



# The 8 Powers of Leadership

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University





# the future of power

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**Future of Power Dialogues**

AN INITIATIVE OF THE



BRAHMA KUMARIS



## Foreword

To be a leader today means something entirely different from what it used to mean even ten years ago. Leadership can, and does, happen at any level of an organisation. Anyone who can see clearly what needs to be done, has the stamina to keep going, can muster resources, think innovatively, and perhaps most importantly, inspire and engage others to accompany them, will be considered a leader.

The best leaders throughout history have been those who have forged a new way that has been sustainable and strong. Primarily these leaders have appealed to people through their character - integrity and other values - that ensure people trust them enough to leave the comfort of the known and follow them into uncharted territory.

To stand by one's beliefs, to commit to integrity and values in times of shifting sands, takes great courage and inner strength. Some people have learned the art of self-sustainability, they have tapped the resources within that enable them to endure the road to a new vision.

The following Powers are drawn from the body of work that is known as Ancient Raja Yoga... Raja meaning 'king or sovereign', Yoga meaning 'connection'. These powers connect us to our own capacity for mastery over limited past patterns and the circumstances we face in leadership roles.



## Power to Withdraw (DETACH)

The Power to WITHDRAW is about perspective. It gives clarity and coolness, as well as the ability to change a situation. To withdraw is to detach or step back from whatever the current situation is, from the insistence of outward situations that seek to draw me into their webs: through feelings, emotions, confusion, interaction - whatever my potential reactions might be.

This power is fundamental to leadership, where moving forward into domains of unmapped futures requires detachment from old patterns of thinking, being and reacting.

To WITHDRAW, it is crucial to understand that I am an actor playing a role, a player in the game. If I begin to believe the game, to become caught in the identity of the role, I lose any power to create, to contribute, to be free to shape new paths. As soon as I merge into the role, I am lost.

Awareness of being the actor will keep me free from the persistence of tradition and conservatism. The power to WITHDRAW also ensures that I have access to other powers crucial to leadership today. When there is no map for the future, when we are truly rewriting the fundamentals of the way we live and work, we must be entirely creative, no adjustments, no incremental change; quantum leaps are required. Quantum leaps in creative thinking and manifestation are born from a free mind, a still and silent inner world that becomes the receptacle for genius. The way to build this instrumental power is meditation - and simply learning to be more quiet. Speaking less... thinking less. Growing a discipline within the self.

***Silence...Detachment...Introspection...Concentration***







## Power to DISCRIMINATE (DISCERN)

This is the power of using the higher intellect. It is the art of consulting the most conscient self to understand the knowledge of truth and falsehood, right and wrong, reality and illusion, benefit and loss.

Using this power, one is able to discern accurately. It is the power of clarity, seeing with different eyes, hearing with different ears. It is about trusting our highest selves even in the face of opposing opinions. It is the power to listen to what is known deep within.

This power delivers a capacity to see three aspects of time: to look at the past, present and future implications of different options and possibilities in order to assess accurately the best avenue of action. Remembering that sometimes the best route is to take no action at all, this power also supports us in simply not reacting. Reaction means being controlled by external stimuli and is a disempowering state to adopt. The Power to DISCRIMINATE is like a window that allows a Leader to step out of the limited aspect of the present time, and as an observer, see the reality of the situation.

The Power to DISCRIMINATE also calls on the leader to acknowledge that logic alone is not enough. It signals that the leader must learn to hone and trust his or her intuitive powers, to allow the 'knowingness' beyond rational logic to speak its truth. Trust is a key word here and the more there is trust in the self, the more a leader will come to know when their sense of knowing is accurate.

***Clarity...Simplicity...Accuracy...Trust***



## Power to JUDGE (DECIDE)

This is the power of truth, the power to choose truth, to stand alone in that truth no matter what. It is intrinsically connected to the Power to DISCRIMINATE, and takes much of its strength from that power. If the Power to DISCRIMINATE has been exercised well, then the Power to DECIDE flows more easily. Even if a person knows the best course of action, if they don't have the power to follow that knowing they are bereft of the Power to DECIDE.

This Power is also associated with the intellect, but unlike the power to DISCRIMINATE, an introverted process, the Power to DECIDE manifests outwardly. A 'knowing' acted upon has impact in the world. One who uses this power is making a statement that "I trust myself and am clear that my actions are right and will bring success. I am prepared to stand by my choices and to allow and be accountable for the consequences. I will stand alone if necessary. I believe I am acting correctly."

This power is essential for leaders today, when most of the world can only see what has already been, or derivations thereof. It requires extraordinary inner power to make a stand, act decisively and move forward when sometimes you are the only one who can see,.

There will be times when it is necessary to become introspective again and access the power to DISCRIMINATE to ensure that the chosen course is still the right one. To remain fixed in a chosen way forward might simply be replicating the process of the old. Even if actions seem different, tradition and conformity can threaten to take hold again.

***Balance...Wisdom...Surrender...Faith***







## Power to ACCOMMODATE

This is the power to accept 'what is' rather than to sing the song of disappointment. It is the power to know that the future is in many ways already written and that it is up to me to have the courage to stay awake in order to see its unfolding. The leader holds a sense of direction and becomes the custodian for all the information and resources that emerge to fulfill the vision.

This power entails an ability to be at peace with the state of things, to sense that there is a plan and that I am a humble instrument privileged enough to play a part in this unfolding.

