

Patterns and Characteristics of Rageaholism

*These patterns and characteristics are offered as a tool to aid in self-evaluation.
They may be particularly helpful to newcomers.*

- **Self-Stimulation -** The more we express our anger, the more we want to express it.
- **Compulsion -** We compulsively pursue the feeling of power associated with acting out our anger despite the adverse consequences. We are unable to stop expressing anger once we start.
- **Obsession -** We are often preoccupied with resentment and fantasies of revenge.
- **Denial -** We do not acknowledge that we have a serious anger problem. We often focus on how others triggered us and that we are, therefore, not at fault. Because of this, we feel righteously indignant. We minimize, alter, or deny our anger and its consequences. We may classify a rage episode as a mistake, lessen its severity or claim that it never happened at all. We seldom say "I am wrong."
- **Withdrawal/Craving -** If we go for long periods of time without expressing anger, we often become depressed, edgy or anxious, unconsciously looking for an opportunity to act out.
- **Unpredictability -** When we express our anger, we don't know how it will manifest. Sometimes we act appropriately. Other times, we explode, rant and rave. Some of us may become physically violent