

WINNER'S MINUTES: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

RECOVERING FROM OUR PAST

We prevent ourselves from having what we desire by living in our past stories. By believing our experiences determine our future outcomes; we trap ourselves into the past. Who we were is a determinant of who we become *if we allow it*. **We have the choice to learn from our past, release our past or live in our past.**

Many people assume they have moved beyond their past because they married another person, swapped jobs, or switched religious beliefs. They changed scenery but still suffer from past beliefs. They blame their husband or their boss for their failures, have excuses for why they haven't accomplished their goals, believe that suffering leads to better behaviors, judge themselves or others, or make themselves miserable by needing to be right. Thinking the same thoughts lead to the same outcomes. They are addicted to their past.

You can live in the now and create your future by changing your thoughts. You live past story by believing in it. You cannot change the events of your past, but you can alter how you perceive them. Releasing the negative emotions attached to your past furnishes you new possibilities for the present, which in turn grants you a new future.

WHAT IS A VICTIM?

People who blame outside circumstances, events or people for their problems are victims. They live in their old excuses connecting their past to their present which explains why they cannot have what they desire. We categorize people as victims rather than seeing ourselves as victims. We hear when other people blame events or people for their demise, but do we hear ourselves?

- "The reason I can't get ahead in life is that I never developed the right connections."
- "I can't lose the weight because my family is all overweight. It is genetics."
- "It is not about what you know; it is about who you know. I don't know the right people to get a good job."
- "I would have been a great athlete, but my father always told me that I would be a failure."
- "I would have gone into business for myself, but my high school teacher told me that 95% of all entrepreneurs fail."

Some people call these reasons, but they are **excuses**. You determined not to receive your desires through your excuses. You connected your past failures to your future endeavors. I'm guilty. I've used excuses to shove the blame away from me. I've pointed my finger at somebody else claiming it was not my fault.

But does an excuse help you feel better or does it chain you to mediocrity?

Decide to stop your victim mentality and start taking responsibility for your character, circumstances, and failures. If you find reasons why you can't be, do or have something, you

remain stuck and powerless. Accepting responsibility for your actions and outcomes leads you to pursuing and finding solutions.

Sarah understood the power of accepting responsibility. She defeated three types of cancer in her life. The last cancer she overcame was stage four lymphoma. Her physician believed her outlook was so bad he recommended she spend the next few weeks saying goodbye to family and friends. Instead, she searched for and found solutions. Sarah chose not to succumb to the victim mentality or to her doctor's past experiences with stage four lymphoma patients.

Sarah shows what is possible when you decide to take responsibility for the creation of your life. No excuses. No reasons. JUST SOLUTIONS.

MISERY IS A SIGN OF VICTIMHOOD

Did you ever hear the platitude, "Misery loves company?" Not only does misery love company. It demands it. Miserable people drag others into their misery by sharing their past stories.

The first day I arrived at college I told my roommate my STORY about how high school teammates booed me when I received the tournament MVP trophy, how they tried to vote me off the team, and how one teammate quit rather than play beside me on defense. I then told another person and another. I wanted to tell everybody my story—the story about how other people hurt and abandoned me. I repeated my poor-me story wanting to be validated. I yearned that my new friends would hate my old enemies as much as I did.

I made that story my excuse platform which solidified my victimhood. Had I been confident and secure in my abilities, I wouldn't have had the need to drive the blame elsewhere. I would have persevered through trials and errors.

I lived in unconscious incompetence. I didn't know my insecurity drove my victimhood and my victimhood thwarted my success.

I lost empowerment by continuing to say things like, "If Barbara wouldn't have been the nasty person she was and influenced the rest of the team, I would have had a better athletic career. If the officials wouldn't have hated me so much and fouled me out, I would have averaged more points. If my mother and father wouldn't have fought so much, I would have had better relationships."

I remained fixated in my past every time I told those stories and convinced myself that Barbara, the officials, or my parents determined the outcome of my life. They held all the power for me and ran my life through their control buttons.

How many times have you used an excuse for the reason you didn't get what you wanted? Did you realize what you were doing? Did you ever ask yourself why you needed somebody else to be your scapegoat?

I needed the excuses because deep down I didn't believe I could do it.

But how many people want to admit they don't believe in themselves? Isn't it easier to place the blame rather than to accept the responsibility that you control your life?

The problem with finger pointing is that when you continue to blame others, you realize you don't have the power to change them. Your powerlessness leads to frustration then exasperation, which can cause you to nosedive into desperation and eventually depression. You are miserable because you can't see an escape. You continue to live your story wondering why life never changes.

If you keep telling the same story, you get the same results. I kept telling the same story. What stories are you telling?