

The Conversation receives a lot of comments each day and you can't read everything. That's why we end the week with a selection of community highlights: comments we enjoyed or thought interesting. Read on for five comments and discussions I thought worth highlighting.

[Anger management: why we feel rage and how to control it](#)

The article's authors, Stan Steindl and James Kirby, got involved to respond to reader thoughts and questions.

[Stephen Nicholson](#) wondered what anger can reveal about ourselves:

I recall hearing that anger is a honest emotion - it's simply telling you something isn't right.

But particularly with personal relationships, it's important to discern whether what is wrong is external to yourself, or perhaps due to something in yourself - eg the other person, or the world, isn't giving me what I expect (even though that might be because I'm self-centred or have unreasonable expectations). But, even if you count to 10, it's hard to be that honest about yourself.

I assume that anger management aims to help with this.

[Stan Steindl](#) :

Wonderful point.

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One of the things that is so important is being able to find the breathing space or pause to tap into wisdom. Being able to stop and reflect on oneself honestly is difficult for sure, but wisdom, values, courage etc all play their part. And sometimes “counting to 10” can be a part in that too! :).

Thanks!

[Clare Byrnes](#) asked how certain situations can elicit anger in an otherwise “balanced” person:

I wonder if recurring situational circumstances can be a trigger factor for anger?

If a person frequently encounters an environment in which they are subject to unrealistic expectations or a sense of being exploited, do they default to a response style specific to that situation? ie, their coping mechanism may be anger utilised in such a way as to defer involvement?

In otherwise normal circumstances, the same person has an emotional balance in most scenarios, it's just that one specific matter that seems to elicit an anger response?

[James Kirby](#) :

Hi Clare,

Yes environmental factors and situational circumstances are certainly triggers for anger. Anger is a hugely important emotion for our threat/self-protect system, and if we are in environments where this part of us is triggered (e.g., we are being exploited) then anger will start to show itself. Anger is particularly useful at orienting us to potential problems or threats, it does this in a quick way. If we just immediately act on anger it can be unhelpful (particularly if we have not

considered all the elements of the situation), as in many situations the problems we face today are more nuanced than standing up for ourselves when we are under attack by a predator in the wild. So the aim is to try and blend or adapt that anger in a way that allows flexible perspective taking to help us achieve our goals. This is of course more simply said than done, and it requires commitment to work with this challenging emotion.

Best wishes, James

[Science fact vs fiction in Star Wars and other sci-fi movies: relax, and enjoy the entertainment](#)

Roger Young and Michael J. I. Brown has an in-depth discussion about the orbit speed of the planet and it's relation to dogfights in space.

[Roger Young](#)

The 8 km per second orbit speed aspect is not really relevant vis a vis combat antics, It's really just a reference frame thing. On Earth for instance we are travelling 30 km per second due to our orbit speed around the Sun, not to mention our expanding universe speed; but that didn't interfere with dog-fights over the English Channel. Relative to each other, Star Wars combatants can dog fight just like Biggles.

[Michael J. I. Brown](#)

It does depend on how the spacecraft are moving relative to each other, but even if they are travelling in the same direction one doesn't have Biggles style dogfights.

For example, if you were pursuing another spacecraft you may want to slow down (not speed

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up) and drop yourself into a lower orbit (with a shorter period) to catch up with your enemy. Also, because of the vacuum of space, executing turns would be quite different from the aerodynamic manoeuvres seen in Star Wars.

[Roger Young](#)

You are right Michael, I was considering free space rather than an orbit. (But maybe all the wars happen in deep space?!) But orbital kinetic energy is inversely proportional to orbital radius is it not?

So to catch up with your enemy you would have to put energy into the system and speed up and not slow down? Or have I forgotten about gravitational potential energy? -Head hurts, matriculation physics too many years ago!

Saying 'I'm not good at maths' is not cool – negative attitudes are affecting business

[Susan Nolan](#) shared her experiences learning maths (and trying to help her mother with it):

Your “Molly” example reminded me of my mother. My mother took pride in “being no good at arithmetic”. She saw this in gender specific terms: men were supposed to be good at maths; women were supposed to be not good at maths.

This went to the extent of her not being willing to manage her own cheque book so that, after my father died, I had to do that for her – along with some other “masculine pursuits” such as taking the garbage bins out and organising (and paying for) someone to mow her lawns. Yes – I was a woman, too, but my mother never saw me as being the properly “feminine” daughter which she wanted and frequently told me so (and anyone else who would listen, including a fairly large number of people she treated as “surrogate daughters” throughout my whole life).

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I tried to point out that she really could do arithmetic. She was able to increase and decrease recipes appropriately to make smaller or larger amounts. But I gave up verbalising that proposition pretty quickly when it became apparent that it was more likely to result in her extinguishing her ability to handle recipes than it was to lead to her being able to manage her cheque book.

It's a long, long time since I was at school. When I first came across algebra in high school, I couldn't get the hang of it at all. Fortunately, I went to a school where we could get one-to-one subject coaching from the teachers at the school and my coach was the teacher who taught us for Maths I and II. She took the trouble to find out where the blockage in my thinking was and to work directly with that.

One of things which I recall her saying was that if I was good at languages and music then I ought to be able to handle algebra if I looked upon algebra as being another language not unlike musical notation and the other languages I was doing well at. That was useful to me – and it breaks down this artificial distinction between mathematics and languages.

Finally, one of our Health + Medicine editors had a question about how GLBTQI communities manage and discuss consent differently to heterosexual communities.

[Fron Jackson-Webb](#) :

Hi Bianca, the GLBTQI community seems to be decades ahead of heterosexuals in negotiating consent and talking about sexual desires – why do you think there's such a lag?

[Bianca Fileborn](#) :

I think in part because LGBTQI people sit outside of our normative sexual practices this can

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create space to view them more critically, and to develop different ways of being. The other issue here is that because LGBTQI people were for a long time (and, to an extent, still are) so invisible there was already a need to negotiate sexual practices/identities with potential partners.

That said, there is also research illustrating that LGBTQI people also experience high levels of sexual violence and coercion, and there can be different aspects of sexual scripts and gendered norms that play a role here. For example, Nicola Gavey and her colleagues have argued that dominant norms of masculinity that portray men as always 'up for' sex can make it difficult for gay men to refuse sex (and particularly for younger members of the community). So I think there are still some challenges facing the LGBTQI communities when it comes to the ethical negotiation of sex.

Read a comment you thought interesting? Let me know during the week. You can leave a comment below or send me an [email](#).

Read more <http://theconversation.com/community-highlights-53559>