

## Advantages of Victimhood

### Advantages

Being a victim is a very powerful role. It actually works very well. There are major advantages of remaining in this angry mode. Some of them are:

- Others expect less of you
- You expect less of yourself
- You have a feeling of power, which masks the feeling of anxiety
- It gives you a sense of entitlement
- You can manipulate those around you who are attached to pulling you out of the victim role. The term used in the addiction world is enabling.
  - This is a huge issue in the world of eating disorders. Every parent wishes to have his or her children to be happy and healthy. When a son or daughter is using control or lack thereof to slowly destroy him or herself, the parents understandably become very concerned. A huge amount of family energy is consumed in trying to deal with this irrational body imagery. The child has complete control of the situation. Until the parents can truly let go of the outcome and just provide resources, the problem is not solvable. It is much too powerful a role for the child to give up.

### Workers Comp

A similar situation exists in the world of chronic pain and is especially true in the workers compensation system. You are being treated terribly. If you are not angry, then you are unconscious or incredibly skillful in suppressing your anger. I personally cannot talk to most claims examiners for more than five minutes without losing my mind. I do realize that they are controlling your ENTIRE life. You have very little if any control of the circumstances. That's frustrating.

### Your only resort

The only control you have is remaining in the victim role. If you are angry with your employer, you can really stick it to them with the cost of your care. You can keep aggressively seeking medical care. Why get better? No one really seems to care, even though they say they do. The victim role is somewhat akin to being a suicide bomber. Your employer will survive. Your claims examiner will go to work tomorrow. There is not one person you are going to permanently harm. Yet you have allowed chronic, completely justified, anger to erode your quality of life.

### No one believes you

There is another aspect of playing the victim role you should be aware of. Without an obvious source of pain, patients eventually feel that no one believes that they have pain. [\*The Cry of Chronic Pain\*](#) I believe you have pain. I **know** you have pain. There is simply not an identifiable source. Patients become understandably obsessive about the possibility that something serious may be missed. Surgeons think mechanically and their language revolves around the idea that there must always be an structural source of pain.

Consequently, patients in chronic pain feel they need to be validated. Even if the chances of success with surgery are slim, they will often push hard for the surgery.

### Can you move on?

How attached are you to your victim role? How willing are you to look at how it might be running your life? How victimized do you feel in regards to your pain and the circumstances surrounding it? How angry are you that no one seems to want to listen, believe, or care about your pain? How frustrating is it to feel that you might have to live the rest of your life with this pain?

The victim role is universal. The willingness to take an honest look at it is not.

—Dr. David Hanscom