

Margaret Hilda Thatcher, Baroness Thatcher.
(1925 - 2013)
British prime minister of the 20th-century, and the only woman to have held the post. Dubbed the "Iron Lady" for her firm opposition to the Soviet Union, she implemented a number of conservative policies that have come to be known as Thatcherism.

POWER

Power is the ability to get things done your way.

Sometimes it involves asking for a favor, making a suggestion or a request, or giving a direct order; but the result is always that the other person acts, and you derive a benefit from the other person's actions. The condition is that you have power ...

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You have it over your employees because you pay their salaries. If you are an expert in a special field, it is because you know the best way to handle matters. In a legal dispute, it is because you have the law on your side. In politics, it is because folks will give you their votes, hoping that you will work and succeed in getting the government to serve them in their areas or areas of interests. If you have credit cards, it can be part of your lifestyle to go into a store, hotel, or restaurant, in any city, and order whatever you wish.

And there is the power that derives from being talented, captivating, and capable from being up-to-the minute and knowledgeable, so that people know that if they let you handle things for them, or listen to your advice, they will probably come out ahead. If everybody in the world were fair and equal, we would not have the need for power. However, of course, they are not, which often means that in a competitive situation, you cannot merely settle for an equal chance.

You must keep your eyes and ears open for and alert to any clue or other tips that will move the balance in your favor. Whenever possible, make sure you get more than an equal chance. When the struggle for power gets more intense, some other methods are needed. When you are dealing with someone whose mind is closed to your ideas and influence from the start, or who feels he is in direct competition with you, then things must be handled somewhat differently. The issue becomes what kind of power a person has and how someone uses that power. Here are some of the common types of power you will encounter in society.



Coercive power: It is associated with people who are in a position to punish others. People fear the consequences of not doing what is asked of them.

Connection power: It is based upon whom you know. This person knows, and has the ear of, other powerful people within the society.

Expert power: It comes from a person's expertise. This is commonly a person with an acclaimed skill or accomplishment.

Informational power: It is about the value or importance of information and knowledge.

Legitimate power: It comes from the position a person holds. This is related to a person's title and responsibilities.

Referent power: The ones who are well-liked and respected hold this kind of power.

Reward power: It is based upon a person's ability to bestow rewards.

Remember that power is something that can be used in different ways. When a person has an unbelievable amount of power and abuses it, then you have a problem. When the person can brandish the power in order to achieve great exploits that benefit a cause larger than himself or herself you often have a positive outcome from the use of that same power.

Do people have power over you?

Those who try to control other people are, simply put, neither nice nor respectful. While a controlling personality belongs to someone who probably has deeper issues, such as codependency, narcissism, sociopath tendencies, or just sheer stubbornness, you should shoulder none of these negative traits.

Controlling people are selfish to the core, immature at heart, and likely to put the brakes on your leading a fulfilling life if you are in constant close proximity to them. In order to spare yourself getting too entangled with a controlling personality, or to awaken yourself to the fact that the controlling person is the one with the problem and not you, here are some questions to ask to help you recognize a controlling person.

Do you have any relationships in which you feel suffocated, bossed around, confused, or distressed?

Is there someone in your life around whom you feel that you have to tiptoe and be super careful to mollify or not anger? Do you know someone who seems to have *buttons* that when *pushed* make the person go off at you - at the simplest of things you say or do, often without rhyme or reason? If you feel that any of these situations has a ring of familiarity to it, then you may be dealing with a controlling person.

Controlling people can be both male and female, and you find them in both romantic and platonic relationships. Be just as wary of a jealous friend who hates your significant other as you are of your significant other, especially if your friend is unhappy with his or her romances. Just because someone has a forceful personality does not make him or her a controlling personality.

The test is: *Does he or she allow you to be yourself, or exert undue influence over your behavior?* You should know this instinctively.



Moodiness is a key signal of a controlling person, precisely because those with moody personalities tend to be mulling over perceived hurts and injustices that have happened to them personally and to be seeking to remedy their internal pain and to improve their situations by controlling others.

Moody people tend to withdraw or "to throw a depressing darkness" right into the middle of a moment of happiness. Narcissists will frequently throw an abusing attack when inadequate attention is being paid to them and their needs.

This is a manipulative way of controlling that can be hard to say no to because the person will often say they are in pain, upset, hurting, and the like, trying to make the other person feel bad for them.

Frequent temper outbursts, especially those accompanied by bullying or threats, are a sign of a controlling personality type. Temper outbursts often happen when you disagree with them or do not do exactly what they want you to do.

In their minds, you are challenging their authority over you when you either disagree with them or do not comply with their wishes.

Questions can reveal several things in terms of a controlling person when he or she responds in a frustrated or condescending way. As I already alluded to, a controlling person thinks that you can read his or her mind. If you ask basic questions about what to do together, where to go, what he or she want, etc., the person can become easily frustrated because they expected you to have all of their needs thoroughly understood and accounted for and placed ahead in priority over yours.

Asking questions means a decision still needs to be made, and when the controlling person thinks, the decisions have already been made, all about the person himself or herself for the convenience of that person.

Controlling people often assume that they understand how you think, even when they actually do not. They may become frustrated because they have constructed an image of you that is at odds with what you say and who you are.

Questions can irritate a controlling person because the person would rather be in control of the questioning, not have anybody else in control.

