

The following is a brief summary of a workshop Bill Rush gave at Northwestern Bible College.

DEFEATING BLAME

We live in a blame epidemic! A woman spilled hot coffee in her lap while driving, and sued McDonalds for a million dollars for making it too hot. Its no wonder, blame plays such a devastating role in our personal lives.

Do you know a blameaholic? I know a lot about this because I am a blameaholic in recovery. Even today, when I misplace my car keys, my brain first wonders who moved them!

Blame deceives us into shifting our problem to someone else. If I have pain (anger, frustration or sadness), it must be someone else's fault. What I am doing is confusing **triggering** of pain with the **source** of my pain. When I have an intense negative emotion after feeling inadequate in the face of my spouses critical remark, I blame him/her for being the source of that pain. In reality, my spouse has simply triggered a much deeper insecurity and woundedness in **me!** My very own insecurity is the source of my intense pain and anger, not my beloved spouse .

When I started to get a hold of that reality, my world started to change. Before I would say, "I wonder why she does these things to make me so angry". That led me to blame, anger, punishment, and relationship damage. Now I can say: "I wonder what is going on in me which makes this incident so hard and me so angry".

What a difference! Instead of my long pointed finger targeted at my spouse, it now gets turned towards my own wounded heart. That allows my anger to dissipate much more quickly and this truth frees me to pray for my own healing and do repair with my loved ones.

Think how damaging and deceptive blame really is! Blame confuses us into focusing on an innocent bystander, damaging our most important relationships and simultaneously this deception prevents us from seeing the real source of our pain and anger. We therefore are often praying for the wrong person! We say: "Lord, change my mean inconsiderate spouse" when we should be praying for him to change and heal us!

These are the steps that helped me:

- **OWN IT:** When I am frustrated and angry, I force my self to look inward and ask myself what it is about me that makes the situation so hard.
- **PRAY IT:** Owning it, allows me to focus on my own healing. I simply pray: "Lord, heal my heart. Help me be free of this pain and know more fully your unconditional love for me".
- **DO REPAIR:** If I have blown it with my spouse or child, I am now prepared to go to them and ask forgiveness for my over-reaction.

These three steps have changed my life and they can change yours

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