

**Author: Heather Felty**  
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## **Don't Be the Victim, Be the Master!**

Victim mode. We've all be there. You've been hurt by someone else. And I'm talking emotionally, no violence here. Your significant other lied for months, you overhear someone say something negative about you, you get yelled at by someone in your inner circle. It hurts. Can you remember feels like that?

It usually comes quite unexpectedly, this feeling of hurt, of being the victim, of being in complete defense mode, when something bad happens. Sometimes we respond to the situation as if something tragic happened only to us. The reality is we play a role in every relationship we are in. Unless we're dealing with a stranger (and more on this topic in another post), it is important to take responsibility for our part in the situation.

It might be hard to hear, but in most cases you are part of the reason the other lied, or said something nasty, or yelled. I'm not blaming you. I'm saying it purely to provide a topic for self-reflection. Of course



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the lying isn't ok, but in general, how is the trust in your relationship? If your friend called you a bitch, how had you been treating her? If your other friend yelled at you, had you really been listening?

Maybe these aren't great examples, but an analogy helps me explain the idea. Action is continuous. As we've learned: every action creates an equal and opposite reaction. What action did you take before the last straw? And the action before that? And before that?

It really takes some deep perspective to see how far back the chain goes. And while the "first" action of deceit, bad talking, or yelling may not have come from you, your reaction to those actions played a role in where you are today.

We put up with so much from others because we crave their love, or attention, or help, or cooking. Whatever it is. When we get to the point that we tolerate more than we receive, it builds up walls. In a good relationship, we are open and freely express our reaction, however difficult it may be. If you cannot freely express yourself, you have to ask: Is this a relationship I want to develop and continue, or do I prefer to develop more positive relationships?

If you can relate so far, take a moment and pick a situation from your past (or present) that applies. Let's assume you want to keep and develop this relationship. Imagine asking the other person why they did/said what they did/said. Do you have a pretty good idea what their answer would be? How do you think you could adjust your prior action(s) to have avoided that particular reaction from them?

Is it possible you feel a little resentful or defensive that you are the only one who has to change their reaction to a situation which was obviously negatively affecting you? It's hard, isn't it, to just let something personally negative just be. How liberating it would be if you could not take *anything* personally; but it is especially hard not to when it is someone you love saying the negative thing.

But here's is the key. Number one key. Don't get defensive. Do what you can to let it roll off your back, and react as positively as you can. It might mean asking a very hard question: why do you feel that way/why did you do that? Keep an open communication. It is the only way to keep a relationship thriving. And of course to refrain as best we can from judgement.

This positive action-taking actually makes you the master of your fate. If you look at it long term, you have the ability to avoid future lying, nasty talk, and yelling. One tip is to surround yourself with loving, kind people. Another tip is to direct your relationships in a positive direction so that the argument never happens. Shine your beautiful light into all of your relationships, and take responsibility in all your relationships.



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You aren't the victim. You are the master. Keep that in your heart when times are tough. I know it is hard when it seems really terrible, but even the biggest pile of trash can be cleaned up, piece by piece. Share your true, good self with others, take responsibility for your (re)actions, and, as best you can, keep calm in the surrounding chaos.

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