



RETHINK THE WAY
YOU THINK

POWERTOOLS

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What are the Power Tools?

The Power Tools are a set of cards that describe a way of being. They offer opposing perspectives.

We all know people who continually experience issues or challenges, and we all know people who seem to have never-ending good fortune. This could be pure luck, but it is also possible that we are in some way choosing a perspective, which in turn is creating an experience. It might not be a conscious choice, but it is nonetheless a choice. For example, a new job or relationship can be approached with fear and trepidation, or with confidence and curiosity.

Using the Power Tools

The Power Tool cards can be used to 'frame' and then 'flip' a perspective. After identifying something you want to change, you can use them as a tool for considering how you might be contributing to your current situation. What is your negative perspective? And, what would it look like if you flipped it to a positive perspective?

Take the card 'Blame vs Responsibility' as an example. It can be very satisfying to point the finger at someone else... I mean it's not your fault, right? That might feel good in the short term, but ultimately blame has lingering feelings of anger, resentment and helplessness. When you are blaming others, you are powerless to change the situation (because it's not your fault!). Flip the 'blame' card, and you will find 'responsibility'. Instantly you are in the driver's seat. You can now choose a different path. By flipping from blame to responsibility, you let go of the past, learn from your mistakes, and steer your future.

The 8 Power Tool cards can all be used to consciously 'flip' from a disempowering perspective to an empowering perspective.

Powerful Conversations

Although the Power Tools are presented as dualities, we know that life does not always present as black and white, or good and bad. Life is, in fact, a multitude of colours, including a fair deal of grey. It is within this context that we view the Power Tool distinctions. They are not a definitive 'answer' or the only option; instead, they are a 'frame' we can use to start new conversations, try out new ways of thinking, or experience new ways of living.

TRYING
vs COMMITMENT

BLAME
vs RESPONSIBILITY

DOUBT
vs TRUST

INVALIDATION
vs RESPECT

SIGNIFICANCE
vs LIGHTNESS

DELAY
vs ACTION

REACTING
vs RESPONDING

FRAUD
vs TRUTH



There is good 'trying' and bad 'trying'.

Good trying is when we don't give up, we try, try and try again – and then most often we succeed. Bad 'trying' is when we repeatedly try to change or achieve something but don't succeed. This sort of 'trying' can be exhausting; it's a bit like running around in a circle and not getting anywhere. The effort required is draining and the stagnation is depressing. You might find that people around you become tired of hearing about your issue. Perhaps you are even tired of hearing yourself talking about it. It is easy to feel disempowered when we are in 'trying' mode, where the very act of trying includes a shadow of doubt or hesitancy.

Prompts

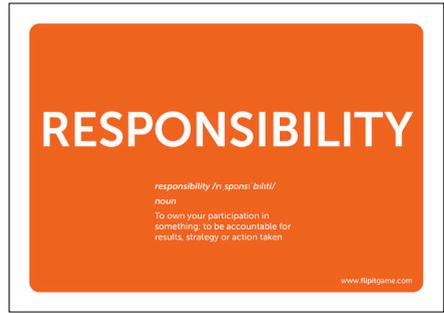
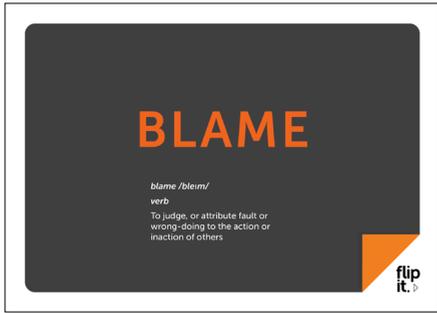
- ▶ If you hold on to this perspective, what is the most likely outcome?
- ▶ What do you notice about yourself when you are trying to address an issue?
- ▶ What do other people notice about you when you are trying to address an issue?
- ▶ How do you approach your current issue when you come from a perspective of 'trying'?

For most of us, commitment is a mighty concept - marriage or a mortgage might come to mind.

But commitments can be small, everyday things too. Have you ever considered that, apart from when you are asleep, you are always committed to something? In fact, everything you have or do in your life right now is there because you are committed to it in some way. You might say, "What about when I'm relaxing, watching Netflix? Or walking the dog? I'm not committed to anything then." Actually, that is precisely what you are committed to at that very moment: watching Netflix or walking the dog. The question is - are you more committed to that, than something else which you might be 'trying' to achieve?

Prompts

- ▶ Is there another, more important commitment at play?
- ▶ How does your mood or energy change when you are 100% committed to something?
- ▶ If you were fully committed to solving your issue/problem, what would you do differently?
- ▶ What tools and support would help you maintain this commitment?



May the true villain stand up!

