

# **Harnessing my Hostilities**

*Ruth Myers*

## I. Harnessing my Hostilities

A. It's okay to feel.

B. God is able to deliver people regardless of their background.

C. Honest communication can provide insight and release from our hostilities.

D. You may be surprised by what hostility actually is and how much you are harboring under the surface.

E. Anger in itself is not wrong - God himself is angry about evil, sin, and injustice. Christ is portrayed as angry against hypocrisy.

1. Anger is a healthy function - anger against sin and wrong: especially when directed at ourselves.

a) The way we handle our anger is often wrong.

b) You don't need to apologize for being angry.

c) You may need to apologize for how you behave because of your anger.

## F. Common misconceptions of anger.

1. That it is psychologically damaging not to vent or release your anger.

2. That anger explosions must be right at some time because they accomplish good results.

a) The ends do not justify the means.

3. Angry outbursts are a sign of a forceful personality.

a) When they occur, they are a sign of an inner weakness.

4. Insight into the past influences that cause our hostilities will automatically cause relief.

a) That insight often causes people to blame rather than overcome.

## G. Hostility.

1. Explosive Anger or Hate.

2. Irrational Grudges or Violent Antagonism.

3. Resentment.

4. Sharp disagreement or Irritation.

5. Malice, Envy, jealousy, squabbling, fighting, losing patience, compiling statistics of evil, rivalry, slander, malicious thoughts, treating others with contempt, judging, threatening revenge, insulting criticisms, and harboring bitterness.

a) Hostility can exist in our lives on various levels or in varying degrees.

1) Surface eruptions - sudden but short lived (one cockroach that flies across your room).

2) Strong Undercurrents of Resentment - erupts frequently into hot war or sometimes a long cold war (swarms of cockroaches filling all the kitchen cabinets).

3) Deep repressed hostilities reside deep inside and are the ferocious dragons - they may scratch and claw and even breathe fire causing severe damage (alive with cockroaches and maggots).

H. It's important to see the effects of hostility.

1. Easy to be complacent when you don't realize the damage it does.

a) We tend to deal with the symptoms rather than the cause.

2. Hostility is destructive in your own life.

3. Hostility can destroy a marriage.

a) The wife feels icy and withdrawn or hot and angry - where she can no longer feel love and fears that she will never be able to love again.

b) The husband feels worn out and useless: Proverbs 25:24

c) Divorce does not resolve hostilities.

4. Accumulated grudges can affect your whole personality.

a) More and more insensitive.

b) Less and less able to communicate.

c) Can lose our ability to see things the way they really are.

d) Efficiency can be lowered.

e) Eventually hostility can spread to others and can make us hate everybody and not want to love anybody.

5. The angrier you get, the more disturbed you'll be.
6. Repressed hostility can cause coldness in your personality.
7. Hostility can ferment into other problems.

- a) depression.
- b) anxiety.
- c) critical attitudes.
- d) scapegoating.
- e) irritableness.

8. Hostility was intended to protect us, but can do the opposite when handled unwisely:  
Proverbs 25

9. Whether hostility is expressed or repressed, it can cause physical damage (Check out the paper Emotions and Health).

I. The Venom of our hostilities poisons us more than the other person.

1. When strong acid is kept in an unsuitable container it erodes the container far more than it hurts the people it occasionally splashes on.

2. The human psyche was not designed to hold hostilities.

J. Hostility does not mellow with mere age.

1. "A sharp tongue is the only tool that grows keener with constant use." - Washington Irving

K. Hostility hurts your spiritual life.

1. Resentment is not pleasing in the eyes of the Lord.

2. Jesus did not say not to feel anger, but he strongly warns against harboring enmity and condemned harbored hostility.

L. Harmful or Temporary ways of dealing with hostility.

1. Expressing it indiscriminately.

2. Holding it in and nurturing it.

3. Repressing it.

4. Rationalizing or blaming others - "Circumstances don't make or break you, they reveal you."

a) The revealing is good, because we can deal with what we know is there.

5. Projection - pointing out hostility in others, rather than looking inward to deal with our own.

6. Repetitious rehearsal of the problem to yourself.

7. Expressing it or releasing it in a harmless way (can be temporary, but can also help).

M. Causes of Hostility - Knowing the causes makes finding lasting solutions much easier.

1. Immediate Cause - Not getting what you want.

a) Frustration.

b) Humiliation.

c) Rejection.

2. Underlying Causes.

a) Lack of true identity.

b) False beliefs (immaturity)

1) "I am a terrible person."

2) "I am the important one and things should go my way. I am important."

3) You can't trust people or "God is being unfair in my life."

c) Transference.

d) Fear/ Lack of Courage.

e) Self hate or guilt

f) Lack of self acceptance.

N. In light of the causes we realize:

1. We are very complex and intricately made.

2. The primary application of insight should be in your own life.

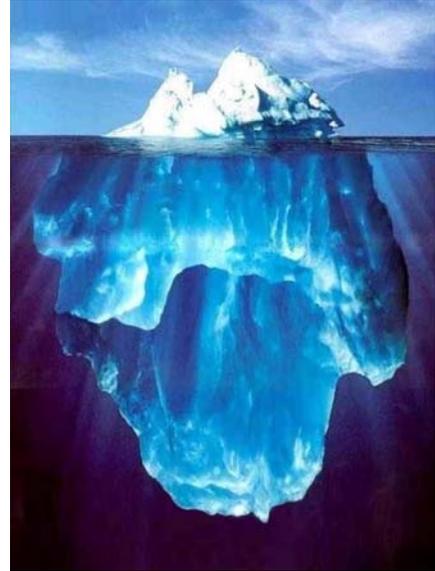
3. You can gain insight through God's word and Relationships with other people

3. You don't have to understand everything to start experiencing love and release.

4. It takes a lifetime to be transformed more and more completely.

### ***Iceberg***

*Photo from Global Marine drilling rig off St. Johns Newfoundland. With the majority of this iceberg hiding below the surface, this hazard was photographed by a scuba diver prior to it being towed away from the drilling platform by barges. The sun was directly overhead allowing the dive team to capture this unusual shot. Global Marine estimated the weight of the ice below the surface to be over 300 million tons.*



5. We should have compassion for the hostile person rather than condemning them.

a) A hostile person is someone with deep needs who is trying to meet them in self-defeating ways .

6. We have to learn God's attitude - Though he disapproves of some of the hostile actions of his children, he still loves us and wants to help us.

7. Don't minimize, justify, or excuse your own hostilities - it is harmful to do so.

8. We need to challenge our hatred of the REAL enemy which is within us.

a) The "inner enemy" is the flesh - the "old nature" from when we lived independent of the Lord.

b) Realizing this can be the beginning of finding the solution.

O. The Basic Problem with Harnessing our Hostilities .

P. God's Truth.

1. About Christ.

2. About ourselves.

3. You cannot do it all on your own.

4. About God.

a) He is the Supreme Ruler.

b) If you are a child of the King, you don't have to defend yourself; God loves you and will take care of you.

c) God has certain official prerogatives, and you are not to usurp them.

d) God is the Savior.

e) God is ready and eager to forgive you.

f) All you have to do is believe.

5. Life runs well when we let God be God in our Lives: believe and submit to Him.