

Stress Bytes Newsletter

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 9

OCTOBER 2008

"WHEN STRESS BITES, BITE BACK!"

THE NEWSLETTER OF ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.
LICENSED CLINICAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR.

Blame: Two Can Play That Game

Why do we always look for someone or something to blame when we are hurt, upset or frustrated? Why is laying fault the first thing on someone's mind when bad things happen? Does there always have to be an aggressor and a victim in every interaction that doesn't go the way one or the other party wants it to? Is retribution the best response to harm or hurt? (It seems to me this could apply both to individual persons, as well as entire nations.)

If we could get inside the mind of someone who constantly blames others (whether they are the aggressor or the victim) this might be the unconscious thought process: "I blame you for my choices and deny that I had other options or choices to make. I am going to react and get rid of this awful feeling as quickly as I can. I don't want to acknowledge that I had my part in making this situation go poorly. I don't want to look at my own behavior or own the negative results I get in life. I want to find fault and blame someone else because I don't want to

feel bad about myself or have to make difficult changes or face my fears. I don't want to look at the fact that my behavior has hurt another and/or contributed to my own hurt. I want to say, 'you made me do it!'

So, I will blame you or circumstances for my drinking, overeating, rages, hitting, infidelity, and lying. I justify it to myself by saying, 'If only you wouldn't have done _____, I wouldn't have done what I did. Look what you made me do!'

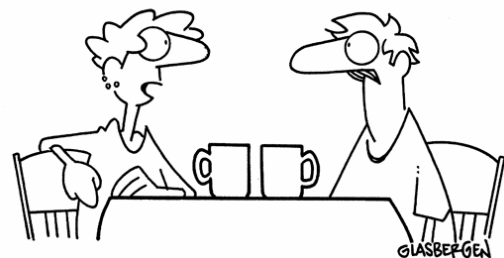
In my worldview, retaliation for hurt or harm is justifiable. I don't acknowledge that I am hurt and seek solace, comfort or understanding. Maybe I don't know how. Maybe I see that as weak. Nor do I seek to negotiate for a more satisfying outcome, talk to you about how your behavior has affected me, or courageously remove myself from a toxic situation. Instead I blame you and feel like a helpless victim. I label you as "lazy, unloving, irritating, frigid, weak, irresponsible, evil, unfit,

stupid, or crazy." I cover up and attempt to assuage my hurt or fear with violence, self-righteous anger, or self-defeating behaviors, instead of forgiveness, understanding or assertiveness.

I wear my victim stature outwardly. I protest is loudly to my friends and family, seeking their sympathy, asking them to choose sides against you and agree with me that you are bad, that YOU are to blame. Everybody thinks I am a saint

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

	1
Blame: Two Can Play That Game	
Blame: Two Can Play That Game	2
....continued	
Poems about Forgiveness and Peace	3
Reading List	4



"Let's compromise. You do everything I say and I'll say everything you do."

Annette Vaillancourt, Ph.D.
Psychotherapist & Motivational Speaker
Phone: 618-549-5935
www.GotStressGetHelp.com
E-mail: DrAnnette@Hughes.net

Blame: Two Can Play That Game —cont'd

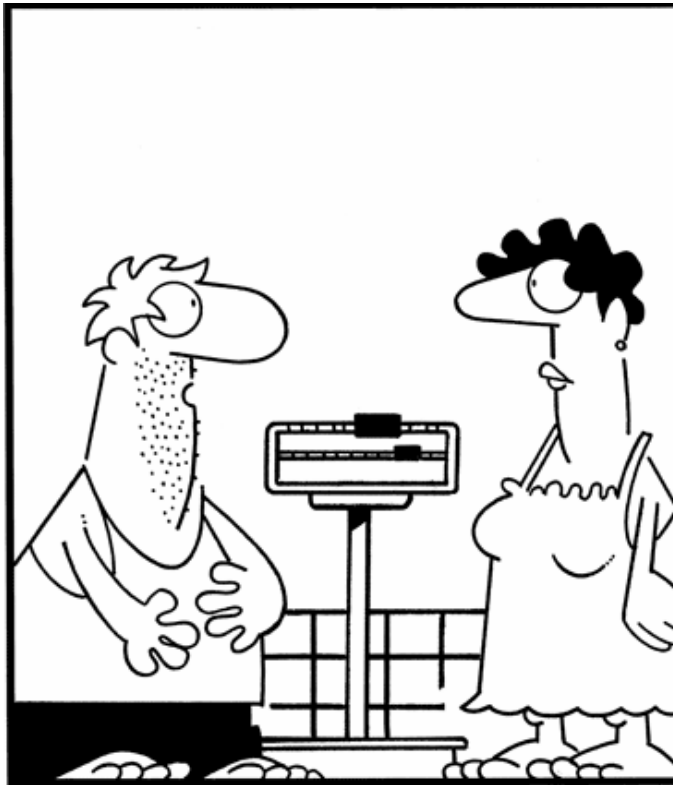
(except those who secretly think I'm a fool) for putting up with this!"

