

20 Questions on Your Use of Masculine Power

Take our quiz to discover your “power leaks”

Do you tend to unconsciously give away your own power? All men do, some more than others. We live in a world where so many men have an uncomfortable relationship with their own power.

In the media, many male politicians and CEOs are depicted as “power hungry” or caught in situations where they were at their worst. On television sitcoms, men are often depicted as weak or foolish, especially in relationship to their female counterparts. In sports, power is granted to those who consistently win, which tempts many to win at all costs. In a world where we have thankfully rejected the prior generation’s ultra-authoritarian attitudes toward power, little is offered in its wake. What is offered is often confusing. As a result, many men don’t know how to hold power in a healthy and effective way. They give their power away.

In our men’s community committed to supporting men on a path of consciousness, called The Tribe of Men (www.tribeofmen.com), we call these “power leaks.” Take the following survey to see if you are prone to giving away your own power.

Instructions: On a scale of 0-4, where 4 means “I do this a lot” and 0 means “not at all”, indicate how often you do each of these.

4-I do this a lot

3-I do this a fair bit

2-I do this sometimes

1-I rarely do this

0-I don’t do this at all

1. Yell, use intimidation as a verbal weapon, or express a violent temper.

0 1 2 3 4

2. Give away your decision making power over to fear of failure.
- 0 1 2 3 4
3. Let others make decisions for you, such as your spouse, co-workers, etc.
- 0 1 2 3 4
4. Overly focusing on "providing" for your family at the expense of yourself.
- 0 1 2 3 4
5. Put everyone else's priorities above your own. Great men with solid power put others and self as both worthy of attention.
- 0 1 2 3 4
6. Not getting "internally clear" about you want for yourself. Confusion is a way to play it safe.
- 0 1 2 3 4
7. Assuming authority through status rather than acting on your own authority.
- 0 1 2 3 4
8. Lead in ways that tend to alienate others.
- 0 1 2 3 4
9. Not communicating what you want.
- 0 1 2 3 4
10. Waiting for power to be given, bestowed, granted by another. This is often the complaint: "I cannot do it because I've been given the responsibility, but not the authority."
- 0 1 2 3 4
11. Not being clear about your purpose, vision, and your life plan.
- 0 1 2 3 4
12. Not moving into action—procrastinating.
- 0 1 2 3 4
13. Using drugs, alcohol, food and other substances to cope rather than confronting or changing the underlying causes of your substance abuse.
- 0 1 2 3 4

14. Overanalyzing, and not making decisions.
 0 1 2 3 4
15. Repeating their life patterns (e.g. remarrying thinking it's a different spouse, only to find the same characteristics; using the same approach to finding yet another bad job).
 0 1 2 3 4
16. Not tapping into the knowledge and wisdom of experts—believing that asking for help is a weakness.
 0 1 2 3 4
17. Not pursuing when an opportunity presents itself.
 0 1 2 3 4
18. Not taking care of the mind, body, spirit and financial well-being.
 0 1 2 3 4
19. Asking the opinion of others before expressing your own as a way to protect yourself or pretending you are inquiring in a pure way when you are not.
 0 1 2 3 4
20. Losing connection with you inner self—your inner source.
 0 1 2 3 4

Add up all of your numbers. The following scoring system is a guide for self-reflection.

Scoring Guide

A score of 5 or less suggests you rarely do power leaks and probably express yourself in healthy and powerful ways.

A score of 6-15 suggests you do power leaks from time to time and probably express yourself in healthy and powerful ways more than most.

A score of 16-25 suggests you have some clear ways you give away your power perhaps more than average and would benefit from some deeper exploration of how and why you do that.

A score of 26 or more suggests you have some significant challenges holding on to your power and expressing it in healthy ways.

Many of the above patterns are self-explanatory. Some are not. For example, having a temper appears powerful, but it is the opposite. When you use temper or violent anger as a weapon, it is often driven by insecurity—a feeling of being powerless. Similarly, asking for help appears like the opposite of power, but men who feel comfortable in their own power feel no hesitation to ask for help. Men who need to prove themselves tend to be uncomfortable asking for help for they fear it reveals weakness. Not taking care of oneself – not getting sleep, not eating well and getting exercise -- is a power bleed, for it reduces your mental and physical strength and stamina, making you less effective. Repeating life patterns shows a hesitance to take a look inward, often a reflection of a fear or discomfort of what one might find. Hence patterns get repeated through lack of self-awareness.

The most powerful and capable of men speak from their own authority and do not rest on the authority of others. They use language that is clear and compelling, without pretensions or worry about what others might think. They express what they see and what they want, and encourage others to do the same. They hold their own counsel and offer it wisely, at the right time and the right place. Their language reflects inner certainty, and yet, when unsure, they comfortably express that fact, without shame or discomfort. They are open to feedback and learning, putting their long term interests ahead of any short-term pain associated with honest

feedback.

By contrast, many men do not express themselves this way, and as a result, they are not taken seriously. They give their power away, often unconsciously.

What you say matters. How you say it matters even more. Instead of living life from these power leaks, consider:

1. Speaking your truth always, respectfully
2. Honoring others to do the same
3. Saying what you mean and meaning what you say
4. When you have a point of view, express it, without attachment to being right
5. Ask for what you want, and let it go if you don't get it.
6. Be open to honest, respectful feedback as a path to future development.

About the Author

Dr. Keith Merron is an organizational consultant and has been working for years with leaders and men and women in improving their own leadership and relationship to power. To learn more, we invite you to join us for a 3-day workshop, called the Sword and Scepter. For more information, visit www.swordandscepter.com.