

Workshop Created By: DARCIE HARRIS



As women we want to be seen as understanding, compassionate and fair. Powerful? Don't go there. Fearful of perceptions and stereotypes, even the strongest women sometimes perceive power as being negative. Anxious about being labeled as demanding or hard to please, we often feel hesitant to embrace appropriate power. The result? We may give away our legitimate power in ways we can't even see. We struggle with saying "no," setting limits and self-care.

With the help of metaphors from the equine world, we can rethink our perceptions of power and:

- Face the fears that cause us to play small
- Develop the confidence to embrace our full potential
- Stop the behavior that might be holding us back from creating the happier life we really want to live
- Connect the dots between our beliefs and our fulfillment in roles like friend, neighbor, daughter, employee, business owner, mother, wife
- Become a force of goodness in the world.

Part Two



OUTLINE:

- How women give away, avoid or abdicate power
 - Avoiding responsibility and becoming a victim
 - Not learning
 - Not being authentic
 - Unclear expectations, limits or boundaries
 - Putting others on a pedestal
 - Gossip and criticizing other women
- What are your most common ways of giving way power?
- Accepting responsibility for your life
- Clarifying boundaries, limits and expectations
- Addressing the fear factor

HOW WOMEN GIVE AWAY POWER AND DON'T EVEN REALIZE IT

- Not taking responsibility for our own choices and being the victim
- Not learning
- Not being authentic
- Unclear expectations, limits or boundaries
- Putting others on a pedestal
- Criticizing other women and gossiping

HOW ARE YOU AVOIDING BEING POWERFUL?

Now that you've looked over the list, it's time to be completely honest with yourself. Take a few minutes and think it over, then ask yourself:

WHAT ARE MY MOST COMMON WAYS OF GIVING AWAY, AVOIDING, OR ABDICATING MY OWN POWER?

"I have issues with boundaries. Or maybe that's not fair to say. To have issues with boundaries, one must HAVE boundaries in the first place...if I love you, you can have everything. You can have my time, my devotion, my money, my family, my dog, my dog's money, my dog's time, everything...I will give you all this and more, until I get so exhausted and depleted that the only way I can recover my energy is by becoming infatuated with someone else."

- Elizabeth Gilbert
Eat, Pray, Love

“Women worry about making their employer feel uncomfortable. I had a man and woman at their first year review around the same time. Both were making \$50,000. The guy came in, outlined all he had done to add value to my company, and asked for \$80,000. I gave him \$68,000. The woman only asked for \$55,000. I think she felt bad about asking for more, but I would have given her \$68,000, too.”

- Christopher Flett
What Men Don't Tell Women About Business

MAKING EXCUSES, BLAMING OTHERS OR BEING A VICTIM

“As long as you blame someone it makes the problem not yours but theirs, and allows you to keep it without taking responsibility for anything but pointing the finger. Which means you give them responsibility for your life and paralyze yourself forever in a place you don't want to be. And there you sit—waiting for justice, waiting for someone to save you, waiting for your mother to kiss it and make it all better...and you continue to feel powerless, and helpless, and frightened, and angry, and things remain just as they were.”

- Merle Shain
Hearts That We Broke Long Ago

“You can blame your mother, you can blame your father and his father for the problems with which you are destined to wrestle, but ultimately you are the one in whom they have made a home. You are the one who must say Thus far and no farther, and then go down and confront them yourself.”

- David Whyte
The Heart Aroused

IN WHAT WAY ARE YOU MAKING EXCUSES OR AVOIDING FULL RESPONSIBILITY?

ACCEPTING RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN LIFE

Identify an incident at work, at home or in another situation that you did not like. Write down the event in the space below.

Use the space below to write out how you and other contributed to the problem. The space to the left is your degree of responsibility; the space to the right indicates the degree to which you believe others contributed to the problem. In the left column, write down specifically how you contributed to the problem (I thought..., I forgot..., I neglected..., I assumed..., etc.). In the right column, write down specifically how others contributed to the problem (they said..., they did..., they forgot..., they denied..., they assumed..., etc.) At this point you have a description of who did what to create the problem.

How I contributed to the problem:

How others contributed to the problem:

Now repeat the exercise and assume responsibility for the entire box. This is challenging, but try to do it. Write down all the things you could have done to prevent the problems on the right that were created by someone or something else.

Finally, without blaming yourself, identify why you did not take these actions (did not have the skill, knowledge, permission, time, willingness, etc). No need to beat yourself up, just be objective.

Summarize what you learned from doing this activity. What insights do you have?

What attitudes and behaviors are in your way?

What changes can you make?

LET'S GET CLEAR ON BOUNDARIES AND LIMITS

So let's start the process of getting clearer on your expectations. What are your "non-negotiables?" What factors, qualities, character traits, skills, or behaviors must be present, either at home or at work?

CHOOSE THREE SITUATIONS IN YOUR LIFE WHERE YOU NEED TO DEFINE CLEARER BOUNDARIES

MY FIVE NON-NEGOTIABLES FOR MY PERSONAL LIFE

MY FIVE NON-NEGOTIABLES FOR MY BUSINESS LIFE

CLARIFY: WHAT SPECIFIC LIMITS OR BOUNDARIES DO YOU NEED TO PUT IN PLACE?

THE FEAR FACTOR- WHY WOMEN AVOID POWER

Women avoid, abdicate and give away their power in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons. From what I've observed, the core of these reasons is fear.

"What happens when we become afraid? We become tentative and our capacities stay buried beneath what might have been or could have been."

- Blaine Lee
*The Power Principle:
Influence With Honor*

- Fear of failure
- Fear of rocking the boat
- Fear of what others might think of us
- Fear that someone won't like us
- Fear that we'll hurt someone's feelings
- Fear that we'll be seen as demanding or hard to please
- Fear that we'll be seen as ambitious
- Fear of living out our own potential

WHAT FEARS DO YOU HAVE ABOUT EMBRACING YOUR PERSONAL POWER?

About the Presenter



Photograph by Tina Brannon

Darcie Harris is a champion for female entrepreneurs and leaders.

Known for her warmth and wisdom, Darcie has helped countless women realize their professional dreams.

Recognized as a thought-provoking international speaker and trainer, Darcie is CEO and founder of EWF International, a company offering peer advisory groups, coaching and consulting for women business owners and executives. Through the Alpha Mare Academy™, she offers her knowledge and tools to female entrepreneurs worldwide through the web.

Darcie is a respected media resource on women's entrepreneurship and leadership issues.

Business coach, consultant, mentor and advocate for women worldwide, Darcie finds the fulfillment of her own dreams by encouraging women to think big, pursue their passions and achieve their personal best.

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