

## **Why is This Happening To Me Again?**

Argument & Analysis Essay by Breaha Montague-Bauer

Have you ever sat back and looked with disgusted wonder at your life and thought, “this can’t be happening again!” Maybe you do really well in school all year, but in the last two weeks something always goes bad. Or job after job, you find yourself having overbearing bosses. Maybe you have relationships that always end in the same way. Maybe you are a perfectionist like I tend to be, and blame your self for everything like I used to. When I was fifteen I took a class that was absolutely fascinating to me. The class actually changed how I viewed my entire world, because it changed how I viewed my *interaction* with the world.

My mom and dad had been friends with Michael Ryce since I was born, so his name was familiar to me, but because he lived out of state I’d only seen him a half dozen or so times in my fifteen years. I knew he was a motivational speaker and remembered him being a nice guy, but beyond that, he was just a friend of my parents. Then he came and stayed with us for a weekend while he taught a class in town. I felt kind of obligated to go to the class since he was staying with us, and of course my parents were going, so that added a little pressure too. I told my self that there was hope... at least the title was interesting, and figured I could give up one Saturday and Sunday of my life for a good cause.

It turned out that I couldn’t have given up a Saturday and Sunday of my life for a better cause. The class was called “Why is This Happening to Me...Again!?” and proved to be the most priceless class I have ever taken. I was amazed by Michael’s range of

knowledge. He used science, philosophy, religious history and a profound amount of common sense to present a new way of looking at relationships; relationships with yourself, others and the world in general.

The basis for the class was taking responsibility for your life, and one of the tools Michael taught was forgiveness. Though it sounds simple, it took two days to really shift my ideas of what that word meant. Previous to the class I thought that forgiveness was something I did to, or for, other people. If someone hurt me I would forgive them because, well, it was the right thing to do and it meant I was a good person. After the class I had the understanding that according to much linguistic research, “forgive,” meant to untie, let go or release. My understanding of forgiveness became one that was self-empowering and necessary for healthy relationships.

Surely you have heard the popular adage that “like attracts like”. Or that to hold someone down, you must yourself stay low to hold them there. Both of these ideas were addressed in the “Why is This Happening to Me...Again?!” workshop. And both related to forgiveness. Michael used scientific explanations to illustrate that the ideas, feelings or emotions kept in your mind were like antennae, attracting more of the same to your life. If you felt that you simply were never good enough, you might do very well in school, but right before you got that good grade you would subconsciously do something to sabotage it. This might happen because you had the core belief that you weren’t good enough. The same thing could be said for jobs or relationships.

The true act of forgiveness, as I understand it now, is the process of letting hurtful or negative thoughts and feelings go. I found that situations in my life seemed to repeat

themselves with new people and in new places, but that I was the common denominator in all of them. I chose to find and learn from the feelings I had that might have caused the negative situations in my life. By letting go of past experiences I learned that I could move on and that I could create consciously in my life.

Realizing that I was ultimately the one responsible for my life was refreshing and empowering. I found that no one could make me angry or sad; others could do things that triggered, or brought up my sadness, but no one could place feelings inside of me. My feelings were my own to let go or hold on to as they came up. This also meant that I was not responsible for other people's lives or situations. I could be free of my need to make sure everyone was all right and happy, because while I could be a kind and good person, it was up to each individual to choose happiness or contentment... or hurt.

It is very challenging to try to sum up a sixteen-hour class in two to three pages. In the class Michael taught practical exercises for forgiveness and used many antidotes and stories, scientific facts and experiments as illustration of his points. I simply could not convey all of that information in a short essay. I do hope however, that I was able to convey the impact that this class had on my life. It was a free, two-day class and it was worth every minute of my time! I would recommend that any one who has the opportunity to attend a "Why is This Happening to Me...Again?!" workshop do so, it might just become the best class you have ever taken as well.