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Q7

Anger is a harmful negative emotion. It is injurious to both personal life and work life. (a) Discuss how it leads to negative emotions and undesirable behaviors. (b) How can it be managed and controlled?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · GS IV · 12 marks · Ethics and Human Interface

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family, society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Core demand of the question

- Anger is a harmful negative emotion. It is injurious to both personal life and work life. (a) Discuss how it leads to negative emotions and undesirable behaviors. (b) How can it be managed and controlled?

Revision summary

Anger as a habit injures body, attention, family and the workplace.

It feeds shame, rumination, hatred, domestic cruelty and biased or violent official acts.

Firmness is not the same as rage.

Control uses pause, **cognitive reappraisal**, sleep and health, structured hearings, emotional-intelligence skill, counselling if needed, and apology.

The State must not inherit the officer's ego.

Introduction

Anger is a surge that says a boundary was crossed. Used as a brief signal it can protect. As a habit it injures body, family and the file. Part (a) traces the chain into other dark feelings and bad acts. Part (b) is control as a civil-service skill, not as saintliness.

Body

(a) How anger feeds other harms

- Physiologically, anger raises heart rate and narrows attention. The person sees an enemy, not a problem, which is already a cognitive injury.
- **It breeds secondary emotions:** after the shout comes shame, then anxiety about retaliation, then a sulk that looks like depression.
- Rumination turns one insult into a story of humiliation, which feeds hatred and, in public life, communal or office faction.
- **Undesirable behaviour at home:** harsh words, smashed objects, and domestic violence. The **Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005** exists because anger is often used as a right over a weaker person.

- **At work:** a shouting officer humiliates a clerk, cooks a biased noting, or orders a lathi when a hearing was due. That is cruelty and, often, a Conduct Rules breach.
- Road rage, communal rumour-forwarding, and revenge transfers are anger as policy.
- Addiction and sarcasm are quieter children of unmanaged anger.
- **For the organisation, chronic anger destroys psychological safety:** bad news stops travelling, so the next disaster is a surprise.
- Anger is not the same as firmness. A calm refusal of a bribe is not anger. A smashed phone after a bribe offer is anger that has already lost the file.

(b) Managing and controlling anger

- **Name it early:** a racing heart and a tight jaw are data. Pause before speech. The ten-second delay is an ethical tool.
- **Cognitive reappraisal:** ask what fact, not what insult, is on the table. A delayed file may be overload, not a plot.
- **Body:** sleep, food, exercise, and no alcohol as fuel. Tired officers are angry officers.
- **Communication:** use a first-person description of the problem, not a character attack. Write the note after the pulse drops.
- **Empathy:** the petitioner's shout is often fear. Meeting fear with a roar creates a mob.
- **Institutional design:** hearings with time slots, a colleague in the room, and a rule that no major punitive order is signed in a rage.
- **Training in emotional intelligence as Goleman described it:** self-awareness, self-regulation, then social skill.
- If anger is a pattern, seek medical and counselling help. Hypertension and depression ride with chronic rage.
- Meditation, sport, and a trusted peer review of one's own outbursts work if they are regular, not a retreat photograph.
- In public order, the officer's anger must not become the State's anger. Use law, not ego, when a crowd abuses you.
- Apology after a wrong shout is control, not weakness. Repeating the shout because one is senior is failure.

Work rule

- Firmness on the rule, softness on the person.
- If you cannot be firm without rage, recuse from that hour's hearing and return with a colleague.

Flow diagram

Anger -> Narrow attention
 Narrow attention -> Shame hatred rumination
 Shame hatred rumination -> Harm at home
 Shame hatred rumination -> Humiliation and biased file
 Pause and reappraisal -> Firm on rule
 Firm on rule -> Safe decision

Conclusion

Anger spreads into shame, hatred and violence at home and into humiliation and biased orders at work. Control is pause, reappraisal, body care, structured hearings and the courage to apologise. An officer's temper is a public risk, not a private hobby.

Facts & figures

Emotional intelligence (Daniel Goleman)

A widely used frame of self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill; anger control sits in self-regulation.

Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005

A civil-criminal protective statute that treats domestic violence, often anger-fuelled, as a public wrong.

Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964

Courtesy and conduct unbecoming: a public rant or humiliation of a subordinate can be a service wrong.

Article 21, Constitution of India

Dignity of the person at the counter; an officer's rage can become a rights failure.

Cognitive reappraisal

A proven emotion-regulation method: reinterpret the trigger as a problem to solve rather than as an insult to avenge.

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