

WE ARE PRODUCTS OF OUR PAST

Why are you the way you are? Why do you think and behave the way you do? Do you really know who you are?

These are questions that the thinking person needs to ask himself. What you might not understand is that much of what you are isn't of your own doing. You are a product of your past. Perhaps the most important days of your past were those of your childhood. It was then that you have the last control over your life and everyday experiences that made you much of what you are today.

Much of your present behavior has its roots during those early years that we have a difficult time remembering. It was then that we were at the mercy of our parents and caregivers. How we were treated then had a lot to do with how we live today.

If we were given much love and tender care, we are steadier and more at peace than those of us who come from dysfunctional families. If we were badly treated, our wounded state will be carried over into our present way of life. Unless we have healed, we continue to suffer from the trauma of the past.

If we have been neglected and maltreated physically, the anger that was generated in our youth still seethes in our hearts. There are times when it rises to the surface and explodes. We might not even be aware of where it is coming from.

I remember a bright young woman who was seen by friends and co-workers as a volatile and an angry person. You never knew when she would snap at you for no apparent reason. Things got so bad that she was about to lose her job when she sought my help.

We soon learned where her anger was coming from. She had been sexually abused as a little girl. The abuse had been repeated again and again. She was helpless to stop it and her anger at her abuser grew and stayed with her long after he was out of her life.

Strange as it might seem to you, she did not know where her anger was coming from. She had mentally blocked out memories of the horrors of her abuse, and she could not release her anger. It remained unresolved and eating away at her heart.

She hated men and would displace her anger on them because she couldn't reach her abuser. She had made up her mind never to marry, but she was determined to compete hard in the workplace. When dealing with me, she was rough on them. And they fired back at her. It got to the point where management was about to remove her when she sought help.

After we identified the root cause of her anger, we were able to deal with it effectively. Through therapy she was able to find her inner peace. She became an asset to her organization and was soon promoted.

Much of our past remains a mystery to us. As a result, we cannot know ourselves well. Nor can we identify where we are lacking and where we are vulnerable. This is why knowing as much about

ourselves and piecing together the experiences of our past is so important. It allows us to find ourselves.