

McMaster Divinity College
MS 3XA3 ANGER, ANXIETY, AND SPIRITUAL CARE
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May 25 – 29, 2015

Course Description

This course is designed to investigate theories of anger and aggression from selected views of psychology, culture, and biblical/theological foundations. Students will be requested to look at their own beliefs, thoughts, and responses in these areas in order to consider applications for pastoral care and counseling. In addition to the readings and lectures, students can interact in a variety of personal learning experiences and clinical cases for role-play during this course.

Specializations: Counselling and Spiritual Care, Pastoral Studies

I. Objectives:

Knowing

- A. To develop a personal understanding of assumptions and expressions of anger and anxiety.
- B. To increase awareness of psychological and theological understandings of anger and anxiety.
- C. To acquaint students with current research on anger and anxiety as a focus for pastoral counseling.

Being

- D. To develop the basic skills of pastoral counselling with angry and anxious persons.

Doing

- E. To encourage opportunities for students to explore their own anger and anxiety from a faith perspective.

II Methods:

- A. Presentation of information and perspective on anger and anxiety will be done by means of lectures, video clips, and interviews.
- B. Students form themselves into discussion groups of three to five persons each in order to thrash out their understanding of anger, anxiety and religious experience. Each student is to turn in a 5-10 page journal of their group observations, participation, new insights, and reflections. (25%)
- C. Independent research will focus on patterns of anger and anxiety in ones family of origin for the past two generations. Students are to assess how each

grandparent and parent dealt with anger/anxiety and to explore how they reflect, use, or change those patterns. (25%)

D. Students will write two reviews on the required reading or a selection from the bibliography if they have already read these texts. (50%)

E.

III. **Requirements:**

A. Share with each other in the class and the groups.

B. Turn in **two reviews**. One is on Tom Meigs Article, "Maintaining A Good and Healthy Anger," Review and Expositor, Fall 2001 (rande.org). This is due the third day of class. The second is on Andrew Lester's book, The Angry Christian and is due two weeks after the final day of class. (50%)

C. A **self-assessment of group observations** will be due the week after the last day of class. (25%)

D. The **independent research project** is a summary of a theory of anger as it applies to the patterns in your own family.

After developing your understanding of anger and anxiety develop a list of interview questions to discover axioms, family stories, or events that guided your family in dealing with anger *and* anxiety.

How has this influenced your life and/or your spiritual care with others? (25%)

Book Reviews should include:

- a. A description of the author and qualifications,
- b. A brief **overview** of each chapter,
- c. The author's **purpose, methods, and audience**,
- d. Your assessment of the **strengths**
- e. Your evaluation of the **weaknesses** of this work, and
- f. How you might **apply** this material in the future.

NOTE: If you use other reviews, be clear about **giving credit** and citations.

IV. **Class Schedule:**

May 25 Introductions, expectations, and course requirements
Understanding and definitions of Religion
Formation of Discussion Groups

May 26 Biblical Understandings of Anger
Faith perspectives on Anxiety
Family Systems Conflict and Stress Management
Group Discussions

May 27 Theories of the Relationship of Anxiety and Anger
"Never Good Enough" and Anxiety/Anger
Compulsive Patterns and Anxiety/Anger

Group Discussions

May 28 Anger and Anxiety: Destructive Responses
Positive Options for Anger and Anxiety
“Anger Management” the Movie
Group Discussions

May 29 Counseling with Angry/Anxious Persons
Evaluations
Group Discussions
Celebration Lunch

V. Grading:

- 25% Meigs Article Review
- 25% Second Book Review
- 25% Research Project
- 25% Self-assessment and journal from group participation

Policies for all Courses at McMaster

A. Textbook Purchase:

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College’s book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

B. Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one’s academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty ~ <http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>

C. Gender Inclusive Language:

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship

services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bach and Wyden, The Intimate Enemies

Bosco, Monica, Never Good Enough,

Burns, David, Feeling Good: The New mood Therapy. New York: William Marrow, 1980.

Clinebell, Howard, Basic Types of Pastoral Counseling, 1996.

Ekman, Paul, Emotions Revealed, 2003

Harriet Lerner, The Dance of Anger. New York: Harper Perennial, 1989.

Andrew D. Lester, The Angry Christian. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004.

_____, Coping with Your Anger

J. Thomas Meigs, "Maintaining a Good and Healthy Anger," Review and Expositor, Vol. 98, No.4, Fall, 2001, pp. 503-533.

Moore and Gillette, King, Warrior, Magician, Lover

Wayne E. Oates, Anxiety and the Christian Experience, Westminster Press

G. Wade Rowatt, Adolescents in Crises: A Guidebook for Parents, Teachers, Ministers, and Counselors, 2001.

Theodore Rubin, The Angry Book. New York: Collier Books, 1969.

Stillion, Judith M. and Eugene E. McDowell, Suicide Across the Life Span, 1996.

Wimberly, Edward P., Counseling African American Marriages and Families, 1997.

Jesse H. Wright and Monica R. Basco, Getting Your Life Back. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001.