

How Do You Win A War?

~by Kimberly

Picture this:

*Little Johnny falls down and skins his knees, screaming and writhing until all the neighbors, AND mom come running, arms outstretched to soothe their little "precious jewel."

*Little Janey grabs Little Mindy's doll. Mindy sulks, bottom lip stuck out, till mommy grabs the doll away from Janey and sends her to bed with no dinner. Mindy now gloats.

*Mommy works late at the office, weary and feeling guilty that she's hardly seen her little ones for the last couple days. To assuage her feelings, she stops by the drug store on her way home and hurriedly picks up some stuffed animals in an attempt to win back their love.

What do these scenarios have in common?

We learn quickly and early on to be "victims" so that we can "win" back the deficit in the 'I Am Loved' wars.

Everything we do is because of a payoff of some kind. Children learn quickly that the "gods" in their lives (parents) will jump up and down and do virtually whatever they train them to do if they whine, sulk, scream, tattler, bite, punch, etc.

They are tremendously smart!

Parents usually have no clue that THEY are the ones being "trained" to cater to the child's mis-placed "needs."

Parents learn quickly to pamper, coddle, scream, scold, buy-off smiles, etc., instead of parenting with equality and long-term happiness as the compass.

So, what happens? Johnny, Mindy and all other "little ones" grow up. Their antics, sulks, screams, tattling, punching often become more sophisticated. But they are, invariably, conducted for similar purposes: Win back the "territory" lost to the Big Bad Menacing Demon-----"out there."

Thus, victimhood rewarded leads to victimhood rewarded leads to victimhood rewarded....

And the list of "victims" grows and grows. "Casualties" loudly pontificate the grievances perpetrated against them.

Is there another way?

Christ taught: "turn the other cheek," "give your cloak also," "Father, forgive them. They know not what they do."

I have learned further the magic of "never ever ever taking offense."

Is that punch to the shoulder by his "friend" done to provoke a fight? to get his attention? or to say "hey pal! good to see you!"???

Since one can never truly know what another is thinking or feeling or intending from any action or inaction, the only appropriate response is.....Happiness. And non-judgment.

As I have fine-tuned and applied these principles to my own children and to those that I interact with daily, I have witnessed miracles. So have their parents.

Children quickly learn that smiles, happy singing, and peaceful interaction pay off with further opportunity to play and interact with others. They are the benefactors of my arms and smile. My eye-contact. My loving words.

When one occasionally lapses, he is reminded by the (peaceful yet firm) words "go get happy" to leave the company of their friends, go into the hallway for (solitary) sitting and bringing themselves back into "balance" and "happiness." Do I love Johnny more when he's happy? Absolutely not. He just gets the rewards he craves for acting sociable and in harmony--further interaction and attention.

Brief role-playing "lessons" on happy "hands" (etc.) seems to help them "get" "happy" actions.

When a child falls down and skins his knees, reaching out to me for solace and comfort..... I stay right where I am, looking at them with eyes that empower THEM to find their "happy button" in their heart. Yes, I hope they feel better soon. Yes, I love them and want their well-being. However, I want to empower THEM to find it for themselves.

After a child has learned this reaction, I will just "ignore" any later outcry, sending him the message that what just happened was a natural part of life and that there does not need to be any sadness associated with it. Get right back up and carry on!

If the child fails to quickly "get back to his balance" then I realize that more training is necessary; he must not "get it" yet. Thus, I take this as a "sign" and re-learning begins again.

I try to raise "my" children with the end in mind: Independent Strength, social harmony, and the ability to quickly get back to their "balance" should they ever de-rail.

It truly seems to be working. Others are gratefully spreading the "word" and enjoying their increased peaceful relationships.

Children are learning the joy of interacting as friends--no matter what the other friend does, says, or doesn't do.

Is this the secret of life?

If, instead of funding rehabilitation and wars, we taught ourselves and our children to never ever ever take offense..... would there ever be a "cause" for War?

It makes sense to me.

Hanging out with whiny, crying children that expect to be catered to and treated as "victims" is my idea of "hell." Hanging out with happy, peaceful, creative children, sharing with their parents and others the things that we are learning and experiencing is my idea of "heaven."

How do you win a war???---Perhaps by never "seeing" one to begin with.

"Wars" require "victims."

No "victims," no "wars."