

## **BLAME AND RESPONSIBILITY - DEFENDING THEM IN A "NON-JUDGEMENTAL CULTURE!"**

Blame is about wanting to hurt a person for a wrong they are perceived to have done and involves condemning them.

Blame is about degrading a person in some way because of what they have done or thought to have done. To condemn or judge is to agree that somebody's action should be punished by some penalty or by disapproval. Even if you say it is wrong to punish an adulteress, you will only mean that punishing her is not bad in itself but punishing her is a bad idea because of negative consequences that may arise from doing so. To judge a person as a person is to open your heart to malice. You open yourself up to emotions that seek to harm.

Blame implies you think you have a right to have bad feelings towards a person as if you have never ever done wrong!

Blame implies that you want the person to suffer because of the blame to deter them from doing the wrong again.

Blame implies that you impute evil to the person as a person - you are not pretending that the evil they did is separate from them.

Today, blaming is widely frowned upon.

Yet it has its defenders, "Blame is needed for us to have reasonably good lives and often we need it to survive. But it is essential that we blame correctly. Blaming people for things that are not wrong or that they have not done defeats the purpose. Blame is at its core about seeing what is for our well-being and what is not. In short, it is about seeing what kind of people are for us and what ones are against us. People are very interested in blame and think about it a lot. It is important to people and those who say they do not blame anybody for anything are liars. They are aware of doing it too much which is why they have to pretend not to be doing it. They think others would fear and reject them if they seen how important blame and blaming was to them. Blaming communicates to others that you will not accept abuse or mistreatment from them. Thus if you suppress the need to blame when you should blame and when you excuse and condone or forgive the person instead of blaming that is showing you do not take the risk of abuse from others seriously."

But if declaring people responsible is an alternative to blaming all the above could be achieved.

Instead, of blaming, you stand for the principle that each person is responsible for herself or himself. Responsible means that a person can change and nobody else can do this job for them. It means they can choose the life or action that they believe or think is best for them. It is about change not condemnation. It is about changing not moralising.

Imagine a woman who could get a job anywhere who remains employed in a firm where the incorrigible and autocratic boss maltreats and humiliates her constantly. We can perhaps blame her partly. If we are going to blame her, we will have to say that she is entirely to blame for her part in letting him treat her that way. Some say we shouldn't blame her for her suffering but should instead declare that she is responsible for letting herself be treated this way. So what is the difference between blaming and declaring that she is responsible? Blaming her implies she deserves to be in pain for staying and she deserves disapproval. It says she is bad in so far as she lets the bad treatment continue. It is judging her as a partly bad, if not wholly bad, person. Blaming judges her and says she is to be punished by your disapproval and because she has earned her suffering by failing to assert her rights. Declaring her responsible is about telling her she can help herself. Some say that focusing only on her responsibility and leaving blame out entirely is about blinding yourself to the thought that she deserves some of her pain and deserves disapproval and is being bad. They say if there is no place for condemning her actions or non-actions (non-actions are actually actions) why would you care if she considers herself to be a responsible person or not?

Some of the disciples of human responsibility condemn judging but use talk about human responsibility to cover it up. Some declare her responsible and do not admit that they judge her. They then smugly believe that they haven't judged her. But all they are really doing is pretending. They are merely refusing to let themselves see that they judge.

Just because you manage to keep the judging thoughts out of your head, it does not mean you don't judge her. You do on some level. That you have to work to keep yourself from realising that you think judgementally means that you do judge her. If you really didn't blame, you wouldn't need to push the blaming into your unconscious mind. The person who speaks of a reckless driver who kills a pedestrian might say, "He had no concern for other people on the road." This is judgemental. Whoever says, "No I am merely saying he was responsible for his lack of concern and am not judging or blaming," is obviously telling lies. Saying that somebody is the cause of evil is the same as saying its their fault. Period. You can't say a person is causing bad things in their life without accusing them of being bad. You are manipulating her and lying to her by

leading her to think that you do not judge.

If blaming is right you are responsible for being blamed. If blaming is wrong then does responsibility really matter? No.

