

The Dangers of Personalising Everything

written by Princess R. Lakshman

Are you easily affected by people's words? Do you retaliate and give a nasty comeback? Do you find that sometimes people's comments are able to ruin your mood and frustrate you? Do their words play in your mind over and over, affecting you for the rest of the day or week?

When you operate on a reactionary mode, your default setting is to react. Anything that is said to you and done to you, no matter how small, will trigger you in some way so that you produce a reaction. Most times, these reactions are in the form of damaging thoughts. These thoughts can play over and over in your mind and slowly you begin to accept them as your reality.

Assumptions about yourself and others are formed in your mind as a result of these recurring damaging thoughts.

These reactions from you perpetuate your habit of personalising everything that happens to you and around you. You become sensitive to even a harmless comment. I struggled with this for years. Even a simple comment like, "You look tired" was enough to make me feel useless and a failure. I was taking everything as a personal attack and felt that I had to constantly defend myself. My reactions ranged from aggressive outbursts to passive-aggressive gestures. I lost faith in the goodness in people, thinking that everyone was critical about everything I did and no one was ever acknowledging my hard work.

I failed to understand that the only one attacking me was me. The only person critical of me was me. The only one doubting my abilities was me. All because I had chosen to personalise external factors and allow them to shape my reality. I was completely disconnected from my internal compass, my intuition.

ALLAH has blessed you with a mind with immense potential. You have the ability to use your mind and become aware of these damaging thoughts the moment they begin to occur. Once you do, you will shift from the default setting of reactions and begin operating from the mode of response. This mode requires you to understand that what is said to you by people and what is done to you by people are only one aspect of your life. HOW YOU RESPOND TO THESE WORDS AND ACTIONS governs how your life unfolds.

How To Respond To Triggers

ALLAH has blessed you with a mind to articulate your response in any situation where you are being triggered, by doing the following:

1. Pause
2. Breathe
3. Listen
4. Observe your body while someone is speaking to you. Is it getting hot, sweaty, muscles are tightening, heart palpitations, shallow breathing, heavy breathing, forehead frowning, nose squinting, eyes narrowing? By observing these body sensations, you will raise your awareness that these sensory manifestations are your physical signs to guide you on choosing the appropriate response.
5. Make the choice to remove yourself from the triggering situation.

6. Understand that other people's words and actions have nothing to do with your purpose in life.

7. Find a quiet space and breathe deeply. Drink water to hydrate yourself during these few moments of silence.

8. Close your eyes and spend some quiet moments thanking ALLAH for giving you the strength to choose calm over aggression.

9. Write your feelings down in your journal. Acknowledge them. Process them through journaling.

Always remember, you are not your experiences. You are the FORCE that overcomes them.

FREE GIFT Receive your FREE first module from the Joyful Muslimah Online Program