

Owning Your Power

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Owning your power, your power to be real, to be who you really are, is really about owning your freedom. Consider how your reasons for not being yourself may have been to get the love or approval of others. Then, you have given others the power to decide your way of being, and thus keeping yourself from being free. In many ways, you have been giving away your power/freedom by your ways of speaking and thinking, and being.

For example, when you say or think something like, "That person makes me angry," you have given your power/freedom to decide whether or not to be angry, to that person. You have said that you are powerless, and that that person has the power to decide when you will be angry.

You can choose to not do that any more.

It would be more appropriate to say something like, "I get angry when that person does that." In that way, you get to see that you are the one that has made you angry, and also that you can decide to feel that, or something else.

No one but you "makes you" feel angry, or sad, or depressed, or happy, or sexy, or bored, etc. Since you are now in the process of deciding for yourself about your life, and your choices, and your actions, and your feelings, and what you see, why not own your decision-making power on all levels?

Be aware of the words that you use, because they do form the basis of your thought patterns. Listen to your words, and notice whether they reflect your freedom to decide for yourself what you feel or do.

Do you say, "Let me do this," asking for permission, or do you express your desires by saying, "I would like to do this," or even "I am going to do this?" Do you say, "That person manipulated me," or "I allowed myself to be manipulated?" Whatever you have been doing that has not been working for you, you can choose to not do any more.

Have you kept yourself from expressing what you really wanted to because of what you thought someone else would think? Then, you have given control of your power of speech to that person.

You are free, you know. Are you willing to own your freedom?

Have you kept yourself from looking at something or someone because of what another person might think? Then, you have given your freedom of choice to see what you want, to that person.

Have you kept yourself from doing what you want because of what another person would think? You have given away your freedom of action. You have kept yourself from speaking, from acting, from seeing what was real for you. Clear vision is related to allowing yourself to be real, and trusting that - in fact, insisting on that.

In owning your freedom, you must also be willing to recognize others' freedom. No one gives you your freedom - it's already yours. It's just up to you to be free. In the same way, you do not give others their freedom. You may only acknowledge that they have it.

When you do something, others are free to feel about it as they choose. For you, though, you are just being real, and acting with love and freedom as your motivations. If you are misunderstood, you can choose to clear the misunderstanding through communication. It is not necessary for you to change your way of Being because of the way another feels. If you choose to change, it must be because it makes sense to you to do things another way.

In the same way, if another person does something that you choose to feel not-good about, that's your choice. That person, too, is free. If the not-good feeling is the result of a misunderstanding, it can be cleared through communication. Don't assume anything. Ask, and then know.

If the not-good feeling is the result of attachments you need to release on your path to clarity and freedom, you can find another way of thinking and feeling that feels better for you, one in which you are not deciding what the other person should do differently, but rather what you need to do differently.

If you expect the other person to change their way of Being because of the way you feel, then you are wanting to control that person. If you don't want to be controlled, are you willing to stop controlling?

Perhaps in the past, when you've looked at a situation which you did not consider optimal, you've decided what someone else should have done differently, or should do differently in the future. When you really own your power and your freedom, you do not do that any more - rather, you only decide what you could have done differently then, and what you can do differently from now on, in the future. When you are sincere about this, your thoughts are included in the process, as well. As long as you find yourself thinking what other people should do, or think, or feel, you have not totally owned your power or your freedom.

If you want to own your freedom, are you willing to recognize others' freedom as well? Then, you also see that you do not make others sad, but they may decide to feel that way when you do something. You do not make them happy, either - they choose to feel that when you do something.

No matter what you do, or say, some people will approve, and others will not. You have the freedom to decide which people you will be with. If you choose to be with those who judge you, you may feel like a weed in a garden, constantly feeling as though you need to defend yourself and your way of Being.

You can choose instead to be okay with being judged, knowing that you're just being who you are, and that others are free to feel what they like about that. They may be judging you by their standards, but you are living by your own standards. You can also choose to be with those people who do not judge you, but rather appreciate you for who you are. You can then feel freer, and more relaxed about being real, being who you really are. You'll see that you weren't a weed, but rather just a flower in the wrong garden.

