

# it's everyone else's fault

The *blame game* makes life very easy for some people. It allows them to hide from taking responsibility for the way they behave. It gives them an out. *If it weren't for the way I was treated by others I wouldn't be this way.*

It is generally accepted that our personality is shaped by our upbringing and the environment within which we operate. Life experience is encompassed in that maxim.

No one should be criticised because they have a particular feeling about something, all feelings are valid. What is being discussed in this short article is the behaviour that can follow those feelings.

It is OK to feel happy or sad or even angry. People need not have to apologise for the way they feel, but the behaviour that comes from those feelings may not be acceptable, for example, if one feels anger and starts attacking other people or smashing furniture. If I behave badly then I have to accept responsibility for that behaviour. Someone else may have provoked the feeling of hurt and anger in me but now I am seen in a bad light because of a demonstrated inability to control my behaviour.

Other examples of blame can lie in the abuse suffered by individuals when they were children. Our past is something that cannot be changed. We do not know what will happen tomorrow, so controlling how we behave in the present is more important than speculating on what cannot be known.

We often hear of people who behave badly, blaming their childhood or other circumstances. Their upbringing explains why they are behaving the way they do but it really does not excuse that bad behaviour. It will always be difficult for people to adjust to the ups and downs of life and to let go of their past negative experiences but the sooner they find a way to resolve those issues the more likely they are to find inner peace. Accepting the fact that the past cannot be changed is a solid foundation on which to find that inner peace and a better life in the present.

The past can be the albatross around our neck. For the *ancient mariner* the solution lay in these lines;  
*"The self same moment I could pray, the albatross fell off and sank like lead into the sea."*

*Men at Work* has helped many men to work through past issues. You may find it helpful too.

Come and join us at *Men at Work*:

***St Bartholomew's (St Bart's) church, Stenner Street near the Symes Thorpe Nursing home (at the eastern end of Stenner Street), on the second Friday of the month. In April that will be Friday the 11<sup>th</sup>, commencing at 10 a.m., lasting about 1 hour.***

**Men at Work is free, and all conversations are strictly confidential.**

The group is held at St Bart's because it was offered to us at no cost and has excellent facilities for meetings, including a great kitchen for morning tea.