



"People in relationship must be able to influence each other. There is a big difference between INFLUENCE (which happens when we speak our UNARGUABLE TRUTH) versus CONTROL (when we get parental or rebellious)."

Julia Colwell, PhD

TAKING 100% RESPONSIBILITY

TAKING LESS OR MORE THAN 100% RESPONSIBILITY ERODES INTIMACY, TRUST, RESPECT, AND LOVE

Empowering partnership naturally occurs when we **ensure we take**:

- 1** 100% RESPONSIBILITY (POWER) for our own Emotional Mind ('Inner Child') - feel and process our own emotions
- 2** 100% RESPONSIBILITY (POWER) to know our own needs, wants, limits
- 3** 100% RESPONSIBILITY (POWER) to communicate needs, wants, limits

Notice how these responsibilities work both ways. We also need to **give our partner**:

- 1** 100% RESPONSIBILITY (POWER) to feel and process their emotions without 'fixing' them
 - 2** 100% RESPONSIBILITY (POWER) to know their needs, wants, limits without making assumptions or 'mind-reading' them
 - 3** 100% RESPONSIBILITY (POWER) to communicate needs, wants, limits without 'analyzing' them
- (Respect their words at face value, even if you think your partner's words are misguided or disordered)

POWER-STRUGGLES NEED A 'POWER-OVER 100%' AND A 'POWER-UNDER 100%' TO EXIST

Notice how quickly a conversation can fall into a power-struggle, DRIFT PATTERN. This is an example of a Caretaker DRIFT.

FROM CARETAKING TO POWER-STRUGGLE

Notice how quickly Caretaking turns into power-struggle

"I'm hungry."

"You want me to make you something?"

"Naw, I'm fine"

"Come on, eat something. What do you want?" **POWER-OVER**

"I said I'm fine. I'll eat later."

"But, you said you were hungry." **POWER-OVER**

"I said I'm fine! Why can't you let me be?" **POWER-UNDER**

"Sorry... but wow, your anger is ridiculous." **POWER-OVER**

TAKING 100% RESPONSIBILITY: NOT MORE -OR- LESS

Allow partner 100% RESPONSIBILITY to state their truth

"I'm hungry."

"You want me to make you something?"

"Naw, I'm fine"

"Ok, let me know if you change your mind."

"I might get grumpy but whatever." **POWER-UNDER**

"Ok, I hear you."

*If they get 'grumpy' and you don't want to be around them, simply take the time and space you need away. Allow your partner to have their emotions.

TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR, OR
SHAMES PARTNER'S EMOTIONS

ENMESHMENT LOOP

BLAMES PARTNER FOR
OWN EMOTIONS

ALLOWS PARTNER 100% RESPONSIBILITY FOR THEIR
OWN EMOTIONS AND FOR COMMUNICATING
THEIR OWN NEEDS, WANTS AND LIMITS

BLAMES PARTNER FOR
OWN EMOTIONS

Do you believe you're more likely to DRIFT into the "power-over" or "power-under" position, or both?

Provide examples if you can. Learn more about DRIFTS: <https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/unarguabletruth>

IDENTIFYING: WHEN WE TAKE ON MORE THAN 100% RESPONSIBILITY

It can be confusing to end up in the "power-over" position, especially in repeated power-struggles. It's likely not intentional! The example on page 1 shows how we can DRIFT into this "power-over" role. Learn to **'not take the bait'** so you don't end up taking MORE THAN 100% RESPONSIBILITY.

EXAMPLES OF POWER-OVER

- "You're too emotional."
- "That was unacceptable."
- "Stop it. You're being (foolish, ridiculous, mean, etc.)."
- "You should start exercising."
- "You can't do that because I don't trust you."
- "I can't believe you lost your wallet again."
- "I really can't rely on you for anything."
- "You work too much."

Write your ideas on why these "power-over" statements are taking more than 100% RESPONSIBILITY.

SIGNS YOUR IN POWER-OVER

Feel over-responsible, exhausted, confused, anxious, resentful, serious, like the 'bad guy,' or parental. Tend to sound nurturing (helping) or aggressive (critical). Trying to 'save' partner from their emotions. Walking on egg-shells. Analyzing partner's words instead of respecting them at face value. Aren't communicating your needs, wants, or limits clearly.

Do you recognize these signs? Have you experienced any of these recently, in current or past relationships?

INFLUENCE VERSUS CONTROL

There's a fine line between INFLUENCE and CONTROL. INFLUENCE feels creative, safe, grounded, aligned with your values, and in-tune with your own emotions, needs, wants, and limits in each moment. You're able to inspire and communicate clearly. When grappling for CONTROL you'll feel defensive, blaming, triggered, small, mean, reactive, anxious, irritable, or in a DRIFT.

What are your thoughts on the differences between INFLUENCE and CONTROL?

Describe your ideas on how you'll stay in-tune with yourself to stay within your 100% POWER, instead of power-over.

IDENTIFYING: WHEN WE TAKE LESS THAN 100% RESPONSIBILITY

When we take LESS THAN 100% RESPONSIBILITY by **blaming ANYONE** (partner or others) **or ANYTHING** ('bad habits,' the weather, politics, etc.) we are forfeiting our power and falling into the 'power-under,' victim role. Which may seem 'safe' and harmless, but it's VERY harmful. Taking less than 100% POWER by blaming has an immediate emotional impact. It slams the nervous system into FREEZE mode. Perceived powerlessness is the #1 of depression, addictions and anxiety. Here are examples:

EXAMPLES OF POWER-UNDER

- "You're so controlling."
- "You make me feel (angry, sad, disrespected, etc.)."
- "Why can't I ever get a break?"
- "Why are you so mean?"
- "Bad things always happen to me."
- "If you respected me, I wouldn't act like this."
- "I screwed up again. I'm the worst!"
- "You hurt me again."
- "Why do you even love me?"
- " _____ " SILENCE (never stating needs, wants, limits)

Notice these are complaints. Some sound childish. There's nothing wrong with needing to vent. Life is tough. The issue is when we EXPECT our partner, or anyone else, to respond in some way. "Power-under" statements tend to have a leaching, subtle yet heavy, needy vibe, which makes the "power-under" role controlling in its own way. It tends to trigger a partner's "power-over" response, to caretake, apologize, 'fix,' placate, and take more than 100% POWER, which you'll likely resent right away or later.

Free-write your thoughts on why the above "power-under" EXAMPLES are disempowering and even controlling.

**Do you notice how quickly we get hooked into a "power-over" role trying to respond to "power-under" statements?
How would you reply to your partner if he/she said any of the "power-under" EXAMPLES listed above?**

Try rewording these "power-under" EXAMPLES into Empowering UNARGUABLE TRUTHS (feelings, needs, and wants)?

Learn more about how to speak your UNARGUABLE TRUTH: <https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/unarguabletruth>

SIGNS YOU ARE IN POWER-UNDER

Feel like you lost your freedom or yourself. Tend to sound defensive, apologetic, or the need to explain yourself. Feel secretive, resistant or rebellious. View your partner as controlling, critical or anxious. May be grappling for a sense of power or purpose. Reacting with passive-aggressive behaviors, child-like compliance, out-of-control rebellion, or blaming and resenting.

Do you recognize these signs? Have you experienced any of these recently, in current or past relationships?

Describe your ideas on how you'll stay in-tune with yourself to stay within your 100% POWER, instead of power-under.