

POWER - ITS USE AND ABUSE (4)

excerpted and adapted from
THE OTHER SIDE OF POWER by Claude M. Steiner, Grove Press, NYC

SOME POWER-PLAY EXAMPLES AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

The universal power-play stopper -- "WAM" -- "Wait A Minute" and its forms:

1. Just a moment, I want to think about that
2. Well, thats interesting, let me think about that for a minute
3. HOLD IT !!!!! JUST A DAMN MINUTE!!!!
4. If you don't mind, I'd like to sleep on that before I make a decision

Use of the forceful vs. gentle form is a matter of situational judgment, not how angry you are or how 'pushed' you feel. It is to be used as a stopper and not as an escalation of power-plays. You must have something "straight" to say after using the stopper.

ALL OR NOTHING or NOW OR NEVER You have to be willing to give up the "scarce" item or have other options. I like your job, security, love, sex, money, food, or used car, but I don't like it THAT MUCH ! (that I will grovel or get desperate or 'sell-out') and I have other plans. You have to have other plans. Bluffing is another power play, and "wolf-criers" are found out fast and early.

There is a difference between business and family life. If a used-car salesman says that a man just went home to see if he could arrange finances for the used jaguar then you might thoughtfully and gently escalate say " Well, I guess you should wait for him and sell the car and I won't bother coming back". This variant of "Have It Your Way" could very well result in him saying, "Well sir, the gentleman wasn't sure and I'm sure we could arrange something....."

However if your partner says, "We are going out to dinner and to the show that is showing for the last time tonight." You need to have other options. When you are face to face with a personal relationship (partner, friend, boss, workmate) there is more at stake than a price on a used car. At this point there is more background involved than just the stated case.

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| 1. You may go, even though you are tired, | with | quiet | resentment. |
| 2. You may go, even though you are tired, | with | open | resentment. |
| 3. You may go, even though you are tired, | with | no | resentment. |
| 4. You may stay, even though there is a fight, | with | quiet | resentment. |
| 5. You may stay, even though there is a fight, | with | open | resentment. |
| 6. You may stay, even though there is a fight, | with | no | resentment. |

EACH OF THESE SIX SCENERIOS HAS BEEN YEARS IN THE MAKING BY YOUR POWER HABITS.

If I bet you \$10 and I lose, you gain \$10. (+\$10) + (-\$10) = \$0. This is called the zero-sum game. My loss is your gain. In ordinary, everyday, people competition, there is an automatic win-lose set up. Any win-lose situation will always resolve into a psychological lose-lose due to the continuing imbalance in the emotional comfort of both parties, and the lack of equality of power for both.

The way out is to cooperate, to avoid emotional competition for power.



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OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.