

Anger, power and soul

Power is part of our DNA, who we are. Power (and passion) are woven into our life's purpose – why we're on the planet. Absent power, life is a humdrum experience – lacking meaning or real engagement. When we lack or lose our sense of power, we feel less than, deficient, and invisible. What results is anger. Sometimes our anger is overt - violence, abuse or aggression, or silent – sadness or depression.

On a macro level, have only to watch or read the news to witness the degree of violence that threads throughout much of the world. So many folks feeling victimized, helpless and powerless.

On a micro level, what about you? First and foremost, anger is a reactivity to loss of love. Secondly, anger arises when we feel we are powerless – feeling we're not able to control others either verbally, emotionally or psychologically. What we need to understand here is that now we're not talking about "power," but "force." What's the difference?

Force is a "faux" power we resort to when we feel deficient and want to feel powerful. Force is actually a "weakness" that leaks out as aggression and dominance.

True and real power – a soul quality – is actually the energy that accompanies self-confidence, self-worth, self-awareness, authenticity, equanimity and gentleness. Power is supportive, not defensive. Power comes from an inner "knowing," an inner drive and inner authority. Power is the soul's "right action."

Powerlessness and resulting anger come not from the heart, but from a fear-based mental and emotional sense of not being in control, or feeling victimized or trapped by one's life or environment – at work, at home, at play or in relationship. Anger is a reactivity to one's circumstances or to the lack of opportunity.

Anger also arises when one feels unable to express one's self – either lacking the ability to communicate, or feeling unheard, misunderstood or unseen. Frustration and self-esteem issues arise when one feels unheard or unseen.

Finally, anger arises when one feels they lack a capacity to "do" or "be." Physical or mental disability, illness, or career or financial hardship. When one feels "limited," anger and frustration often result. Anger arises, too, when one cannot fulfill their dreams or visions.

So, what is the antidote to anger?

First, on a practical level, it's helpful to explore the reverse side of frustration. What do I need to do, be and have to reduce or eliminate my frustration? What knowledge, skills or abilities do I lack? What would empower me to feel capable and powerful? Are there new or different directions or interests I might pursue that would give me a sense of purpose and power? Can I challenge myself to explore the "unknown" and forward the action of my life into new areas, across my current life boundaries? Powerlessness is a "message" that suggests we need to look beyond our eyes.

Second, on a spiritual level, powerlessness is an opportunity to "go inside," to explore within to touch the true source of Power, where true and real "empowerment" resides. Often, the "inner" will point us to the "outer" – that true and real power is about serving the needs of others. Lest you think that "power" is "volunteering," it might be. But true and real power and the sense of authenticity, self-confidence, aliveness, fulfillment, and meaning

accompanying it come from a conscious choice to serve, support and be self-less to others – at work, at home, at play and in relationship.

True personal power arises from a personality-soul connection. True personal power is the result of passion and purpose that is heart-driven, not ego-mind driven. Personal power results from empowering – others, not your self. As Deepak Chopra says, "Seventy-five percent of what a person does, they do for their self – and there isn't one." If we understand that, we can discern the difference between the love and gentleness of power and the ugliness and harshness of force.

So, power begins with me, my True Self – identifying and making healthy choices to change and grow in my life at work, at home, at play and in relationship - and allow the ripples from my growth to move out and affect others.

So, some questions for self-reflection are:

- Where are you on the power-force continuum?
- Would your colleagues and friends say you are ever forceful and aggressive?
- Are you a "control-freak?" Do you move to anger quickly when you feel you're not in control?
- Do you ever reflect on your forceful or aggressive thoughts, words or actions? If so, what do you see about yourself? Any patterns?
- Are there folks in your life you can empower? How can you do that?
- Do you feel stuck, powerless or frustrated? What talents, skills or abilities might enable you to forward the action of your life?
- Think of a person or persons you can empower and decide how you will do that.
- Can you take some time to reflect or meditate on your life purpose or how you can contribute to life? This is where you discover your power.
- What was being around anger and force like for you and your family as you were growing up?

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