



How You Are Who You Are

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We are all victims. Whether we are aware of it or not is entirely a different matter. The facts are, however, as grown adults, we are all a product of the childhood years that shaped who we now believe ourselves to be. During those formative years, our subconscious minds learned about the world we live in and our place in it. It learned about our strengths and talents and, just as effectively, learned about our weaknesses and perceived inadequacies. All this so-called learning was done through our faculty of snapshot learning – we literally took photographs of people and events that made an impression upon us when we were young and impressionable.

Today, as grown adults, those childhood snapshots demand our attention. They are the baseline from which we act or, more correctly, react to current events and people in our lives. They are the sole catalyst for all normal adult reactive behaviour. In other words, we, as normal adults, react to today's events whilst focusing on and being driven by impressive events long gone. So each reaction we have today – in our adult lives – is the product of our childhood programming. We are, indeed, victims of our past.

I say victims because, even if you were, as most of us were, brought up in an environment of unconditional love and attention, the incontrovertible facts are that our faculty to learn through snapshot learning – and then repeat that learned behaviour in later life – takes our attention away from the present moment, the only time and place either you or I have. As I said at the outset, you are most likely unaware of your victim status, because all the focus and attention on past childhood events is subconscious. In short, the normal adult subconscious mind is invariably focused on your childhood snapshots. And therein lies our problem. On the one hand, our learned ability to accomplish repetitive tasks through learned conditioning provides us with a major advantage – we can undertake such tasks without needing to pay any attention to them – we can preserve our attention for more pressing matters, like being unexpectedly attacked by a man-eating tiger (after all, that is how and why evolutionary psychology believes we became so expert and efficient at preserving our attention for major events).

On the other hand, our ability to accomplish those repetitive tasks without paying them any attention is our Achilles heel – we end up paying attention to nothing, given that, sooner or later, almost everything we do in life becomes routine and repetitive. Our ability to withhold our attention from the routine disables our ability to pay attention at all – and our subconscious ability

to repeat our daily routines from learned programming means that our subconscious mind is permanently using our childhood as the yardstick by which we should behave as adults. As a result, the normal adult pays only 1% attention to the here and now. The vast majority of their attention is focused in the past – how they felt about themselves many years ago quite literally dictates how they feel about themselves now – regardless of what is actually going on now.

As such, we are indeed victims of our childhood learning and our ability to not pay attention. What is happening in the present moment, who you are with in the present moment – all these people and events are lost on you. You never experience the here and now – that is why psychology states that normal people only perceive what they expect to perceive (based on their childhood learning) and only experience what they expect to experience. The next stranger who could become the most important person in your life (after all, all those who are now important to us were once strangers) could be standing right in front of you and you wouldn't see them for who they are.

We need to stop being victims to enable ourselves see and experience what is actually going on in the present moment – actually perceive the opportunities of the here and now, rather than react automatically to what we think is going on in the here and now, based on the “expert” advice of a subconscious that is looking at events twenty, thirty or forty years ago and telling us that that's what's happening now. We need to wake up from our deadly slumber, where only 1% of our attention is focused on the only show in town. We need to pay attention. Psychology tells us that our ability to be happy and successful is directly correlated to our ability to pay attention. In effect, that rules out all normal people. If you're normal, allowing your subconscious to watch old re-runs, you simply will never be either happy or successful.

We need to be abnormal. All that means is that we need to pay more than 1% attention to the here and now. In doing so, you'll be more effective – and your subconscious will be less inclined to look at old snapshots – so, you'll get a better idea of what's really going on in the here and now – and what's potentially in it for you. To be abnormal, you need to start training your mind to pay attention – to little things, so that big things follow. You have five senses, use them – see, feel, hear, smell and taste the first few minutes of every day – and you're on your way to abnormal happiness and success.