

This chapter is addressed to all the teenagers who blame themselves for family problems they have absolutely nothing to do with. Believe me, this is a bigger problem than you may imagine and one that can be really destructive to an individual.

To start off with, let me give you the bottom line to this chapter; **Respect** for family is essential. Keeping family problems which have nothing to do with you separate from your personal life is **crucial**.

For you people who blame yourself for all your family problems, you'd be smart to understand that not all problems fall under one category. This is especially true when it comes to family problems. Truth is, there are two types of family problems:

Problems you have control over and problems you don't.
(Yes, as much as you may not want to believe it, there are some problems you don't have control over.)

For those problems you **do** have control over, problems caused by you and ones you can solve if you choose to do so, such as

curfew,
school work,
doing drugs,
respect for parents,
getting to school on time...

you must do what you have to do to make sure you take care of your own business. These kinds of problems rest on your shoulders and are ones you need to take responsibility for.

For the problems that you **don't** have control over, problems that are not caused by you and ones you have no control over solving, such as

divorce,
alcohol or drug abuse by others,
physical or verbal abuse

you need to leave them at the doorstep, keep them separate from your personal life, and then move on. If you don't, they will effect just about every thing you do.

If you don't believe it now, you'll believe it when you see it.

You can bet the ranch that many of the people in treatment centers or in jails have carried guilt with them for years from problems caused by others.

This guilt most likely caused frustration, depression or anger which in turn caused their drug problem, alcohol problem, anger problem or whatever problem that got them in trouble.

If you constantly blame yourself for other people's problems, you need to step back and take a good hard look at what's going on in your life.

Let me show you how you can go about doing this.

First, grab a piece of paper and a pen.

Next, think about all the things that are bothering you right now and write them down on the paper. No matter what they are or how small you think they may be, if it bothers you, write it down.

Problems with your girl or boyfriend, trouble in school, problems at home —whatever they are— write them down.

Once you've done that, look over each of the problems one by one. If the problem is yours and you have total control over solving it, put a "C" next to it.

If, however, it's a problem that someone else in your family has and you don't have any control in solving, things like alcohol or drug abuse, verbal or physical abuse, divorce, etc., put a "NC" next to it.

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When you're done, look at the C's on the list. These **Control Problems** are the problems you need to take responsibility for and make right. They are your problems and it is you who must deal with them. No big thing.

For the NC's,

the ones that are not your problems and ones
you have **NO CONTROL** over,

think about what your options are. I mean, what can you do
about them since you have no control in getting them solved?

You can't just say, "*well, I'll just forget the feelings I have
about what happened to me and get on with my life.*"

These issues weigh heavy on your mind and are not
things you can easily dismiss.

So, what do you do?

I have a suggestion for you.

READ IT VERY CAREFULLY...

**THE SITUATION
AND
THE PERPETRATOR
HAVE NOW
BECOME THE
MOTIVATOR**

The **situation** you were in that has caused you so much guilt, pain, anger and frustration, and the **person or persons** who were responsible for this situation, have now become your **motivator**.

In other words the perpetrator has not defeated you but rather has motivated you.

YOU WIN!

In other words, you do what thousands of young people in your situation have done. You take the anger, frustration and guilt you have from the situation you were in and make it work for you.

How?

By switching these emotions away from being a depressing burden to you, to being tools used to help motivate you in achieving your goals in life.

Let me give you a quick true example:

Richard was a young boy living in New York City when his father walked out on the family leaving them with nothing. Total poverty. Richard became extremely frustrated and angry thinking he had something to do with it. For years this frustration, anger and the depression that went along with it grew. When Richard was in 7th grade, his anger came to a head when he got mad at a teacher and throw a chair at him.

Richard was suspended.

A few days later, the principal asked me if I would take him in my program; a program for New York kids that teaches, among other things, about switching anger and frustration from off “your” back and onto “your” goals in life. Gradually he worked on this teaching and more and more worked hard at not allowing himself to switch the anger he had back onto himself.

“I’m gonna make it in school and do something with my life for a change. I’m gonna show dad and everyone else that I AM somebody. Ain’t NOTHING gonna stop me.”

Richard became focused on keeping the anger off of himself and on to what he had to do to make it in school. To make a long story short, Richard graduated on the honor roll. He now works in Washington DC at the intelligence department of the United States Navy.

The **SITUATION** (his father walking out) and the **PERPETRATOR** (his father) have become the **MOTIVATOR** for his success. Richard wins in more ways than one.

You say you have no goals in life? Yeah you do. You, like everyone else, want to “be somebody;” have a decent life; good friends, a nice house, a good job, maybe be married and have a nice family. When you as a kid were asked what you wanted to be when you grew up, you didn’t say things like,

“I want to be a bum,”

or

“I want to spend the rest of my life in prison.”

Instead you talked about positive things for yourself. By switching the emotions you feel from the situation you were in onto the goals you set for yourself and allow them to be the motivation to succeed, you, like Richard, win in more ways than one.

FIRST: You overcome the bad feelings you have because you're not using them to beat yourself up anymore, but rather as a tool to be successful in life.

Different focus, different outcome.

SECOND: You defeat the perpetrator by taking what he/she has done to you and using the anger caused by it to motivate you.

In other words the perpetrator has not defeated you but rather has motivated you.

YOU WIN!

THIRD: You increase the chances of reaching your goals in life and being successful at what you do.

Like I said, there are thousands of young people who have switched their emotions from being on their back to putting them onto the goals they set for themselves in life. I'm sure you have heard of such people.

FINAL THOUGHT

From movie stars to business people;
from athletes to high school students,
people have come to realize that when you take the
emotions of “WHAT WAS,”

and apply them to

“WHAT COULD BE,”

YOU WIN.

And the more you stay focused, keeping that “switch” on
motivating yourself and not allowing it to “click back” to bring
yourself down,

the better you are going to feel about yourself in the end.

So always remember...

*The situation
and the perpetrator
have now become the
motivator*