Perhaps in the past you've tended to change yourself, to be someone different from who you really are, in order to be loved, in order to get love. If you would like to know that you're loved for whom you are, then you have to be who you really are, and let that be the image that's loved.

Love cannot be solicited. It must flow freely, and be freely given. Then, you know that it's real. If you create an image in order to be loved, and people love the image, you still do not feel loved for who you really are.

If the expressions of love are solicited, asked for, then you do not really know that they would be there if you did not ask for them. You would still not be sure of the love. Notice when the expressions of love come freely from others, when you're being real. Then, you'll know that they come because the others choose to express their love, and you'll know it's real. When you know the love is there, open and feel it.

Sometimes, expressions of love are misunderstood, because we've all been taught different ways of expressing the love that we feel. The way some people express their love is sometimes misunderstood as love being taken away. The misunderstandings can be resolved through communication, though, so that expressions of love afterwards can be those which enhance the experience of the person receiving them, something that feels good for them.

Remember to express your love in that way, too. Express your love in the way that you would like others to express their love with you, in a way that results in their feeling good, in a way that you would be happy to be on the receiving end of.

You have the power/freedom to be who you really are, to be where you really want to be, with whom you would really like to be (if they would really like to be with you), doing what you would really like to do. Others, too, have the same power/freedom.

If you find yourself not honestly able to say, "I love where I am. I love who I'm with. I love what I'm doing," then something has to change. You have the power/freedom to make that change.

If it's a situation in which you do not feel happy, you have three choices:

1. Change the situation. Re-arrange it.
2. Change the way you see the situation.
2. Leave the situation, and find another.

If the situation, for example, is your job, you can change it so that you're doing something there that's more meaningful for you. Or, you can look at it in another way that feels better for you so that you feel happy in it (but it must be real for you). If you do not do either of these, then perhaps you need to be doing something different, in a different job, so that you can look forward each day to spending time and energy there.

If it's your home, does it feel like home to you? If not, re-arrange it so that it does. Otherwise, choose to see it as really perfect for you right now. Otherwise, move.

If you really believe that these changes are too vast for you, that you "can't" make them, you have given away your power/freedom. It isn't that you are not able to make the changes, but rather that you have chosen not to. You still have the power to create your life the way you would really like it to be. You have the power/freedom to change what has not been working for you, to change that which has not resulted in your being as happy as you would like to be.

Do you find yourself with people you do not really enjoy being with? If so, you have given away your power to be happy to them.

You don't have to do that any more.

If you have given away your power, you can take it back. It's still yours. Own it. Your power/freedom also includes your choice to change those patterns within yourself that you recognize have not been optimal, that have been the result of misperceptions, limited ways of seeing.

Your attachments and addictions stand between you and freedom. When you are free, you are able to decide in each moment what you would like to do, and what makes sense to do. You do not allow yourself to be controlled by past programs.

When you are addicted to something, and you don't get it, you feel not-good. The degree of the not-good feeling shows the degree of attachment or addiction. You can choose to not give your power to your attachments, or to the object of your attachments. Non-attachment is freedom.

It isn't detachment. Detachment is removal of all feelings. Non-attachment allows positive feelings of joy when you have. When there's something you don't have, you are able to focus your attention on what you do have.

If, for example, you are attached to a lobster dinner, and you don't get it, you are not free to enjoy what you do have. When you are not attached, you can enjoy a salad, or a steak, and if you have a lobster, really enjoy it, too.

If you're attached or addicted to a person, when you're with them, you're spending time worrying about when you will not be with them, and when they are not there, you spend your time missing them, and not being present with the people who are with you. That isn't freedom.

You have the power and the freedom to be totally present wherever you are, enjoying whatever is happening.

Others do not have to change their way of Being because of your attachments, and you don't have to change your way of Being because of the addictions of others.

You take total responsibility for yourself, and everything you think, do, and say - and you acknowledge that others have the responsibility for everything they choose to think, do, or say.

