



TAKING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY – by Marney W. DeFoore, LCSW-S

One of the first words used in childhood to declare ownership is the word, “Mine!” The word claims that something is possessed by the speaker. The typical rebuttal in childhood is a firm, “No, MINE!” Do you remember doing this? Maybe not, but you have probably heard children use this as a way to firmly state, “This belongs to me.”

Well, children have some learning to do, don’t they? As adults, we learn to share. Then, something might be mine, it might be yours or in some cases, no one owns it. Sadly, some people grow up never learning to clearly state what does and does not belong to them.

When it comes to the area of personal responsibility, many people grow up with a number of bad habits that are used to avoid taking responsibility like saying, “It is not my fault, I had nothing to do with it, It was not my idea, or You fix it.”

When was the last time you claimed responsibility for a wrong-doing or mistake? Unfortunately, many people confuse forgiving and condoning by saying, “I can’t forgive so-in-so. What they did was WRONG!” There is one result of my harboring anger or resentment for the wrong of another person - I damage myself. “Resenting someone is like you taking poison and waiting for the other person to die.” It is time to change ownership responsibility in your life. By this I mean that perhaps it is time to take ownership of wrongdoings by apologizing, making amends when and where doing so doesn’t cause harm. Next, experience the freedom to stop letting other people rescue or interfere with what truly belongs to you: Opinions, preferences, likes and dislikes, time, and yes, even money.

Here is one recipe that can help. Ask for and accept God’s forgiveness. Forgive yourself. Ask others to forgive you and stay the course even if they don’t. Forgive everyone for everything BUT don’t return for more abuse. Stop taking responsibilities that are not yours. Begin taking responsibility for what is yours by living differently, autonomously, freely.

This can be a long process for many people. I assure you it is well worth the journey. The results can be truly liberating.

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