

THE BLAME GAME

I'm running late, rushing out the door to pick up the kids from school, practice, lessons, or a friend's house, and it's all because of HIM (my husband, boss, son...even the dog's not immune). Once again I am playing the blame game, and I realize I have three choices:

Choice #1: Blame someone else

Most of us learned early in life to blame the other person. It's a natural instinct for self-preservation. Just listen to young children: "I didn't do it." "It's not my fault." "He did it." Blaming someone is better than getting lectured or punished or admitting we're not perfect.

So, as I'm speeding down the road to pick up the kids, I'm feeling very self-righteous because I'm right, and more importantly HE is wrong. Unfortunately, it usually isn't completely someone else's fault and I'm still running late.

Choice #2: Self-Blame – "I'm so stupid"

If I decide to look deeper at the chain of events, I might see what I did to contribute to the situation. The challenge here is to accept responsibility without feeling too bad about myself. Being overly self-critical isn't productive and is damaging to my self-esteem. If I am busy beating myself up, I'm probably not looking for a solution to the real problem.

Choice #3: NO BLAME

The best option is to stop worrying about who is at fault and decide how to prevent the situation from happening in the future. Get past the anger. Instead, take a deep breath and adopt the attitude, "Isn't that interesting?" Blaming doesn't fix anything; it just makes everyone feel worse. If you can look at the situation objectively, you may just realize you have options to help manage your frustrations. And, next time you can have a different result.

Take a tip from "Murphy" and plan for the unexpected so that – if what can go wrong, does go wrong – it doesn't ruin your day.

Next time, I plan to leave 15 minutes early. And to be honest, we don't even have a dog.

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