

# Understanding Power

by Penney Peirce

Do you notice the times you unconsciously give your power away—to another person, certain type of experience, object, or place? Thomas was bullied as a kid and even today, at work, his aggressive, ego-driven colleagues run roughshod over him. Emma develops anxiety every time she has to bargain or negotiate a better price with someone—it seems like a war-game and she can't think straight. Jeremy becomes paralyzed with fear when he sees a black spider. The numbing shots Darcy received when her wisdom teeth were extracted hit nerves and caused excruciating pain; now she resists going to any dentist. In each case the power to influence how these people felt was given to someone or something else. Why do we do that—let others dictate our experience?

## POWER OVER

It all began when you learned how the physical world works. You encountered various “outside influences” that looked separate from you. Perhaps you experienced an earthquake or hurricane that destroyed much of your town. Or you saw police or armies attacking and controlling other people. You might have run into insects, animals, and even plants, like poison ivy, that could hurt you. You probably also noticed that some people had more power than others; those with money and possessions had more power than the have-nots.

Some people “took up all the space in a room” with their dominant self-expression. Others could sell snow to Eskimos. Still others were intimidating and threatened violence if disobeyed.

The tendency to give power away stems from the fact that you saw the world as outside yourself and separate. It was bigger than you and potentially dangerous. And you placed the bulk of your attention on this outside world to try to stay safe. Your survival instinct told you to be vigilant about potential pain, damage, and destruction, to never be caught off-guard because: *The outside world has all the power.*

When your attention goes to the world beyond yourself, you don't experience the world inside yourself. When you live with the idea of separation being *the way it is*, power is always either-or. Either you see power in the outside world, or you see it inside yourself. When you give others power, it's typical to fall into behavior patterns based on helplessness, victimization, envy, worship, resentment, greed, or even violence and vengeance. You might try to please and win over the people you empower, to be with them or emulate them, hoping some of their power will rub off on you. You may develop resentment when they don't recognize your worth.

When you place all the power inside yourself, you may become trapped in ego and narcissism, thinking you alone can and must control reality. You can experience megalomania, conceit, and isolation. Then it's easy to behave in a disrespectful, dismissive way with others, succeeding by being skillful at manipulation, dominance, and deceit. You may see others as pawns that exist to serve and validate your needs.

Both these positions (polarities) are misperceptions about power. Both stances minimize your ability to be truly creative and successful. Thinking you have no power stops you from creating and acting independently. Thinking you have all the power causes you to waste time and energy *making* others support and serve you; this limits access to the great ideas that come with the diversity of a group mind.


## WHAT IS POWER?

If I drill down to see what power really is, I get that it is first a universal energy-and-consciousness that runs inside all form; it exists as a subtle core Substance that can be formed into anything. An *act of power* is the ability to direct attention into this core Substance by focusing on an idea and allowing it to be a filter that shapes the Substance into a matching physical result. Everyone has equal access to power because everyone is made of this Substance and is already creating their life with continuous acts of power!

This true power originates inside each soul—it's what allows us to be creators. If you see the ability in yourself *and* others equally, you'll experience joyful co-creation and the amplified power of the group mind and heart to create greater, higher frequency realities. You'll shift from thinking about "power over" to understanding "the power to . . ."

## THE POWER TO . . .

But "power to"—what? The first thing is the power to BE—to be who you want to be, to be heard, seen, and respected. It's also the power to DO and HAVE, to materialize your own vision or dream and have the experiences (including objects and forms like a house, car, laptop, or good haircut) that you need in order to learn, grow, contribute, and create effortlessly. It's also about the power to help things happen societally, to influence the course of events, or of thought—for everyone. I heard the women elected to Congress say they feel their power is in their *collective* knowledge and abilities. *With shared power, idealism becomes realism.*



*There is no power separate from yourself—  
and you are part of everything.*

Penney Peirce



I hear this repeatedly—from women, minorities, students, employees seeking greater responsibility and recognition, and those who have dreams of the life they sense they were built for: “It’s time to step into our power.” What does that mean and feel like? It’s a bit confusing—the image is of us stepping into something—like a spotlight—that is separate from us, “over there.”

The truth is that you’re already in your power, or your power is always in you, and you just need to

stance and noticing what idea comes to you in each moment that wants to act as a focusing lens.

Reconnecting with your power doesn’t necessitate a wrestling match. It’s actually not about dealing with other people! It’s a quiet experience of first being lovingly *with* yourself, then realizing you enjoy *being* yourself. The simplicity of this experience allows you to release old identities, other people’s ideas you temporarily took as your own, and survival-based beliefs. Then, ironically, what

you need drops in your lap as you go along. Life repatterns itself around you. Power is really about purity or clarity: the personality becomes the soul, and you trust what makes itself known to you. When you receive what you need, it comes because you’ve been focusing on it *without believing you can’t have it*. If you have to use willpower, you don’t understand how life is already working perfectly and how entitled you are to have any reality that occurs to you as an imagination.

*Power occurs wherever you place  
your undivided attention.*

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feel it, understand how it works, and use it. Some say we must “take back our power” and that again implies separation. We gave our power away (so we don’t have any), as though it is a discrete thing like a crown, and now we must take it back from “the other.” This creates an energetic wrestling match that is unnecessary and draining. *The only thing that depletes your power is not noticing it.* So having “the power to” is simply a matter of being centered in your own frequency and core Sub-

## ATTENTION AND POWER

What you give attention to has power. That’s because when you place undivided attention on anything, you see and feel into it, and eventually you experience its core Substance, which is the same as yours. In effect, you see your Self in what you focus on. You realize the universality of the underlying power process: how consciousness focuses Substance and materializes form. You see



power everywhere. Perhaps you decide to invest attention in a crystal and use the idea that: “This rock is special and can help me create realities.” The idea becomes the filter for the physical qualities of the stone and the crystal becomes a “power object.” It could just as easily be a lucky coin or your grandmother’s silver locket.

Sometimes regaining your experience of power requires you to make a blatant “act of power.” That might mean facing something you’re afraid of and succeeding at it. Or trying something new you think you don’t know how to do and finding you do know about it. You’re demonstrating the dynamics of power to yourself. You get it: It’s an

innate, natural thing to focus attention through an idea and materialize form, or remove attention and dematerialize form.

As your understanding of power evolves, you may expand into the experience of belonging in a collective consciousness, and how We help Us to create realities. Power is nothing special; it’s just another word for effortless creativity and communion. You know the polarity of powerfulness and powerlessness comes from perceiving separation. “Power over” and even “Power to” seem like old thoughts. Perhaps you realize you don’t actually need power! Instead of saying, “I have the power to” you may say, “I have the *focus* to.”



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