



Playing the blame game.

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In response to the @everydaysexism campaign my mind went back to an incident a few years ago. I was well into my 40's and at a wedding with my boyfriend when at the end of the night a 'friend' of his saw fit to shove his hand up my dress and grab my crotch.

My first feelings were paralysis, I slapped his hand and ran, unable to shout and immediately wanting to pretend it hadn't happened. The same old questions – had I 'asked' for it, was it my fault? I was a 40 something year old woman but as unequipped to deal with the incident as I had been in my twenties.

I did share the experience with my boyfriend and he behaved as I should have, outraged, angry and dealt with the man in question. I received an apology but was too embarrassed to voice my feelings and just grateful that it was over.

Fast forward to today, I watched the Everyday sexism film and saw fit to send it to the man in question and tell him how I felt then and now about his assault.

His response was to deny it had ever happened; accuse me of being deluded and indeed for having behaved provocatively. In that split second once more I questioned myself. Had I flirted with him? Had I suggested I was open to his advances?

NO. Obviously the blame lies 100% with him but although educated, mature and a supporter of all other women and their rights I wavered, maybe it was my fault.

As a therapist and spiritual seeker we are taught to take responsibility for our own actions, not too blame, to surround the problem in 'love and light'. 'How do we invite events into our lives and what can we 'learn' from all our interventions both good and bad'

Well, IT WAS HIS FAULT!!!

Along side that, to the client that came to me feeling guilty that she had terminated pregnancies at 15 and 16, I'd like to say, it was the fault of the much older man that impregnated a minor and then did nothing to support her.

The stories are endless I do not need to list them here, the Everyday sexism campaign is doing a wonderful job of that but what I do want to say is sometimes the blame game is more than necessary.

If we as women are to heal from the harassment both major and minor that every one of us has suffered throughout our lives we need to know where to place the blame. The blame ALWAYS lies with the man who assaults us. We never ask for it or deserve it we do however, have chance for recourse. We can confront sexism wherever and whenever we see it.

We can stand up for ourselves and we can stand up for women around us when we see it. We can teach our sons, our men and our fathers that it is not harmless fun and it is not our fault.

To my boyfriend at the time who did the right thing and to all the wonderful men in my life who are far removed from blame, I am grateful.

But its time to play the blame game and point our fingers at the ones who need to be told, at the men who have no shame and the ones who should know better. It is their fault not ours and now is the time to come right out and say it. Maybe then we could get down to forgiveness and back into that love and light.



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