anger is a feeling or emotion, and aggression is an action or something we do. Aggression is something a person does that may harm someone else.”*