# Don't give away your power

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Do you feel you've lost control of your life--that every move you make is intended to accommodate someone else in some way?

Do you feel deeply offended by any criticism or negative feedback you receive, regardless of the source?

Do other people have the ability to make you feel so angry that you say and do things you later regret?

Have you changed your goals based on what other people have told you that you should be doing with your life?

Is the type of day you're going to have depend on how other people behave?

Do other people guilt you into doing things you don't really want to do?

Does your self-worth depend on how others perceive you?

Do you spend much time complaining about people and circumstances that you don't like?

Do you go to great lengths to avoid uncomfortable emotions?

Do you have much difficulty setting boundaries and then end up feeling resentful toward people who take up your time and energy?

Do you hold grudges for a long time when someone offends you or hurts you?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you could be giving others the power to control how you think, feel, and behave.

The problem with giving away your power is you end up becoming completely dependent upon other people and external circumstances to regulate your emotions. This can make life become like a roller coaster--when things are going well, you'll feel good; but when your circumstances change, your thoughts, feelings, and behavior will shift. If you're giving away your power, it's time to reclaim it.

First, take a close look at the people you are devoting your time and energy toward. Are they the people you want to receive it? If not, you may be giving them more power than you think they deserve.

For instance, each second you spend commiserating with coworkers about how unfair your boss is, you are giving your boss more power. Every time you tell your friends how controlling your mother-in-law is, you give her a little more power over you. The more you dwell on not receiving the love you deserve, the more power you give to the person or people neglecting you.

If you're saying things like: "My boss makes me so mad," "My boyfriend left me because I'm not good enough," or "My mom makes me feel really bad about myself because she's alway critical of me," it's time to realize that your boss can't really force you to feel anything, your boyfriend's opinion is only one person's opinion, and your obligation to listen to your mother make critical statements about you does not have to lower your self esteem.

I've seen people make life altering decisions because of disdain toward one other person. From quitting or changing jobs to retiring from a professional career to overreacting in a manner that brought regret later on--all because of one other person who, in reality, never cared one iota about them. Don't let such a person have this much power over your life.

I've seen beautiful and smart young women let an uncaring and absent father distort their opinions about their self-worth. A selfish, uncaring, eccentric, and/or toxic parent can bring you down if you let them. Don't let them. Always know you deserve to be loved and will be loved, despite any neglect from a parent.

When you decide that no one else has the power to control how you feel, you'll experience empowerment, which in turn helps you be mentally strong--and when you are a mentally strong person, the following will apply:

1) You'll develop a better sense of who you are when you're able to make choices based on what's best for you instead of what will prevent the most repercussions.

2) You'll become more accountable for your progress toward your goals because you take responsibility for your own behavior.

3) You'll never be pressured into doing something you don't want to do based on guilt trips or what you think other people want you to do.

4) You'll be able to devote your time and energy to things you choose rather than blame other people for wasting your time or ruining your day.

5) You'll prevent or reduce the risk of depression and anxiety when you take control of your life because you normally won't have feelings of hopelessness or helplessness.

So it's time to resolve to stop giving away your power. Despite anything that happens, you always have a choice on how you will let it affect you over the course of time. Don't be a passenger in your life, be the driver. Make choices that keep you in control of your mind, body, and spirit. Your happiness, sanity, energy, and personal and professional effectiveness depend on it.

~ The End ~