It is the understanding that 'what's in the way, is the way'. Whatever obstacles emerge are only telling me I am still thinking in the same way I have thought before. It is a pattern of thinking that labels the situation as a problem, the problem only exists in my seeing. Each so called obstacle calls me to pay attention and to access a new filter, a third eye, to see more clearly. To exercise this power it is important that I should have accessed the fundamental power to WITHDRAW. Otherwise I become caught in the play, in the game, in my reaction, and I am lost.

If the vision of a more sustainable future is powerful enough within me, I will attract all that is required to manifest that future. I am the instrument, however, not the knower of all things. The result of the Power to ACCOMMODATE is a deep contentment. Since what is inside me contributes to what manifests in the outer world, a seed of contentment will surely grow worthwhile fruit.

***Flexibility...Openness...Mercy...Gentleness***



## Power to TOLERATE

The path of a leader is not the path of popularity, though often confused with such. When people feel the discomfort of change, they react, project and blame those they believe responsible for their discomfort. This is not always rational, but when people feel threatened, they resort to survival tactics.

The Power to TOLERATE is the power to handle whatever anyone doles out. It is the power to see beyond the behaviour, recognising and then dealing with the motivation which drives the behaviour. People who look to you for leadership will test you as a child tests its parents. If you pass the test by not reacting but rather answering their deeper need, you will win their trust.

The Power to TOLERATE provides insight and maturity to the leader. It is the underpinning power of the Power to Face.



***Understanding...Patience...Acceptance...Fearlessness***





## Power to COOPERATE

In many ways the Power to COOPERATE is the culmination of all powers. It requires the leader to be free from vice - ego, jealousy/envy, attachment, lust, anger, greed. The leader must be free from anything that would impede him from being an instrument for a task. The Power to COOPERATE enables the leader to step in and contribute whatever is needed for the completion of a task.

Detachment, a sense of knowing what is needed, the ability to be flexible and able to adjust to all situations and types of people: these qualities enable the leader to be benevolent and to provide the 'extra hand' that is needed. It is the domain of situational leadership – beyond position and title, working at the level of the right person at the right time for the right job. It is the power to contribute without the need to be praised or acknowledged. When a leader's self-worth is not based on position, status or externals of any kind, he or she happily lets go of a role when someone else emerges to take it over. Such a leader does not need a demonstration of adulation or gratitude from anyone. They are solid in their self-respect, whether being praised or derided.

***Respect...Honesty...Harmony...Generosity***



## Power to LET GO

This is the power to cut away everything that is destructive, useless and wasteful. It is the power to let go of all, and hold nothing of the past in my heart; nor anything pointless of the future in my mind. It is the strength to say 'no' to negativity. Letting go requires courage, forgiveness, trust and purity. It means my life starts anew from this point onwards.

This power connects deeply with the Power to WITHDRAW. It requires me to LET GO of all limitations of identity. It means finishing what others expect of me and what I expect of others; letting go of all limited thinking and beliefs and identity. When I do LET GO of the expectations I have of myself based on what other people expect of me, I can have greater understanding and compassion for myself and for others... qualities crucial to the role of the leader. In letting go of expectations, I become free to make decisions that are incisive and imbued with the power of truth rather than the force of tradition.

This power enables me to hold a vision of a new world, of a new way of living and working together. It compels me to finish any attachments to the ways of this world. I am required to LET GO of the ego's attraction to limited position. I must go beyond the opinions of others, LET GO of "shoulds" and "ought tos", and of behaviours destructive to myself and to others. I also have to LET GO of what I think I know and who I think I am. This power accompanies to ability to choose a new life, a better way.



***Self Respect...Discipline...Positivity...Purity***





## Power to FACE

The main attributes of this power are courage and honesty. For the leader, the Power to FACE means nothing is too fearsome to handle. The leader is equipped with all the powers needed to face whatever comes – fears, or other overwhelming emotions; lack of self worth; attacks or denigration by others; or situations that seem impossible, insurmountable.

The Power to FACE is ruthless and does not in any way accommodate untruth or corruption, whether within our own character or in external situations. Because this power sits opposite the Power to TOLERATE, the underlying drive is love. This brings a balanced approach to dealing with “demons”.

This power is not to be cajoled or negotiated with. It is the weapon of truth, and the leader who wields this weapon deals with all that seems to be blocking the way forward, no matter what the level of fear involved. Nothing is allowed to hide, nothing dark or unsaid is enabled. This is the power to bring into the light of day the invisible stuff that threatens the new way. It is not aggressive, but it is assertive and powerful.

***Courage...Confidence...Determination...Purpose***



## About the Brahma Kumaris

For more than 70 years, the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University has been pioneering a unique approach to spiritual knowledge and understanding. Having grown steadily from small beginnings, it is now a global network dedicated to the service of humanity. At its heart, the university believes we should endeavour to remain peaceful and positive at all times, even in the most adverse situations. The teachings show people exactly how this can be done.

The organisation began in the 1930s in Northern India, when a remarkable teacher, known affectionately as Brahma Baba, inspired a small group of spiritual seekers to join him in a 14-year period of secluded reflection. Together, they learned how to bring divine qualities into their hearts, actions and relationships. Brahma Baba passed away on 18th January 1969, but his vision and example continue to guide and inspire. Some of the founding members, now known as Dadis (elder sisters) are still with us today, continuing to serve with their wisdom, peace and purity.

Many people believe that lasting peace is an impossible dream, yet the vivid example of the Dadis shows otherwise. They demonstrate by the way they live that people have the capacity to go beyond whatever divides or disturbs them into an experience of the inner being and a deeper level of reality in which conflict or tension is unthinkable. This peace becomes a real power and is the basis of bringing about lasting change.



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