

ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY

After all, it is pretty much human nature to want to blame other people or our circumstances when things go wrong, or when we fall short of our goals and expectations. Our first inclination is often to complain about the way we were treated, or about all the ways the deck was stacked against us—the unfair treatment, the tragic circumstances, the lack of money—and to make one excuse, justification, and rationalization after another.

It's much easier to point the finger at external circumstances than to acknowledge our own shortcomings. And it is certainly easier to give up when things get hard, especially when we are handed a perfectly legitimate excuse not to keep going. Who could blame us for wanting to throw in the towel?

And that's not always easy, but it is incredibly freeing. So how do we do that? How do we change our mindset in a way that lets us take ownership of any situation we happen to find ourselves in, no matter how difficult?

STEP #1

LET GO OF THE VICTIM CARD

Let's be honest here you guys--We don't like to think of ourselves as victims. After all, it is a pretty strong word with a lot of negative connotations. Victims are weak. Victims are whiny. Victims are stuck being, well, victims.

And yet, so often, we play the victim card without even realizing it. Those rationalizations that we've made for why we can't be successful, or why we can't go after our goals and dreams, or why we can't accomplish the things we really want to do are so close to the surface, such a part of our internal narrative, that they come out before we even realize what we are saying. They are such a part of our story that we don't even recognize that we are making excuses.

And here's the thing—on the surface, most of those reasons sound perfectly legitimate. After all, who can blame someone dealing with a health concern or disability for not going after their goals? How can someone facing serious financial hardship think about pie-in-the-sky ideals? How can anyone dream big while dealing with major family issues?

Those are real problems. Actual hardships. Genuine obstacles. But a good excuse is still just an excuse.

STEP #2

STOP WAITING TO BE RESCUED

Have you ever noticed that we live in a society built on heroes? It's all about the daring rescues and the dramatic saves—the more death-defying, the better! In fact, the idea is so ingrained in our culture, that it is hard to imagine a story without one. Indeed—it is the crux of every fairy tale—the handsome prince coming to the aid of the damsel in distress, the princess sleeping in the tower, the fair maiden in mortal peril. Cinderella has her fairy godmother. Even Aladdin gets his three wishes.

Every great story needs a hero. Right?

Remember—action is the antidote to fear, and at the end of the day, the only thing that is stopping you is YOU.

STEP #3

TAKE BACK CONTROL

As a mom, sometimes I feel like a broken record, and I find myself wondering if they will ever really get it. If you have kids, you can probably relate. But the reality is that taking complete and total ownership for everything that happens in our lives is a pretty tough lesson for all of us.

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But it won't matter, because you are no longer a victim of your circumstance. You are still in complete control of how you choose to respond.

In other words? You need to take back control so that you can get where you want to be.