

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 One



## OUTLINE:

- Personal perceptions of power
- Negative perceptions of power
- Contrasting powerful to powerless
- Empowering women
- Definitions of power
- The cost of giving away power
- The Alpha Mare: a model of power
- Would you like to be powerful?
- Benefits of embracing power
- Changing your perception

The mare grazes quietly in one corner of the pasture. Her head is down as she munches quietly on spring grass.

Down the fence line ahead of her, she sees two colts playing. She sees another mare enjoying a roll in the dirt. Because horses have nearly 360 degree vision, she also sees several horses drinking from the pond behind her.

The mare's nostrils flare as her powerful sense of smell picks up the scent of a neighbor's dog. Her ears twitch forward and back, listening for signs of change.

She is alert and her profound intuition is guiding her decisions. If she sees, smells or hears any signs of danger, she will signal the herd to run.

**This is The Alpha Mare.**

**Her wisdom makes her a natural leader.**

We're about to embark on a journey of self discovery. This journey will lead you to explore and unlock your passions, discover your unique purpose and embrace your full potential. Before we begin, let's get clear on where you are beginning your journey.

## MY THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT POWER

---

---

---

Now think about this... I THINK YOU ARE POWERFUL!

What's your most honest reaction to that?

---

---

---

## NEGATIVE CONNOTATIONS OF POWER

“Most of the women I interviewed for this book shrank from the notion that they were ‘powerful’.

Influential? Perhaps.

Powerful? Don’t go there.”

- Dee Dee Myers  
*Why Women Should Rule the World*

I’ve asked many women what they think about the word power, and most of the time, their reaction to the word is uncomfortable at best, and often negative.

Many women don’t want the word power to be associated with them. Women want to be seen as compassionate, fair, understanding. We are the “helpers” of the world.

For many women, to think about power seems a bit unfeminine. Or worse, crass, as though power is associated only with personal, selfish or material gain.

It’s almost offensive.

Many women have an aversion to power or a fear of power.

Take a look at what a couple of women I know (both pretty powerful themselves!) have to say about power.

“I just don’t like the word power. I always believed if you had to tell someone you were powerful, maybe you questioned your own abilities.”

- Teresa Moisant

“For women who need power to function, and who thrive on it, I think their power can sometimes be bought with money (short term), but it comes at the price of being unfulfilled (long term).”

- Katie O’Brien

---

## HOW WOMEN DEVELOP NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF POWER

- Appropriate, honorable power is often invisible, so we just don’t see it.
- Negative stories about power are newsworthy because power has been abused, overused, or misused.
- Women’s perception of power has been defined by a more masculine stereotype.
- Women are uncomfortable with the concept of power because women have often been on the losing end of power issues.

“Amoral, Cunning, Ruthless and Instructive, The 48 Laws of Power... is a piercing distillation of three thousand years of the history of power.

A synthesis of in-depth research into the philosophies of such great thinkers as Machiavelli, Sun-tzu and legacies of the statesmen, warriors, seducers and con men throughout the ages, The 48 Laws of Power is the definitive study of power and the essential guide to modern manipulation.”

- Robert Greene  
*The 48 Laws of Power*

HOW WOMEN DEVELOP NEGATIVE PERCEPTIONS OF POWER

- “Power is essentially amoral and one of the most important skills to acquire is the ability to see circumstances, rather than good or evil...”
- “Power is a game...Your opponent sits opposite you. Both of you behave as gentlemen or ladies, observing the rules of the game and taking nothing personally. You play with a strategy and you observe your opponent’s moves with as much calmness as you can muster...”
- “It is dangerous to seem too power hungry, to be overt with your power moves. We have to seem fair and decent.
- So we need to be subtle—congenial yet cunning, democratic yet devious...but if we play by those rules too strictly, if we take them too literally, we are crushed by those around us who are not so foolish.”

- Robert Greene  
*The 48 Laws of Power*

---

POWERLESS

So if we think power is bad, then wouldn't it make sense that being powerless is good? What are your thoughts about that?

THINK ABOUT THE LAST TIME YOU FELT POWERLESS. WHAT WAS HAPPENING?

---

---

---

WHAT CONTRIBUTED TO YOU FEELING POWERLESS?

