

BEING OFFENDED - OR BEING IN CONTROL

by Edward R. Clark

Being in control includes refusing to be offended by any one, any thing, or any set of circumstances. Not being offended is a way of saying, "I have control over how I'm going to feel, and I choose to feel peaceful regardless of what I observe going on."

When we feel offended, we are practicing judgment, and judging someone else to be stupid, insensitive, rude, arrogant, foolish or inconsiderate, we find ourselves upset and offended by their conduct. What we may not realize is that when we judge another person, we do not define them, we are defining ourselves as someone who needs to judge others.

We can significantly reduce the amount of negative judging, and this will help to improve the quality of our own lives. The first thing to remember about judgments is it does not alter anything or anyone. Just because we dislike someone or react negatively toward some behavior does not change the person or behavior we are judging.

Judgments only say something about the person judging, describing their likes and dislikes. It does not define the person being judged. That person is defined by his or her own thoughts and actions.

Whenever we find ourselves caught up in this style of behavior, we should remind ourselves that we are the ultimate victim here, allowing our emotions and thoughts controlled by the behaviors of others. Once we recognize this, we begin replacing our inclination to judge with acceptance. The more at ease we are with the behavior of others, even if we would not

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act that way ourselves, the more we are at ease within ourselves. Quoting from the book, "Jesus," by John Van Auken:

There is so much good in the worst of us, and so much bad in the best of us, that it doesn't pay for any of us to think poorly of the rest of us.

Thus, a good way to approach self and others is to focus on the good and minimize the bad.

Nothing helps a bad person more than bringing out their goodness.