As I write this I am keenly aware that everybody loses in this kind of interaction. There is no accountability, no responsibility, no integrity. In the "blame game" it becomes difficult to tell the aggressors from the victims after awhile, as both are pointing fingers at the other and saying, "she/he did that to me! ! Everybody feel sorry for me!"

Without personal accountability and responsibility, without stopping to consider how your actions contributed to the unsatisfactory outcome you're experiencing, where that's the bombing of the World Trade Center or the fact that you just bounced another check in the family checkbook, the cycle just continues. There's no stopping it until someone takes responsibility for their behavior and says, "Yes, this part was my doing. I did that to you because I didn't know what else to do. I didn't want to look at myself and acknowledge my hurt, fear, frustration or my incorrect assumptions. I didn't want to take the time to listen and respond after some consideration of your side. I just reacted.

Seems to me if we all did this, there's be alot more peace in the world!

"All we are saying, is give peace a chance!" " John Lennon and Yoko Ono



"The reason for my weight gain is obvious — humans are evolving into a larger species!"

NEW: PARTICIPATE IN AN ONLINE DISCUSSION OF THIS AND OTHER TOPICS AT DR. VAILLANCOURT'S BLOG AT ENTERTRAININGYOU.BLOGSPOT.COM

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE OUR FREE NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO DRANNETTE@HUGHES.NET WITH THE WORDS "SUBSCRIBE TO STRESS BYTES" IN THE SUBJECT LINE OR COMPLETE THE SUBSCRIPTION FORM ON AT GOTSTRESSGETHELP.COM

COPYRIGHT © 2008. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.
Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console;
to be understood as to understand;
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen

Forgiveness is
as blue as the pen I'm writing with.
Forgiveness is
the most beautiful star
shining in the dark sky.
Forgiveness is
all over the world.
U can hear "I forgive U"
in Asia, France and everywhere in the world.
Forgiveness is
always in my heart.
When I forgive,
I feel like I burst into a flame of strong friendship.
Forgiveness is
the sound of claps of joy when U forgive someone.

-- Nora, 5th grade

Annette Vaillancourt, Ph.D.
Psychotherapist & Motivational Speaker

Schwartz Building
231 W. Main, 2W
Carbondale, IL 62901
Phone: 618-549-5935

And
PO Box 220034
Kirkwood, MO 63122
314-995-9500
Annette@GotStressGetHelp.com



The Stress Doctor is IN!!!

"IF YOUR DAILY LIFE SEEMS POOR, DO NOT BLAME IT; BLAME YOURSELF, TELL YOURSELF THAT YOU ARE NOT POET ENOUGH TO CALL FORTH ITS RICHES." - RAINER MARIA RILKE

"TAKE YOUR LIFE IN YOUR OWN HANDS AND WHAT HAPPENS? A TERRIBLE THING: NO ONE TO BLAME." - ERICA JONG

"THE BEST YEARS OF YOUR LIFE ARE THE ONES IN WHICH YOU DECIDE YOUR PROBLEMS ARE YOUR OWN." - ALBERT ELLIS



**"Have you been hurt in an auto accident? We'll sue!
Are you the victim of medical malpractice? We'll sue!
Are you planning to call a different law firm? We'll sue!"**

ANNETTE VAILLANCOURT, PH.D.

- Gently helping individuals, couples and groups resolve personal problems, manage stress, and reach their full potential since 1990.
 - Specializing in Women's Issues and Stress Management
 - Emotional Freedom Technique for Peak Performance
- Call **(618) 549-5935** to set up an appointment

READING LIST: FOR ACCEPTING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY & BYPASSING BLAME

Conscious Loving: The Journey to Co-Committment by Gay Hendricks and Kathlyn

How to Be an Adult: A Handbook for Psychological and Spiritual Integration by David Richo

How to Be an Adult in Relationships: The Five Keys to Mindful Loving by David Richo

Couple Communication I: Talking Together by Sherod Miller, Elam W. Nunnally, and Daniel B. Wackman