

Victim or Victor: It Is Your Choice

By John Wagner

Life is a test, it must be just a test or there would be instructions on where to go and what to do. Yes life will test us and our resolve to succeed each day. Events and circumstances will occur that will create challenges and obstacles, and we will all experience set backs and failures. How we choose to think and how we choose to act will determine our success. Yes that is a period at the end of the last sentence. The end! Our actions and our attitude determine whether we are just victims to be pitied or victors to be celebrated.

Victim status is never permanent unless you choose to be helpless, hopeless and thereby choose to do nothing to overcome the challenges. If you don't give up or give in you are a victor. Victims loose and become losers; victors loose and work hard to become winners.

Victims choose to:

1. Wait; for something to happen to improve their situation or for someone else to take care of them.
2. Whine; they blame and try to convince others to help or do for them what they will not do.
3. Wonder; why it happened, when will it change, who will help, and why people don't care.

Victors choose to:

1. Assume accountability; they know if it is to be, it is up to me. Accept what they can't change and change and improve what they can.
2. Ask; they ask for help and direction (unless of course you are a grown man lost on a highway somewhere).
3. Act; they do things to improve their odds of success and try again and again by taking direct and positive action. They know persistence works wonders.

Victims become angry and are no fun to be around. They bring nothing to the party but reasons why a party shouldn't happen in the first place. Business and life success requires victors. Businesses want to win customers and that takes a team of victors. Victors know how to loose, they get over it quickly by taking themselves lightly and there work seriously. This allows them to learn form the setback and move quickly to improve and try again. Victims believe they should never experience a loss and blame others, they avoid loosing by not playing the game, and they are put out of commission by setbacks.

The bottom line is it is easy to understand how to not be a victim but it is hard to do. In a recent article in Prevention Magazine Dr. William Glasser outlines The Seven Deadly Habits of Truly Miserable People. The habits are criticizing, complaining, blaming, threatening, nagging, punishing, and bribing. These habits can become automatic reactions to setbacks. Rather than just react with these negative habits we can choose instead to have a positive attitude and take positive action. Our sense of humor can help us take on all of this responsibility for our success. Lighten up and make failure your teacher not your undertaker. Make your life and work a game that you are determined to get good at by playing hard and having fun.

Many examples exist of victors who choose not to be victims. Michael Jordan was cut from the freshman basketball team, but he obviously did not stop playing. Walt Disney was fired from his first media job because he was told he lacked creativity, but he didn't stop being creative. Abraham Lincoln lost eight elections but he didn't stop running.

Bad things will happen to us all. The important question is what will you do then? Will you choose to be a victim or a victor? Lighten up and remember how we choose to think and act will determine our success. Yes that is a period at the end of the last sentence. The end!

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