



POWER SHADOW QUIZ

USE THIS DOCUMENT TO INCREASE YOUR SKILL AND SENSITIVITY IN NAVIGATING THE PERILS AND TRAPS OF ROLE POWER

Remember that many of these are called shadow because they are shadowy and easier for others to see than yourself. This is one good reason for doing this quiz in a group of peers. You can also understand this as power-blindness, since we all have blind spots.

PERILS AND TRAPS OF NOT UNDERSTANDING (BOTH EMOTIONALLY AND INTELLECTUALLY) THE DYNAMICS OF RELATIONSHIPS IN WHICH THERE IS A POWER DIFFERENTIAL:

- Lack of awareness or denial of power (the *ability to have an effect, take action, have influence*): personal power, role power, (and status power) (*"I don't have any power. I'm not powerful. We're all equal, I'm just doing my job."*)
- Unconsciously not fully owning or saying yes to role power when you have it
- Merging and personal, role, and status power into your identity, not understanding role power as an add-on power that travels with the role, not with you.
- Lack of knowledge about the relationship values of the power differential (*"Hierarchy is bad and should be avoided."*) (Values: *assignment of responsibilities, safety, offering of expertise and experience, access to resources, holding larger view, making assessments.*)
- Lack of knowledge about the major impacts of power differential on those in down-power position:
 - 1) *are more vulnerable and at risk of harm*
 - 2) *are "only" 100% responsible for the health of the relationship while person in up-power role is 150% responsible*
 - 3) *take a risk in being direct, and/or giving negative feedback or suggestions for change*
 - 4) *frequently feel, or expect to be, disempowered*

PERILS AND TRAPS OF UNDER- AND OVER-USE OF POWER

On this continuum, do you tend to disown or under-identify or merge/over-identify with your role power?

under-use of power -----over-use of power

Under-use of your power - shadow feelings and behaviors:

- fear of taking charge
- fear of seeming autocratic or egocentric
- commitment to everyone to be equal (no role hierarchy)
- fear of causing harm with your power
- fear of being wrong or making mistakes
- feeling the need to have more authority to be taken seriously
- giving people too many chances to change



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Over-use of your power - shadow feelings and behaviors:

- being habitually rigid and inflexible
 - giving people too few chances to change
 - obliviousness to or denial of impact (impenetrable shell)
 - projecting your issues onto those in a down-power relationship with you
 - not apologizing or correcting mistakes or misuses of power
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PERILS AND TRAPS OF HAVING ACCESS TO RESOURCES AND ROLE-PERKS

On this continuum of preferencing your own needs/interests versus not taking care of your own needs, where do you tend to be?

preferencing needs-----not taking care of own needs

Preferencing traps:

- Getting your legitimate personal needs inappropriately met through your role or rank.
 - love,
 - respect and approval,
 - money,
 - intimacy,
 - friendship,
 - sex,
 - control,
 - intensity,
 - drama,
 - refuge
- Having special relationships with students or clients that result in actual or perceived favoritism?
- Not feeling or acting accountable for your impact

Non-preferencing traps:

- Suffering from burn-out, feeling over-extended, exhausted, resentful.
 - Getting drawn into territorial battles
 - Feeling over-protective of your students or team
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PERILS AND TRAPS OF BEING BIGGER THAN YOU ARE

On this continuum of over-confidence and under-confidence where would you place yourself?

over-confidence -----under-confidence

Overconfidence traps:

- Getting out of touch with your limitations
- Failing to notice, disregarding or projecting out your impact
- Feeling isolated in your up-power role,



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- Becoming upset or angry by people's projections onto your role
- Letting your greater role power get the best of you
- Getting into struggles and escalating conflict too easily
- Not noticing or taking responsibility for the aspects of conflict or dysfunction that are yours

Under-confidence traps:

- Getting surprised, frustrated, or disturbed to receive projections of often unrealistic expectations (both good and bad) associated with your up-power role
- Getting enmeshed with your clients, students, organizers
- Leaning too heavily on your role to get your needs met
- Feeling that others obstruct your input
- Wanting to be "just my regular self" again

PERILS AND TRAPS OF SOCIAL DISTANCE

On this continuum of power as strength and as heart, where would you place yourself in your professional roles?

strength -----heart

Strength traps:

- isolation
- rigidity
- losing relationship connection
- inability to accurately read others feelings and needs
- loneliness at the top

Heart traps:

- compassion fatigue
- loss of big picture awareness
- unclear or too loose boundaries
- trying to make everyone happy

PERILS AND TRAPS OF DECISION-MAKING POWER AND IMMUNITY TO CONSEQUENCES

On this continuum, do you tend to be impulsive or restrained with your power?

impulsive -----restrained



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Impulsivity traps:

- Losing your cool, loosening your inhibitions, saying things you regret
- Using cognitive strategies to legitimize or deny your mistakes or misuses of power
- Holding stronger rules for others and loser rules for yourself
- Not noticing and managing your trigger behaviors
- Being unrealistically enamored of your own ideas
- Heightened confidence in predicting positive outcomes only to find that this was unrealistic?

Restraint traps:

- getting derailed or disempowered, knocked off balance
- not noticing the strength of your impact and influence
- continually trying just to be “regular old me” when in your up-power roles
- too little confidence resulting in losing trust and uninspiring or bland leadership
- getting lost in details and losing touch with the noble goal of your role