

Comment Response

Dear buhogrunon,

Thank you for your comment and for transcribing one of my posts. Transcription is key if my blog is to ever come up in google searches (I think, not sure how that works).

Okay, I agree that ~~to~~ it is not appropriate to make excuses for criminal behavior. This would not be fair to the victims, society, or the offender. My point was to emphasize that all behaviors have underlying factors. If a person is "just cruel", though, that would assume that he or she was born cruel. Although I don't make excuses for any behavior, I do recognize that humans are driven by two desires; the desire to experience happiness, love, joy, etc., and the desire to avoid pain. These are the motivating forces behind all behavior (research B.F. Skinner's work, and the work of dozens - hundreds - of behavioral psychologists).

Now, ~~to meet these desires~~, we all learned ways to meet these needs when we were very young. This is when connections in the brain are forming. As adults we have a specific set of connections and patterns for meeting our desires for happiness and for avoiding pain. Some people learned to meet their need for happiness through dominance. They may have learned to avoid pain by using drugs or acting out in violence. Of course, there's no excuse for criminal behavior. I certainly advocate that each person be held responsible for his (her) actions

2

What's the difference between seeking to blame someone and seeking to hold someone responsible? I would like to hear (read) your answer.

Maybe I use aggression to control my environment so I can feel safe, maybe I use hate to show the world my disapproval of it. None of this is "good", it just might be how someone earns to behave.

At the same time, we must also recognize that the offender is doing his or her best to meet present needs with the skills available to him or her. These skills may be totally horrendous, and if that's the case, the offender needs to be held responsible ~~and~~ and removed from society for an appropriate time. One can hold an offender responsible without hate, or believing he is an "evil" person.

~~But~~ I'm not naive. Remember, I live in prison. Also, myself and family members have been victims of brutal crimes. I hold no hate for my offenders. What I would like is for those who committed crimes against me to be made to face their behavior and to receive the help they need in an environment removed from society. ~~But~~ But why get involved with blame or resentment? Is it not enough to hold people responsible? Anger, hate, only hurts me, and ^{the} offender.

If we held each other responsible for each other's actions while keeping an open heart... wow, what a difference that would make. I still believe that all dysfunctional behavior is due to unskilled attempts at gaining happiness or relieving suffering. This is no excuse. I would still have every offender held responsible, but I find no need ~~to~~ to attribute resentment, blame, hate, ill-will, or judgement of any kind. If you want to find someone to blame you'll have to look to the first cause for life. It's much more effective to just hold people responsible.

Take care and keep the comments coming :)

Peace

I enjoy your comments as they force me to reconsider my beliefs, but in this case, I maintain my original view.