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Sunday, September 21 2014

Hello reader, here is our newsletter for this week.

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Is it me or are people more and more aggressive these days? Or maybe we just see it more due to easiness of the getting all the minute by minute updated news.

Perhaps it is the video of the footballer Ray Rice that got me thinking about this idea for a blog. How can you hit your “supposed” loved one to the point of unconsciousness, then drag them, while unconscious, out of a hotel elevator, with no concerns whatsoever about their well being. The penalty for that? A 2 game suspension. It’s a joke. Is our society tolerating aggressiveness? What is

going on?

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I see people being aggressive all the time in the workplace, whether it is passively or actively aggressive. And sadly, it often comes from the top of the organization. If the boss does it, then it is perceived by the employees as an acceptable behavior. And then it goes downhill from there. It is the domino effect. If you are yelled at and get in a bad mood, then you pass it on. It seems that people don't know how to deal with their anger anymore. Whatever happened to a good old punching bag? When you are angry about something and you don't let it out in a healthy way, it will come out in an unhealthy one. So why not handle it already?

First things first: it is ok to be angry. It is an acceptable and more importantly, a normal emotion. It is what you do with it that is acceptable or not. Have you ever been so pissed at something that you had to go out to take a walk? Well congratulations on going for a walk. The one time I agree with procrastinating is when you delay your reaction to being angry. Don't react right away, breathe, go for a walk, do something. There is a saying, "he who loses control, loses". Period! And once you have voiced or acted on your anger, it is very hard to take it back. You've lost some points there for sure.



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Anger affects both your mental state and your physical state. We tend to take better care of our mental state by talking to friends or to an experienced therapist. But then you need to find an acceptable physical outlet to express your anger. Here are some examples that come to mind: tough work out at the gym, going for a jog, punching a gym bag, extreme sports, breaking glass (securely) and screaming. I read from a trusted therapist I know that after a hard event, one thing she did was, jacking up the sound system, went into the basement, scream and broke glass ware she was throwing out. She had been living with this anger for months and after 15 minutes of focused physical expression, she felt liberated. No matter what you do physically, aim at expressing your anger safely. I don't have access to a punching bag, so I use a pillow and I hit hard while thinking about what (or who) makes me angry. And it works. It does alleviate the physical pressure of anger.

Now that your body is no longer in aggressive mode, you can enter solution mode. You can now work on what, or who, made you angry but in a much calmer manner. The good news with the domino effect is that it works both ways. If you are managing a small group or if you are part of a small group within a big company, nothing stops you from enforcing the no aggressivity rule within your team. And then it will spread. If you don't react to being yelled at and don't "spread" it around to others, it won't. I had a boss once that started getting aggressive with me and it was so out of character that I asked him what was going on. He mentioned he had just gotten yelled at by his boss about one of my projects and he was literally just passing it on whether it made sense or not. After saying it, he realized it was wrong and he auto corrected himself.

Have you ever noticed that people will try to push your boundaries until you say "stop"? So it is up to you to set acceptable boundaries for yourself and your team. I promise you, if you make it clear that aggressivity towards you is unacceptable, it will stop.

And if you are the one being angry and aggressive, well cut that out and go hit a punching bag.

*Have a great week!*

Sophie



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Book: in Paperback or Kindle

*"When we can no longer change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves".*

**VIKTOR FRANKL**