Do not decide what other people think, or will do in any given situation, because actually, you don't really know - that's their responsibility. You just need to examine your own consciousness, and what happens in it.

Others are free to want what they want, and you are free to say yes or no to that. It's okay for them to want, and it's okay for you to not want. In the same way, you are free to want what you want, and they are free to not want the same thing. When you both want the same thing, there is free agreement, and then something can happen.

Otherwise, you can agree to disagree, and each of you can find happiness and satisfaction in your own respective ways.

Everybody is entitled to their own opinion and to their own thoughts and wishes - and you are free.

Review your movie, the one in which you are not only the star, but also the director. Be the audience too. What were the effects of your actions and words? Could you have written a better script for yourself? If so, what would you have done differently? Could you have acted with more love, more understanding? Replay the situation in your mind, doing it differently, and see the different ending. Decide that if the situation presents itself again, you will replay it in the

new way. Dedicate yourself to the decision. Then, you have changed yourself for the better, because it was your choice, and you've learned what you needed to.

You must also realize that things happened the way they had to, with the chemistry of the people involved, in order to have the result that needed to happen. Next time, however, you'll be able to achieve the same result more harmoniously.

Continue to do this until you are honestly able to give your movie and your character great reviews. If you saw that movie in a theater, you would have thought it a fabulous movie, with an inspirational star - you! You would have recommended the movie to your friends, and enjoyed seeing it again.

Notice what your reasons are for doing things. What are your motivations? In a given situation, are you making the fear choice or the freedom choice? Are you doing things because that's what you really choose to do, or are you doing things (or not doing things) because of fear? Trust your instincts, and what's real for you, and do what you really want to do.

Did you keep yourself from being who you really are because you thought you had to, and find out afterwards that you didn't really have to? Then, the basis for your decision and your action was fear. Make a decision that you don't have to do that any more. You can be who you really are, and people will enjoy you even more. When you do what you really want to do, something wonderful always happens.

Is love your motivation, or is it guilt? Do you do things to avoid feeling guilty, because you would feel guilty not doing them? Or do you act clearly, doing what you really want to do, as an expression of love?

If you have been having fear or guilt as your motivations, do you want to continue that way? You don't have to, you know.

You can make a conscious choice, a deep decision, to not have fear or guilt or anger controlling your life, but rather to act as a free conscious Being. When you do that, then from that moment on, if you discover that your decision to be a certain way, or do (or not do) a certain thing is based on fear, guilt, or anger, you dedicate yourself to making a different decision. Then, you are not allowing yourself to be controlled by past patterns of being or doing, but really living your freedom.

You really are free. You just have to own your freedom, and be free. Not only will you feel better and enjoy your life a lot more, but you will also be releasing patterns that were associated with the impaired vision. You will truly be returning to clarity.

You're free to think the way you choose, and love the way you choose, and act the way you choose.

People who love you enjoy seeing you happy the way you really like to be happy, being the fullest expression of your Being, being real, being all that you can be. People who love you really want to see you being successful.

It's up to you, though.

You have the power and the freedom to be real, to be happy, to be successful, to be fulfilled.

See clearly what is real for you.

And live it.

While we've been taught that it's a good thing to be ourselves - necessary, in fact - we have also been taught in so many ways that we have to not be ourselves in order to please other people, and that it's a good thing to please other people, to make others happy.

Then, it seems to be a choice between making others happy, on the one hand, and being ourselves, making ourselves happy, on the other hand.

If you have been choosing to not be yourself so that others would be happy, you have decided that pleasing others was more important than really being yourself. That was a beautiful expression of your love, but at a high cost to you, and your ease of Being, and your health. Ease of Being is associated with health. Not being yourself requires an investment in energy, which is also known as stress, an unhealthy element from anyone's point of view.

What makes more sense is to shift your priorities so that being real is more important - and, in fact, a necessary part of any healing process.

You can still enjoy expressing your love in any way that works for you, and yet knowing the importance of being real. Being yourself. All the time.

With clarity, and love.

(From *Improve Your Vision*, by Martin Brofman, Ph.D.)