

Feminist Leadership & Power

Hosted by Mariama Deschamps (Plan International)

When we hear the word 'power', we often think of domination and control over others. This is also known as 'power over', but power comes in other forms too:

- Power within: self-esteem, self-worth, loving and respecting yourself, inner wisdom
- Power with: the ability to work with others, find common ground, fight for a common cause
- Power to: the potential to shape the world, acting for ourselves and others towards the collective goal

Where does your individual power come from and what's blocking you from accessing it?

Mariama Deschamps

"It's much easier to reflect on how we are using our power positively than how we may be using it negatively or irresponsibly."

Humanitarian action can be said to be linked to accessing 'power within', marked by passion, a drive for purpose and meaning, and an altruistic will. So what can block us from accessing that, and how can we overcome those blocks?

Challenges to accessing your inner power

- An overpowering ego (the 'I-self')
- Fear of vulnerability
- Limiting beliefs: what you've been told you should be, how you should behave or what you're capable of
- Capitalism: daily tasks keep us busy, demand that we draw from our ego and don't leave space to build connection with inner self
- The unknown: talking about things beyond the physical is not common and even stigmatised, especially in professional settings,

More resources

[Activating the Will to Change with Respect to Anti-Oppression](#)

[Authentic Leadership for Anti-Racism Work](#)

Baby steps towards overcoming those challenges

- Be present, aware and conscious to who you are
- Give yourself time to be alone, be silent, and reflect: What is the impact of your behavior on others? What are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Don't be afraid to ask for help: seek knowledge, support or coaching
- Seek relationships that nurture and inspire you
- Be kind and take care of your mind, body and spirit