

The Essence of Power is Choice

by Stewart Blackburn

Power is one of those things that we know when we don't have it and not having power doesn't feel good. On the other hand, saying what power actually is has been somewhat elusive. Philosophers have long debated what it consists of and how much we humans actually have. Here is one more carrot in that soup of understanding.

Science defines power as the ability to do work. Huna uses that same basic definition. When we use our power, we get things done. But what power actually is can easily get overlooked in the drive for more of it. By reminding us that power only comes from within us as our ability to choose, we are powerful to the degree that we are willing to make the choices in our life. We can define our personal reality as one with few choices, leaving our lives to fate or chance. Or we can accept that there are *no limits* to the possibilities open to us. We are exactly as powerful as we think we are and our freedom is exactly as boundless as we allow it to be.

To take up our power we start by choosing what we think. Most people in my experience allow a great variety of dysfunctional and damaging thoughts to run freely in their minds. Taking charge of all these fears, angers, hurts, and doubts is a formidable task. But that's what we need to do in order to be at home in our power. This has at least three components: one, we decide that we are responsible for what we keep in our thoughts; two, we refuse to accept any beliefs regarding our unlovability, unworthiness, or brokenness; three, we master the art of focus: choosing what we are going to focus on. By taking charge of what we focus on, we can stop most of the damaging thoughts and nurture the thoughts that help us be healthy and happy.

Our feelings are our experience of energy. To be powerful means to use our energy wisely. Therefore, we want to master how we use our energy and to learn to shape our reality to our preference. That means we need to pay close attention to our feelings and learn how they work.

Most of our feelings come as the results of what we are thinking, so as we take charge of our thoughts we are also taking charge of our feelings. The connection between thoughts and feelings is not an obvious one, but a little time spent observing them both pays great dividends.

We can choose how we feel by mastering what we are thinking and what we are focusing on. In our society we have a great many distractions that weaken our ability to focus for long. Advertisers and salesmen are constantly vying for our attention and have great skill in hijacking our focus, often injecting an element of fear or lust into the mix. That's their job and it's a fundamental component of our economic system. Just the same, it comes as an increased challenge to those of us working to take charge of our own minds.

The idea that we are powerless in the face of our feelings is nonsense. By first choosing for ourselves that we will be the master of our mind and paying attention to what's happening inside, we gradually relax and allow our feelings/energies to flow

smoothly without resistance or disturbance. When they flow easily we experience very pleasant feelings. When we resist we can easily notice how poorly we feel. This simple guidance system works every time.

We can embody our power when we choose how we act and, more importantly, how we react. We have a great many choices as to how we will react to the things we don't like and each choice will affect us differently.

Disappointment, for example, is a choice that is so natural when things don't go the way we want them to that it seems like the normal and expected response. But disappointment is only one of several ways we can respond, and in fact is the least pleasurable of them all. We may not always see the choices we have made as things "happen" to us. But it is easy to see that we have the power to respond any way we choose.

A powerful person is one who has many choices in how to act and what to do. The opposite of this is depression where one feels that there are no options and that one is powerless. To go from powerlessness to power is to accept options and to actively choose among them. Each choice is a step of empowerment.

If you would be more powerful, then, use your muscle of imagination to see all the possibilities, the probabilities, that are open to you. Take advantage of all the inspiration that is there for the asking. And then choose what will please you the most!

Wouldn't it be nice to feel comfortable with who you are and to feel that you are okay all the time? My newest book, *It's Time to Come Home*, is a pathway to get back to that feeling of being at home in ourselves. Available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).