

No Swearing for Grant

Gen. Horace Porter was an American soldier and diplomat who served as a general in the Union Army during the American Civil War. He received the Medal of Honor for heroism in the Battle of Chickamauga near Chattanooga, Tenn.

He once wrote about a conversation he had with Gen. Ulysses Grant – who would later be elected the 18th President of the United States – one evening while they were sitting by a campfire. Porter noted, “General, it seems singular that you should have gone through all the rough and tumble of army service and frontier life and have never been provoked into swearing. I have never heard you utter an oath.”

Grant replied, “Well, somehow or other, I never learned to swear. When I was a boy, I seemed to have an aversion to it, and when I became a man, I saw the folly of it. I have always noticed, too, that swearing helps to arouse a man’s anger; and when a man flies into a passion, his adversary who keeps cool always gets the better of him. In fact, I could never see the value of swearing. I think it is the case with many people who swear excessively that it is a mere habit ... they do not mean to be profane; to say the least, it is a great waste of time.”

Gen. Grant was right. Not only does anger give rise to harsh words, but harsh words feed anger. The seething soul uses up valuable inner energy, leaving far less for the normal healthy functioning of the spirit, mind and body.



To rid yourself of feelings of anger and frustration, perhaps the first step is to watch your tongue.

– Beecher Hunter