

I Was a Victim... I'm Not a Victim Anymore

	<i>Stuck in Yesterday</i>	<i>Living in Today</i>
Feelings	<i>hurt, anger, shame, sadness, despair isolation, fear, numbness</i>	<i>happy, peaceful, content, genuine, hopeful, serene</i>
Attitudes	<i>defeated, pessimistic, past-directed, why? other-centered, trapped, victim, suspicious</i>	<i>optimistic, empowered, why not?, present and future oriented, free</i>
Behavior	<i>indecisive, hide, nervous laughter, fake smiles, lying, passive, compulsive</i>	<i>assertive, risk-taking, deep laughter, make amends</i>
Time Frame	<i>living in the past</i>	<i>living in the present</i>
Resources	<i>very few: generalizations, go numb, act out, all-or-none thinking, defenses</i>	<i>several: discernment, development, financial</i>
Defense	<i>walls jealousy, resentment, indifference, drugs, superiority, self-pity, compulsions</i>	<i>boundaries identity, values, appropriate intimacy, assertive</i>
Life State	<i>depression and/or chaos as a result of repressed or exaggerated feelings</i>	<i>serenity as the result of feelings in, feelings out</i>

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This two-stage model is an admittedly simplistic description of two life states. Many people have passively decided to live in one of the two. They are either immersed in the identity of the debilitating tragedy, pain and powerlessness of their past victim status, or they are in denial (or “minimal”) about how bad it really was; they “look good” on the outside while scrambling on the inside.

So, I try to assist them in the legitimate full experience of both: first, the feelings, memories and powerlessness of the past, and then the feelings, skills and empowerment in the present and future. People need to transform their present internalized feelings of shame and self-loathing into anger and indignation correctly directed at past perpetrators and situations. Then, through a spiritual process of surrender and self-responsibility, and energetic rebalancing, release the anger, heal the wounds and live on.

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“There is pain in change, and there is pain in staying the same. Pick the one that moves you forward.”

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