

Finding Somebody Else to Blame

By Hap Hansen

For many people, the most challenging personality conflict is to blame others for any misfortune they may have endured. At what point do we, as individuals, become mature enough to accept the notion that things can and do go wrong and no one is to blame? When is it that we begin to take responsibility for ourselves, for our own actions, for our own lives? Unfortunately, too many people never reach that level of maturity. Too many of us will always blame others for our shortcomings, our failures, our bad decisions. There's always a scapegoat to blame when some of us suffer ills, accidents or disappointments.

I happened to be watching a newscast the other day where one individual was tearfully explaining to a reporter about a tragedy he had just suffered. After discussing how he felt, how the situation was affecting him now and would in the future, he closed the interview with the reporter by saying, "The worst part of it is, there is absolutely no one to blame!" Even the reporter appeared incredulous with his statement. Here was an individual, obviously distressed about what had happened and his biggest concern was that there was no one, nobody, to blame. Would he have been in less pain, have been less distressed if someone or something could be blamed for the tragedy? Would he have felt better if he could have sued someone in an attempt to relieve his anguish? I suppose so.

In another statement I read recently, where someone had suffered a perceived grief, the comment was, "I don't know what happened, I do know that somebody is gonna pay!"

I wish we could get the idea across to these people that sometimes bad things happen to good folks and no one is to blame. It isn't anybody's fault in many tragic situations. And much of the time, when someone is to blame, it lies with the very people who complain the loudest and sue the most. It is easier, I believe, for some to decline personal responsibility for their own actions than it is to find someone to blame. It is particularly easier when frivolous lawsuits are successful and people who have been imperceptibly wronged receive millions in undeserved awards. It's time to stop this nonsense. It's time for education. It's time for responsibility. It's time for maturity. Now there's a challenging personality conflict!