The fight for control is undoubtedly the biggest issue facing families, relationships, governments, friendships and even those perceived as enemies. However, completely controlling anything outside yourself is a huge illusion! Not only is it an illusion, any amount of control can easily bring disastrous, unwanted and often unplanned results. Though many people absolutely detest the word, control is actually an illusion created by how you use your power.

If you resent being controlled but believe you need control to create the lifestyle you want, the question really is: Is it possible to surrender all control and still have the power to achieve the lifestyle you want? While numerous self-help books, videos and awareness programs attempt to answer this intriguing question, they fail to explain who and what to surrender, who and what to surrender to, how to surrender, how to determine when to surrender and, above all, why. Well, it’s time to set the record straight.

For the second perspective, think about this: The best way to fight being controlled is to fight for control. Please know, ...the same fight against being controlled is also the fight for control. The act of pursuing control is a conscious choice (you know when you are fighting for or resisting it), so the real benefit of the illusion of having control is that it shifts the focus off of your own results. This too is a terrific place of non-action; you never have face your own results so you never have to change. This becomes a marvellous place for co-dependency to thrive; you use others to satisfy your internal needs while you remain the exception.

Therefore, the actual illusion of achieving control is held entirely within the ego. While you seem to feel quite full and powerful, having control feeds image validation and image denial; your image becomes stronger than your need to achieve SELF-esteem. Here, attaining control automatically validates self-righteousness - an image need - and uses co-dependency to satisfy internal needs. While controlling others seems to satisfy the internal needs of power, self-esteem and self-actualization, this is all part of the illusion.

Quite simply put, if you believe your mate needs to change so you can have self-esteem, you are not facing your own results. Attaining esteem by controlling others is to be dependent on them for your esteem. That’s not self-esteem, that’s other-esteem. Achieving SELF-esteem from someone else is impossible; It must exist in the SELF.

Now, because all control is really about how you choose to use your power, examining the six power bases of motivational behaviour will demonstrate how you use your power to satisfy your internal needs, and how the misuse of that same power feeds the illusion of control.

The first two power bases are linked to basic motivational performance and are the first two you learn as a child: Reward and Punishment. While many professionals enjoy expounding on how these two are different, reward and punishment always travel together.

First, a reward has it’s own motivation, and not receiving a reward can be a punishment; like a child not being allowed to go on a family picnic.

Next, if the child detests being punished, not being punished can be a reward. This is the main reason both parents and society use various forms of punishment as motivation.
However, a misbehaving child who receives instant attention in the form of a punishment quickly learns that punishments will satisfy attention and love needs. This is where the whole idea behind the use of rewards and punishments breaks down; the punishment becomes the reward AND it is the recipients who make the choice. The only real effectiveness a reward and punishment has towards a child is with the degree of necessity the child places on their current need and not with the motivation of the reward or punishment being offered. With reward AND it is the recipients who make the choice. The punishments breaks down; the punishment becomes the where the whole idea behind the use of rewards and punishments will satisfy attention and love needs. This is attention in the form of a punishment quickly learns that

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Reward that will never be delivered. The most common form of coercive power (and the biggest threat a parent can wield against a child) is to withhold. This is not just to withhold love, but to withhold anger, touching, belonging, inclusion in family and support. There are many other forms of withholding: withdrawing, avoiding, denying or hiding emotions, running away, telling lies, cheating, etc. Establishing a coercive power base is the main reason why marriages need a mediator. At least with

Reward and punishment needs are being met, but no matter what, coercive power never satisfies needs.

Even though it’s a threat, the ‘special’ illusion of having someone else satisfy your internal needs so you can achieve a strong self-esteem and self-actualization makes coercive power an incredibly powerful motivator. The truth is, coercive threats, like having love withheld, actually denotates self-esteem and self-actualization by encouraging co-dependency; your self-esteem is based on their love for you and not your love for yourself.

The last power base is believed to be the hardest to achieve yet it is the quickest to slip away from: Reference Power. This is the ability to be a reference or an example; to be reverent. As reverent means to treat with reverence, and reverence is - honour and respect mixed with love and awe, being reverent is to be the example of honour and respect mixed with love and awe.

People who use Reference Power are the most desirable people to grow with and be influenced by. These people are the example of what they believe and how they wish to be treated. This example allows you to see who they really are and be like them if you choose. Therefore, any person who uses reference power never needs control, so control is never an issue.

So, the true definition of control is: the illusion I create when I choose to use reward, punishment, legitimate power, expert power or coercion to become the exception, rather than just being the example.

If you are a parent, in a relationship or are the boss, ask yourself this one question: Am I being the example to my children, mate or employees, or am I demanding to be the exception. To use reference power, the example you provide gives them your permission to be the same to you. To many, this can be a very scary thought, the main reason for needing and often demanding control.

Now, because control is the misuse of power, believing you are being controlled without your permission is also an illusion, an illusion held in the belief that you had no choice. This is blatant denial. What it really means is, “These are not my results, they are yours,” when the truth is, they are your results and you always have a choice. Even though some of those choices are not as desirable as others, choice does exist. This is where believing you are being control - or believing you can achieve control - feeds the illusion. So, if you suddenly find yourself thinking that you need to control someone, especially your children, ...stop! As children take on the attitudes and behaviours of parental figures, before you do anything, ask yourself if they aren’t just demonstrating your example. If you believe you need to control them, you are actually demanding to be the exception to who they see you as.

The real beauty of Reference Power is that you never need control to be the example. Therefore, reference
power needs no control and has no control. And the power needed to get past the worthiness (or worthlessness) held by the illusion of needing control or being controlled comes through understanding, embracing and cherishing what you love about yourself as evidenced by your own results. Being the example is the greatest asset to SELF-love. This is why people who are truly committed to using reference power never need validating.

The easiest way to use reference power is to surrender the idea that you will ever need to control anything - including yourself - to be the example. It is very easy to surrender control once you realize the illusion. As being controlled is always a choice, you have the choice of whether or not to be controlled. Also, if allowing yourself to be controlled is getting you the lifestyle you want, are you really being controlled or are you a willing participant? This is the ‘when’ of surrendering, when you are achieving the lifestyle you want.

The power you hold inside you that satisfies your needs is far greater than any power you may find in others. This outside focus is co-dependency. The ability to surrender while feeling like you are unwillingly being controlled is the ability to say, “I have the power of choice! What am I choosing to do right now?”

Likewise, the ability to surrender when you feel a sudden need to control is the ability to say, “I have the power of choice! Am I being the example here, or am I demanding to be the exception. What am I trying to hide?”

This easily answers the ‘how’.

Surrendering to find your choices will quickly show you the example you are setting, ...your reference power. Because needing to control shows the exceptions you are demanding, and being controlled shows the victim position of believing you have no choice, only surrendering control will give you the power of total choice. This is the ‘why’.

Please understand, blatant surrendering without a focus will not satisfy your internal needs of self-esteem and self-actualization: If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time. Self-actualization demands a strong focus.

And surrendering to your image without being the example only focuses your image as the need. This focus brings up the value you place on your results by the image you present. This lifestyle is like materiality, an outside focus. Self-esteem and self-actualization cannot be achieved from materiality, so materiality can easily become a co-dependency that provides the illusion of a lifestyle. You can achieve the internal lifestyle you want and be outwardly material but understand, materiality is a reward; where self-esteem is the love of self.

Surrendering control by becoming the example will allow you that internal lifestyle of self-esteem and self-actualization right now. And once you’ve achieved this exemplary lifestyle, to keep it, you must continue to surrender it back to being the example, ...and you must continue to celebrate it!