

[REDACTED]

How can a female teenager overcome a traumatic experience in order to learn from it to make better choices in life? When I was given the Four-Way Test, there were four specific questions for me to apply to the experience I had been subjected to: Is it the truth? Is it fair to all concerned? Will it build goodwill and better friendships? Will it be beneficial to all concerned? I was a bit confused by all of this at first, but once I looked at each question individually I started to see how these questions would assist me in the healing process I was working through.

Is it true that I had fallen for a boy who put me in a position I never wanted to be in at my age? The four way test first asks me to analyze whether or not what happened to me was the truth. At first, this was hard to wrap my head around. Of course my story was true. I had no reason to lie to anyone about anything. The more I thought about it, I began to take a step back and be a little less critical of myself. This question isn't trying to make me a liar; it's trying to get me to think deeper about the situation I was in. The boy I had started to date seemed wonderful. He made me feel special, always wanted to spend time with me and got jealous when another boy would look my way. Although this felt right, I soon came to feel trapped. My friends heard rumors that he had "snitched" on a friend of his and they were looking for him. When I thought about it, this explained why he never wanted to go out in public. At this very moment, instead of feeling admired I started feeling like I was in the middle of something that wouldn't end well. I had asked him about the rumor one night but instead of talking about it, he became angry and hit me multiple times while screaming obscenities at me. I had no choice but to fight back to escape his restraint. The four way test has helped me to better understand that it was true that I had been exposed to mental and physical abuse. It didn't seem like it at the time but looking back it was just that. Although this truth hurt, I am now able to verbalize the pain that I endured.

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Is it fair to all concerned that I was abused and disrespected by an older male as I'm just a young teenage girl? What I experienced wasn't fair to anyone. It was not fair on my behalf that a male thought it was appropriate to put his hands on me in an abusive manner. I should have had the willpower to remove myself from the situation but at the time, I really liked the boy that was abusing me and I figured he would stop at some point. It was not fair that the male who beat me found it acceptable to do such a thing. Perhaps he was in an unfit state of mind and needed help, but that still does not justify his actions. The experience I went through was also not fair to my mom or his mom who both had to deal with our anger and sudden mood swings when we were together. This situation overall was not fair to anyone involved.

Do I even stand a chance at building goodwill and better friendships as a result of my experience? This was a difficult question to analyze in regards to my situation. I think that I am capable of building goodwill and better friendships as a result of what I have learned from being mentally and physically abused. I am not sure to what extent or how soon I will be able to exhibit these traits as I am still in the healing process as I continue to learn from what happened to me. Because I was abused, I feel that I have the ability to now stand up for myself and potentially help other girls around me who feel like they cannot walk away from an abusive situation. In this way, I can build goodwill by being a support system for others. I have also learned that I need to be careful in choosing who I befriend. My emotions cannot overtake when I am faced with a decision that could possibly hurt me in some way. By working to choose more positive people to surround myself with, I can build better friendships.

The last question of the Four-Way Test asked me analyze whether the situation I experienced would be beneficial to all concerned. This question took me the longest to answer. I knew being abused was not beneficial for me or the person doing it to me. However, I feel it was



beneficial in the aspect that I was able to learn one of the most valuable life lessons I have encountered yet. After I was mentally and physically abused, I ignored it for a while because the thoughts of what I went through brought me to tears just thinking about it. This question made me realize that even though I will never put myself in a situation to be abused as I was before, it ended up being a beneficial life lesson in the end.

Using the Four-Way Test has allowed me to take a step back in order to view the traumatic situation I was a part of to better myself as a young female teenager. The Four-Way Test has helped me to realize that there are lessons to be learned from being mentally and physically abused. Because of this experience, I now know that I am a strong female who is more than capable of standing up for myself and others. The Four-Way Test is something that I will use throughout my life when I find myself struggling to deal with a situation.