---

---

---

WHAT WAS THAT LIKE FOR YOU? HOW DID YOU FEEL?

---

---

---

WHAT ARE THE RAMIFICATIONS OR CONSEQUENCES FOR YOU OF FEELING POWERLESS?

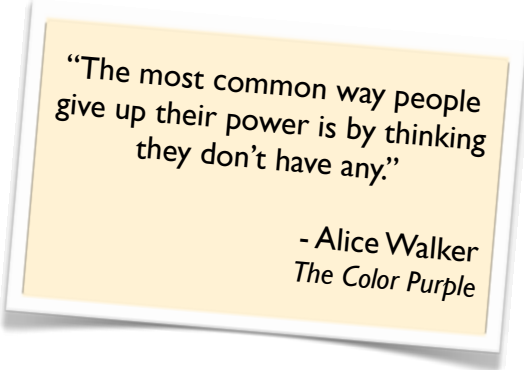
---

---

---

## BEING POWERLESS DOESN'T FEEL GOOD

- When we feel powerless, we feel helpless and vulnerable.
- In those situations where we truly are powerless to change the situation, to change the outcome, we still have the power to choose our response.
- We can let that situation make us bitter or make us better.



“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.”

- Alice Walker  
*The Color Purple*

## EMPOWERING WOMEN

- If power is so bad, then why is everyone trying to empower us?

## WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS ABOUT THE WORD “EMPOWERMENT?”

---

---

---

## WHY DO YOU THINK WE SPEAK IN TERMS OF EMPOWERING WOMEN, BUT WE DON'T TALK ABOUT EMPOWERING MEN?

---

---

---

- I’m not a big fan of the whole concept of empowering women.
- To empower someone means to give them power.
- If we have to give them power, it implies that they don’t have power to begin with.
- And right there, this puts you in a position of having less power than the person who is going to bestow some on you.
- I don’t think women need to be empowered. I think you already HAVE power.
- Sometimes you just give it away.
- Sometimes you avoid it, or abdicate your legitimate power.
- You may be uncomfortable with the masculine stereotype of power.
- You may be uncomfortable with the word power.
- Call it what you want, but I believe you ARE powerful!

WHAT IS POWER?

HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE POWER?

---

---

---

Let's take a look at what Roget's International Thesaurus lists as synonyms for power.

Authority	Influence	Talent
Control	Means	Will power
Effective force	Prerogative	Vigor
Energy	Potency	Wealth
Greatness	Strength	
Impulse	Supremacy	

WHICH OF THESE WORDS DO YOU RELATE TO MOST?

---

---

---

ARE THERE ANY OF THESE WORDS THAT YOU FIND OBJECTIONABLE, OR UNCOMFORTABLE?

---

---

---

WHAT POWER MEANS TO WOMEN

<p>"I feel the most powerful when I am able to effect change without using force. It comes from knowledge, talent, experience, trust and respect."</p> <p>- Regina Lamoreaux</p>	<p>"To be powerful means I have the confidence to be my best self unapologetically, even if my beliefs or lifestyle don't align with what others push me to accept."</p> <p>- Michelle Hubble</p>	<p>"Power is how you see yourself--your potential, your value, your purpose, your weaknesses (in perspective)."</p> <p>- Dawna Blue</p>	<p>"Power is the ability to influence. True power is assumed, not given. Power is a state of mind that enables you to change the world--available to all, but seized by few."</p> <p>- Donna Bennett</p>	<p>"To me power is about choices. Without power, be it money, authority or self-confidence, whatever, we are at the mercy of others and our choices are very limited, if they exist at all. Power means the power to choose."</p> <p>- Sue Oldham Loftis</p>	<p>"Having power enables you to make change, both good and bad."</p> <p>- Elaine Perriello</p>
--	---	---	--	--	--

***In physics, power is defined as transforming energy to a force to move something.***

## A NEW DEFINITION OF POWER

Clarity of Purpose + Energy + Humble Confidence + Influence = POWER

- Power isn't bad.
- The abuse of power is bad.
- Power isn't good or bad.
- It's how we use power that matters.

"The sole advantage of power is that you can do more good."