Questions can verify for a controlling type of person that the questioner is in need of guidance and control because they do not know the answer.

This may actually make things worse over time because the controller is seeking to have the controlled person second-guess his or her own decision-making abilities.

It is often the case that people with control issues are not very good at giving sincere compliments. They do not want you to feel pleasant about yourself because it may take away control from them and draw attention away from them. Compliments, when given, are backhanded, sneaky, and actually point out some flaw or defect in the other person.

A controlling person may try to control the way you dress and speak, or he or she may even criticize your opinions.

Be wary of any person who seems incapable of understanding or accepting the word "NO." Controlling or not, this person is a problem but coupled with controlling tendencies, he or she is bound to walk all over. This person will tend to insist on something under he or she wears you down and makes you give in, changing your firm no to a weak yes, and leaving you feeling guilt-ridden and ashamed of yourself.



Remember that it is your right to make decisions, including ones that are in the negative and that refuse to do what this person asks.

You should review how this person sees difficult situations, mutual decision-making, or issues of responsibility. It is in these areas that you can truly spot the controlling person more fully.

Unlike a highly opinionated person, a controlling person lacks the ability to tolerate or accept differences between the two of you. Indeed, a controlling person is always seeking ways to change some part of your core traits or personality, to reshape you as part of his or her feeble attempt to control the surrounding world.

While it can be said that relationships are not democracies, neither are they dictatorships. It is important to seek a balance that the parties are comfortable with within any relationship, and the ability to compromise, tolerate, and be flexible - and give mutually and take are essential to healthy relationships.

Remember that we teach people how to treat us. If you find yourself constantly "giving in" to the other person on things that matter to you, then you are not being yourself but are being controlled.

Look at what happens in your other relationships. When the controlling person is around your friends and supporters, watch out. The controlling person will often try to cause trouble between you and your friends, spreading rumors, attempt to create divisions, divide, and conquer, and will even tell lies about you to them or about them to you to try to break your attachment to them.

The ultimate aim is to isolate you from others, so that he or she can have your exclusive attention inside the reality he or she is trying to structure for you. Stay alert; any attempts to remove or downgrade your friends or supporters from your life are red flags.

Controlling people often do not have close friends, and they are rarely friends with others who are more attractive, intelligent, or well liked than themselves.

They tend to be jealous of popular, successful people and will criticize those held in high-regard by others. A lack of close friends may be one additional sign of their inability to tolerate others and their need to control relationships tightly.

Relationships and friendships are not built on who is in control. They are mutual interactions based on shared give and take and people always seeking balance.

A controlling person tends to keep up social and legal connections, such as threats of litigation, divorce, manipulating marriage, roommate tenancy contracts, shared cell phone plans, misuse of divided credit, and similar contracts, especially if administrative rights are included.

Even in social networks, one may block and unblock a person rather than delete the connection, as another attempt to control a difficult or failed relationship.

The longer that you allow other people to control you, the weaker you may become. In time, this softer self may become your new personality, and you can find yourself only dreaming of your former strong self.

Suspect excessive generosity from a controlling personality as an attempt to impress and control you. By seeming to give you lots of things, so that you always feel as if you are benefiting in some way, you end up feeling as if you owe the person something, perhaps even long term. The controller then uses that obligation you feel towards him or her to control you.



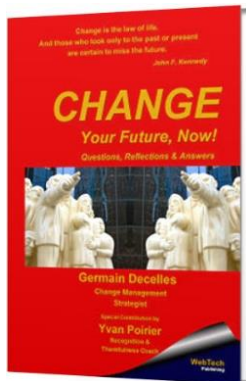
Remember that if you are a person who likes to control others, step back and take a long look at the stress that you may be causing someone else while you are breaking down your own mental health and happiness.

This 642-page book is the result of a four-year project called Project Tomorrow. During the four-year period, we followed more than 500 trainees, aged from 16 to 72.

The trainees were from colleges and reinsertion programs in administration and computer science. Some of the trainees that were implicated were dropouts from school districts, and others were new immigrants or unemployed workers from different economic and social backgrounds.

To graduate, the trainee had to perform during a period of three months in a business environment. At the end of that time, an appreciation evaluation was performed to determine both the amount of change the trainee experienced during the period and the impact of that change on the trainee.

Many of the questions, reflections, and answers presented in this book are issued from our findings during this period. We would like to thank all the trainees for their efforts and determination during the process.

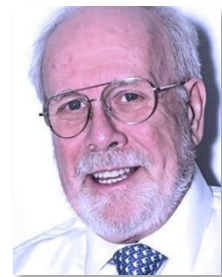


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It is also the fruit of forty years of experience acquired with local and international organizations and companies and during consultancy, change management, transition, and marketing services. For more information go to: www.webtechpublishing.com.

About the Author

In addition to writing, Germain Decelles acts as Change Management Strategist. He has over 40 years of business and consultation experience with local and international markets, including sectors such as retail trade, distribution, information technology and communications, transportation, manufacturing, financial services, and government organizations.



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Information

Printing and Distribution: <http://www.lulu.com>

Available to Librarians through the Ingram Content Group: <https://www.ingramcontent.com>

- Paperback format: ISBN 978-0-9783667-7-3
- E-book format: ISBN 978-0-9783667-8-0



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