

## Premises about Personal Power

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Each person has a unique **Personal Purpose**. People only begin to fulfil their creative potential when they have a high degree of personal alignment in their lives, that is, when their pursuits and conscious goals, the things they are actually committed to, are in line with their own personal purpose.

The simplest definition of personal power is one's capacity to **realise one's personal purpose**. A more immediate definition would be: the extent to which one can create one's life the way he or she would like it to be.

Now, the problem is that when you ask most people what they want, their wants are often not very fundamental. They are things they want to get away from, or simply material things. This reflects a lifetime of believing in supposed limits. But, if personal power is to create life as one really wants it to be, it necessarily involves collective wants -- the wants of one's immediate community and the larger world. How can one identify one's purpose in life? It's not like the neon lights flash and you hear, "This is God speaking to you. Your personal purpose, should you choose to accept it, is...."

In our terms, personal purpose exists at a level of consciousness that can never be fully conceptualised. But this does not mean that purpose is inaccessible.

This is why **personal vision** is so important. It is a key to unlocking the power of purpose. By vision I mean a picture of the future one wants to create. A vision is powerful to the extent that it expresses one's underlying purpose. It is the vehicle for bringing purpose into the domain of acts and commitments.

Most people who have done remarkable things in their lives have had a clear vision stemming from a deep and pervasive sense of purpose.

A second key premise regarding personal power is that what an individual holds in his consciousness tends to become real in the external world. The problem is that people not in deep touch with their personal purpose pursue objectives in conflict with that purpose. The resulting inner conflict limits their power and forces them to become highly manipulative in trying to accomplish their objectives. This is why **creative power is released when an individual's vision aligns with his personal purpose**. A powerful reinforcing process develops for the highly creative person: as he becomes more internally aligned, the results he creates in his life become more consistent with his personal purpose; this leads to deeper understanding of that purpose, clearer vision, and more commitment to his vision; and in turn, deeper alignment and creative capacity.

The third key premise relates individual purpose and power to an organisation's capacity to create. As the process of individual visioning unfolds among a group committed to a common endeavour, the underlying purpose and vision of the group begin to emerge. Just as an individual's capacity to create draws from this alignment of his conscious objectives and his true nature and purpose, the same dynamic appears to operate for an organisation. It is the organisation's vision, not the individual's vision that matters here. The group's vision is not the vision of the most articulate or most dominant individual. It is a thing unto itself, just as the organisation is an entity distinct unto itself.

A systemic view of personal power entails empowering the individual to manifest his or her own personal power simultaneously with empowering the organisation to manifest its purpose. The distinction between individual and group blurs in this process, just as happens in the exceptional jazz ensemble or championship sports team. This view implies thinking of the organisation as an organism. In this context, system dynamics becomes a way for the organisation to know itself better and evolve its design to more effectively accomplish its purpose.

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