

Your lens is more than your eyes

By Jeff “Chief” Urbaniak
COLUMNIST (www.AdviceChief.com)

Quite often we experience the world based on the way we see it. We all have a lens that guides our opinions and perceptions. But our lens is more than just what we see with our eyes--it also contains information from our brain and our heart while also revealing a lot about ourselves.

Many years ago when I was a young man, I went through a phase in my life when I had a habit of finding nit-picky faults in others, would criticize someone at the drop of a hat, and often had negative opinions. One day I woke up and realized I was at the center of all this--that I was the common denominator in every perspective--that I was the one who needed to make personal changes and not everyone else. I was due for an overhaul in the way I viewed the world. I wanted my lens to reveal more positive things.

For centuries, many wise philosophers

have come to a similar conclusion: Who we are determines the way we see the world. It is very difficult to separate our identity from our perspective. All that we are and every experience we've had color how we see things. It is our lens.

In his book *Winning with People*, John Maxwell tells the following story:

A traveler nearing a great city asked an old man seated by the road, “What are the people like in this city?”

“What were they like where you came from?” the man asked.

“Horrible,” the traveler reported. “Mean, untrustworthy, detestable in all respects.”

“Ah,” said the old man, “you will find them the same in the city ahead.”

Scarcely had the first traveler gone on his way when a second traveler stopped to inquire about the people in the city before him. Again the old man asked about the people in the place the traveler had just left.

“They were fine people: honest, industrious, and generous to a fault,” declared the second traveler. “I was sorry to leave.”

The old man responded, “That’s exactly how you’ll find the people here.”

Why would the old man tell two different travelers two different things about the same town people? Because the old man understood that the way people see others is a reflection of themselves: If you are a trusting person, you will see others as trustworthy. If you are a critical person, you will see others as critical. If you are a caring person, you will see others as compassionate.

If you realize you have a long pattern of not liking what you see in others, then it’s time to focus inward and adjust your lens. Be the kind of person you want to see in others and in no time you will see great things in people.

~ The End ~