

The Differences In Understanding Your Abuser And Justifying Abuse

So many articles I have read say you shouldn't try to understand your abuser. It's a complete waste of time. All that matters is that you were abused, not why they did it. Some even say trying to understand the abuser is the same as justifying the abuse. I disagree with these things however.

To start with, justifying abuse & understanding your abuser are two very different concepts. Justifying abuse says you're ok with it. Understanding your abuser says you understand why the abuser is as they are, & why they do the things they do, even when you don't agree with their actions. See what I mean? Two different things.

I also believe you can heal while understanding your abuser, but you can't if you justify what they have done. Justifying the abuse they have done to you means you're in denial about the abuse being bad. You make excuses for why it happened rather than face the problems & pain it caused you. You can understand your abuser while still facing the fact the abuse was really bad & wrong.

With that being said though, I don't think understanding is necessary for everyone for emotional healing. Some people move along just fine in their healing journey without any clue why the person that abused them did it. Other people are more like me though, & understanding their abuser has been helpful in their healing.

For me, understanding why my parents are as they are has been very important. It has shown me that they are the problem, not me. I've come to see them as very dysfunctional, selfish & abusive instead of the loving parents I thought they were when I was a child. I see clearly now that they said & did horrible things to me in order to get whatever they wanted from me, primarily narcissistic supply & obedience.

Understanding them also made me feel a certain amount of pity for them. Not enough to return to tolerating their abuse of course, since that would just be stupid. But, enough pity to pray for them daily. Matthew 5:44 says we should pray for our enemies. That is a very hard thing to do! I really didn't want to pray for my parents. Not that I wished bad on them of course—I just didn't want to pray for them. but once I felt some pity for my parents, praying for them became a lot easier. In fact, I now do it daily.

Like I said, it's not necessary for everyone to understand their abuser if they want to heal emotionally. Everyone is different & I'm sure some of you watching won't understand why understanding my parents helped me. That's fine. You have to do whatever works to help you to heal.

One thing you do have to do though is understand that justifying abuse & understanding your abuser are two very different things. There is no good reason to abuse. Nothing can justify deliberately hurting another human being, especially a

child. Especially your child. Understanding your abuser though simply means you understand that person operates in a very dysfunctional way, probably because of problems in her own past. It doesn't make it right, of course, but you do see how she could behave as she does. It also doesn't mean you tolerate the abuse. You can understand your abuser while protecting yourself from further abuse.