You simply cannot declare a person responsible without declaring them blameworthy. If it is true that she deserves her suffering, then refusing to blame her is refusing to recognise justice. If there is no justice then she has no rights for rights are applications of the principle of justice. To deny she has rights is in fact to say that the boss is right to hurt her and she is right to let him do it. To say you cannot judge a person as sinful or evil is to say everybody good or bad should be rewarded as if he or she were perfect.

You cannot blame her unless you first OR ALSO declare her responsible. Blame says, "Her suffering is just justice for she helps cause her suffering." Responsibility says, "She helps cause her suffering." We know we must not declare that she is responsible for what happened to her even if she freely stayed in the employment of her ruthless boss.

So how can we encourage a person to change the hurtful things in their lives without blaming that person? The answer is simple. She is not responsible for the past or the present for she cannot change them. She can only change the future.

It follows from this that we are able to remind people that they can change their lives and we can do this without accusing them of being responsible. We can do this without branding them as blameworthy should things fail to turn out as planned.

A person has done wrong. A person is doing wrong now. You cannot stop them this moment but maybe in the next. You can do nothing about the person who has done wrong or who is doing wrong. If you intervene you are not changing any of that. Your intervention will make a change but not to any of that. Hating the wrong would be pointless. You work against it yes but you do not hate it. It would be self-abuse to hate what is done for it is done and nothing can change the fact that it was done.

Don't blame yourself for making a mistake. Blame is about condemnation and is useless. Recognise that you have responsibility. Responsibility means you have the power to change. And don't blame the other person for hurting you. Responsibility says, "A mistake is happening. It needs to be fixed and I am willing and able to fix it." Blame says, "I am bad for I make mistakes". Blame is to be avoided. Never blame yourself. Never blame others no matter what they do.

If you drink too much and there is no God, the bad consequences cannot be called punishment in any sense. But if there is a God then he has tied the consequences to drinking for he could have made alcohol harmless and he didn't. So it is punishment. And worse, the religionist blames the drinker not God. That is nasty and a further punishment. A believer in God cannot expect to be taken seriously if she says she does not blame people.

You do something. You must do your best to avoid any bad results. If they still happen they are not your responsibility. Some will happen in spite of your efforts and some bad results will be completely unexpected. This will happen whether or not your action was harmful. People will look at the bad things that happen after your act and judge them to be consequences. But it is not that simple. They will tell you they declare you responsible for them. In fact they blame you. If a man cheats on his wife and she burns his car people say he is responsible for it for he committed adultery and she would not have did that unless he had done wrong. That is actually a false accusation and is quite nasty. Her action and response is her own. It is about blaming him and not just declaring him responsible.

You are not responsible for what you have done in the past. You were responsible. There is a huge difference.

Those who impute responsibility to you and deny that they impute blame are lying. They punish you by treating you as if you could go back in time and fix what you did wrong. They unfairly treat you as responsible for it NOW.

Many feel that responsibility stands on blame. So responsibility is just a polite form of blaming. Others think blame stands on responsibility. So responsibility makes blaming possible.

That is about principle but what about the reality? Do most people tell you about your responsibility to mask its true nature which is blame? Yes!

The doctrine of free will that I can just do the opposite of what I normally do – can kill my beloved child just like that is a bad influence. If it is not true it is dangerous if people think it is true. Free will believers do not take responsibility for how their doctrine can influence and program people and lead to atrocities. People like that have no room to blame you for blaming!

## THE TWO EDGED SWORD

Personal responsibility is a heavy burden and usually we prefer not to have it. We fear it not just for us but for those whose lives we touch. But what is the alternative? We end up with no right or chance to control our own lives. We want more than

the freedom to exist. We want a free life to live. But we will never be free of the curse of responsibility. We ask others to pay a big price when we invite them to be responsible. We almost invite rebellion. Maybe this is why we find it hard to avoid having enemies of some kind. Perhaps it is why we need to make enemies of the “other” – the group or class who we do not see as “us”.