

The Lens Of Victim-Hood

When a person has been abused, they tend to see the world differently than other folks. People like this aren't as trusting as the average person, & with good reason. They have survived some pretty terrible stuff! This isn't necessarily a bad thing, considering how many untrustworthy people there are in the world. However, it can become a bad thing. A good friend of mine once called it "seeing things through the lens of victim-hood." I thought the term made perfect sense.

When a person sees others as out to hurt them with little or no evidence to prove this is happening, it's a bad thing.

Or when a person reads so much into every small comment or action that they see others as out to get them, this is a bad thing.

Unfortunately, it can be very easy to turn out this way after surviving abuse. It can be especially easy to see problems online over face to face contact. Once you've been badly hurt, you obviously want to avoid it again. It's very easy to become hyper-vigilant, seeing abusive behavior everywhere. A person looks at you a bit odd or cracks a joke that isn't like your sense of humor & suddenly you think they're out to hurt you when nothing could be further from the truth. This is no way to live!

Rather than succumb to this miserable lifestyle, change yourself! It is possible! I was this way & managed to change. If I can do it, so can you.

As always, I recommend prayer as the place to start. God can & will help you to make whatever changes you need. He also will show you what you need to do. Why not let Him?

Also slow down when a situation happens. Respond, don't react. Responding isn't instantaneous. It requires time to consider the situation. Reacting is instantaneous & done in the heat of emotions. Reacting often happens when seeing situations through the lens of victim-hood. Give yourself time to consider the situation before you respond.

Don't automatically assume that your knee-jerk reaction is correct. Consider it. Question it. Slow your thoughts down for some time & ask yourself why you think the way you're thinking. Is there evidence to back up what you believe is happening? What is that evidence? Are there red flags that show you this person isn't safe, such as a lack of empathy for example? Write it down if it helps. Writing can help you to see things clearly, often more clearly than speaking or thinking about things.

Think too about the person in question. If this is someone you know well, you will know what this person is & is not capable of. You know if this person is safe or not. Ask yourself, is it likely this person is out to hurt me or not?

If you want advice, don't talk to someone else about the situation in a way that will get them assuming the worst about this person. If they believe you, they will only feed your fear. They'll automatically respond to your fear with fear, especially if this is someone you're close to. If you want to talk about your situation with someone safe, that's totally fine. An objective opinion can be a truly great thing! Just make sure you say things in such a way that the person who you're speaking with can form their own opinion. Say things like, "I think this person is looking to hurt me in some way.. what do you think?" then state the facts without emotion. Let this person form their own opinion if you want their best advice.

Just remember, not everyone is abusive. Not everyone wants to cause you pain & suffering. Pray & seriously consider the situation so you can respond to it appropriately, rather than reacting because you're seeing it through the lens of victim-hood.