

## The DISTORTED LENS of

### Reba's Responsibility

**DISTORTION:** *"If I don't do it, no one else will; others are not capable; I must oversee every aspect to make sure things are done correctly."*

Similar to the lens of the Lone Ranger, wearing the lens of sole responsibility comes with the added burden of the belief that outcomes in life depend totally on her. No one else can help carry the burden, for they are not willing. Results of being caught wearing this lens include fatigue, resentment, burnout, depression. Pride is crafted into the framework of this lens. "I can do it, no one else will." There is fear of others letting her down, "If I let outsiders help, then they will know our problems." Control also comes into place, "I am the only one who can do it right anyway." Prematurely taking on adult responsibilities as a child may be the culprit here. Reba grew up with both parents checked out, of "normal life," as addiction plagued her family of origin. As a child she was placed into the role of hiding the truth from outsiders early on, thus forfeiting Reba's chance to experience the exhilaration of being carefree. Reba feels ultra responsible and continues her story to tell why:

I know that I have needs and wants, yet I would rather not depend upon anyone. I would rather go without what I need or want rather than ask for help from anyone. Honestly, I just do not want to be perceived as a bother to anyone, I don't need anyone's pity.

It is still difficult for me not to take care of my parents as they squandered away their savings for their drinking and gambling addictions. However, I have learned that they seem to manage and "just get by," they always have. They have never cared about my needs. I learned early on that I could never depend on them. Not only was it embarrassing for me growing up with parents who were always sloppy drunk, but they were also never there for me, not in the little things, and not for essential rites of passage. I just took care of myself. To say what I honestly felt, I felt abandoned by them. The only thing that I can remember that I had "going for me" is that I was street-smart" early in my life, learned how to take care of myself because I had to.

Initially, I thought that they would someday get better and quit for good; however, I have given up hope. I am not looking back to try and save them anymore. I have moved on with my life, but when I am honest with myself, I sometimes feel guilty.

## REFLECTIONS for DISCUSSION

What other issues do you think Reba is dealing with?

What type of relationship will she have with a future spouse?

What does she need to do to break patterns from her family of origin?



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*CoDevelopers of O for the Soul  
Joni LeRette Flores  
Crystal Anzalone*