STOP BLAMING THE WORLD

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THE other day, I was going to drop my daughter to her school. It was rush-hour traffic. My driver disobeyed the traffic rule and sped up. I noticed it and kept silent. But the problem aroused when the traffic police fined us and we were eventually late. When her class teacher inquired about her delay, I blamed the traffic police, traffic jam, over-populated Dhaka city etc. Thus the list went on and on.

Then I realized that I was blaming each and everyone for my own mistake. It had not been anyone's fault. I had been the one who should be blamed. I was well aware of school time traffic, so I should have started earlier. I should have told my driver not to break the rules no matter how late we were or how important my program was.

I also realized that all through my life, I had been blaming everything and everyone but myself. But is it only me? Each and every one of us blames others for our own mistakes.

And once I began to notice how pervasive blame shifting was, I realized it was woven firmly into the fabric of our society. For example: Drug addicts are victims of family negligence or bad company, criminals are casualties of society, insufficient and inefficient traffic system is responsible for intolerable traffic jam. In politics, it is always the other government or the other party's fault. For our economic stagnation, we blame the natural disasters (floods, cyclone etc). For every problem of the society, we point our fingers to the Government. When we cannot blame our own Government because the issue is too complicated we blame foreign powers.

And what's more when we cannot find any other person or thing on earth to blame, we curse our fate and blame God. Some people go to the extent of blaming Adam and Eve who are responsible for losing the paradise and bringing us to the earth.

So how and when will we stop blaming others for our own mistakes? How will we learn to be responsible for our own actions?

According to the sociologists, from childhood children should be taught to make choices and accept the results. For example, ask your kid which color of dress they want to wear. Then do not let them change their minds. They should learn to live with the consequences of their decisions, so that they can learn from their mistakes and make better choices.

It seems to me that our children are too pampered and protected. All too often parents simply tell their kids what to think and what to do. Parents take all the decisions and make all the choices. For example, in our society the parents decide which college or university their children should go, which subject they would study. Many students are seen to study medicine or engineering because their parents want them to study it though they wanted to pursue other careers. As a result, they often lose interest and cannot do well which they could have done if they were allowed to follow their own choice of subjects.

So the children never learn to take decisions. If fortunately they do make choices but fall into crisis, often parents step in and rescue them. In this way, the children never learn to take responsibilities as parents keep on interfering and keep on rescuing them. So not only the children, parents should also be taught to let their kids to make choices. If parents can do that, we will get a new generation who will not blame others for their own mistakes.

Once Dale Carnegie said, "Any fool can criticize, condemn and complain and most fools do." So let us not be fools, rather rational human beings who can take decisions courageously and accept the results gracefully without complaining or criticizing others.

(The writer is a former school teacher)