- Baltasar Gracian  
Spanish Philosopher

You become powerful when you are:

Authentic	Confident	Humble	Resilient	Trusted
Autonomous	Courageous	Informed	Respected	
Clear	Honorable	Interdependent	Self-aware	

---

## WHAT IS THE COST OF GIVING AWAY YOUR POWER?

- Confusion and disorganization
- Overwhelm
- Over-functioning
- People pleasing
- Lack of accomplishment
- Lost opportunities
- Unfulfilled potential
- Unrealized dreams
- Inability to effect change
- Less joy and meaning
- Repressed feelings
- Feelings of resentment and bitterness
- Feeling victimized

### WORKPLACE

- Missing a possible promotion
- Not negotiating for a better compensation plan
- Lost sales opportunities
- Vacuum of leadership
- Ineffective teamwork
- Mediocre results
- Employees have no accountability
- Minimal employee commitment
- Charging too little
- Loss of profit
- Embezzlement
- Unrecoverable debt

### FAMILY AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Imbalanced responsibility
- Inequitable relationships
- Over-functioning while others under-function
- Resentment
- Sacrificing choices and opinions
- Consistently deferring to others
- A pattern of giving more than you receive

### LIFESTYLE/LIFE SATISFACTION

- Fatigue
- Overwork
- Increased Stress
- Sacrificing self interests
- Poor choices that lead to dissatisfaction
- Not living the life you truly desire
- Not living out your true potential

In every herd of horses there is a dominant horse recognized to be “in charge.”

This horse is always a mare.

**She’s known as The Alpha Mare**

It’s her duty to tend to the safety and well being of the entire herd. She signals the herd when it’s time to move, to sleep, to eat, and to drink.

Horses are prey animals – their first choice when frightened is to run, not fight. So when danger is near, it’s the Alpha Mare that alerts the herd that it’s time to run for safety. If that’s not an option, she’ll fight to protect the herd or herself.

The Alpha Mare disciplines the unruly youngsters. She teaches them about boundaries and respect.

She is self-assured, strong, competent and non-threatening.

If she does not lead with confident, legitimate power, the herd can suffer grave consequences. The entire herd depends on her for wise choices. She enforces reasonable rules. The herd looks to her for leadership, structure and discipline.

It’s a great honor to be The Alpha Mare.

---

THINK OF A TIME YOU WANTED TO CHANGE SOMETHING, TO HAVE AN EFFECT, TO MAKE SOMETHING BETTER, AND WERE UNABLE TO.

---

---

---

WHAT WERE YOUR REASONS FOR WANTING TO BE POWERFUL?

---

---

---

WHAT WAS THE MISSING FACTOR THAT WOULD HAVE ENABLED YOU TO DO WHAT YOU WANTED, TO HAVE THE EFFECT OR THE OUTCOME YOU DESIRED?

---

---

---

“Many will tell you the keys to power reside in forcefulness, negotiation, compulsion or compromise. They’re wrong!”

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

HOW WOULD EMBRACING YOUR POWER HAVE MADE A DIFFERENCE?

---

---

---

HOW WOULD YOUR LIFE BE DIFFERENT IF YOU WERE MORE POWERFUL?

---

---

---

“We all want power. We may not want to rule nations or run corporations, but we do want to get results in our lives.”

- Blaine Lee

*The Power Principle: Influence With Honor*

---

## THE BENEFITS OF BEING POWERFUL

I hope your thoughts and reflections on power and what it means to you have helped you:

- Change your perception of power from negative to positive
- Understand that power isn't good or bad, it's neutral – abuse of power is bad
- See that power is a beautiful combination of clarity, energy, humble confidence and influence

Being powerful gives you the sustained energy to live out your version of success.

Legitimate, authentic power allows you to be intentional about the choices you make.

You can live from an inner wisdom, without getting distracted, without living out someone else's version of success, without pursuing meaningless materialism.

Once you have clarity of purpose, being powerful allows you to be a force of change in ways that are meaningful to you.

When you want to accomplish something—for yourself or for others—you need power, influence, credibility and connections to get it done.

As you seek to influence or change, to affect an outcome, your personal, honorable power will help you accomplish your desired outcome.

Being powerful allows you to live from your deepest, authentic center – to live out your full potential.

# 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.

Darcie Harris

405.205.1124

[darcie@darcieharris.com](mailto:darcie@darcieharris.com)

[www.darcieharris.com](http://www.darcieharris.com)