Sometimes there is joyful relief in pointing the finger at others: a poor cousin to the 'to-do' list, the blame list is easy to populate. It could include people like a boss (who failed to promote you), a partner (who rarely supported you) or more nebulous injustices like age (why won't companies hire 50-year olds?) But we forgo a lot when we blame others. When we say "it's their fault" what we are really saying is "it's in their control" and when we say that we are giving up all agency or power over our own lives. It is very hard to change something if you perceive you have no control over it.

Prompts

- ▶ Who or what are you blaming for your current situation? (this could also be yourself)
- ▶ What would happen if you turned your 'blame list' into an 'excuse list'?
- ▶ If you hold on to this perspective, what is the most likely outcome?

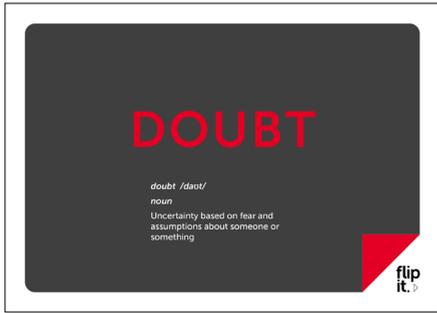
Responsibility is about taking back control and putting ourselves in the driver's seat of our own life.

Instead of looking outward, it's about looking inward. Imagine you get sacked from your job - you could blame your boss, the economy or even yourself. But the problem with these choices is that you don't move forward. You are stuck playing 'the blame game'. Instead, you could take responsibility, let go of the past, look inwards at what role you might have played in your sacking, and what you can now do to get the job of your dreams.

If you decide that every situation involves something you created and that ultimately you are responsible for your own life, then you become the driver of your destiny. You will learn from your mistakes, take control, and steer your life in the direction you want to go in.

Prompts

- ▶ Imagine accepting/taking responsibility for your situation. What type of new thinking is required to do this?
- ▶ What changes for you when you choose to be 100% responsible for your current situation?
- ▶ Imagine taking a photograph or video of your new 'responsible' self. What do you notice about body language, gesture, habit or mood?



Doubt is a debilitating and shadowy state.

Born of fear, anxiety, insecurity or worry, excessive doubt places us on high alert for problems, missteps and attack. It's almost like deliberately creating space for things to go wrong.

The belief that there is a 'right' and 'wrong' way for something to be or occur is often at the root of doubt. If you believe there is a right way to behave, then you could be concerned about behaving in the wrong way. Similarly, if you believe certain things are good, then you could become concerned about the bad. Regardless of the cause, doubt can be extremely limiting and severely block any action.

Prompts

- ▶ What judgement are you making that might be creating doubt?
- ▶ Who or what are you doubting in your current situation?
- ▶ When you come from doubt what is the most likely outcome?



Trust - that magical word that evokes calm, peace and security.

With it, relationships are stronger, workplaces are more productive and things can generally move faster, with more ease. The key to building this trust is confidence. We need to feel confident that the people (and processes) we are working with are reliable and safe. But even more importantly we need to trust ourselves, and that means being clear on our beliefs, values and purpose. When we are clear about who we are and what we value we can choose trust to be more confident in our choices. Instead of over analysing or questioning we can implicitly trust what we are doing and where we are heading.

Prompts

- ▶ What changes for you when you choose to trust yourself and/or others in this situation?
- ▶ What would happen if you decided to be vulnerable in this situation?
- ▶ What support or structure do you need to build trust?



Invalidation has the destabilising effect of thin, melting ice.

Have you ever been in a situation where you have not been heard or truthfully represented?

Whether the intent was ignorance or purposeful malice, the result is the same - it's the ultimate act of disappearance and disempowerment.

When we invalidate someone, we do more than just disagree with them. We communicate that they have a lack of authority over their experience; that they or their feelings do not count in any way. The same applies when we invalidate ourselves with negative self-talk or through actions of self-sabotage. It is the ultimate 'not good enough' message.

Prompts

- ▶ Is there someone (could be yourself) that you are invalidating in this situation?
- ▶ When you invalidate yourself or others, how are you viewing your issue?
- ▶ What judgements are you making?



As humans, we all have an overwhelming desire to be seen and heard.

To be acknowledged and appreciated in our families, our workplaces and our relationships. Most of us learnt about respect delivered to us as a set of rules as we grew up - 'Respect your elders', 'Respect your teacher' etc. Respect is much deeper than that and is more than being well-behaved. Respect is the recognition of a person as an autonomous, unique, and free individual. It means that we value and acknowledge their right and capacity to make their own decisions, even if we disagree with those decisions. Self-respect is similar - it means allowing ourselves to be who we want to be and live how we want to live, free of self-judgement or the judgement of others. It also means deeming ourselves worthy; worthy of attention, care and support.

Prompts

- ▶ What or who could you respect more in this situation?
- ▶ What happens to your mindset when you replace 'I shouldn't feel like this' or 'I need to be fixed' with 'How I feel is valid'?
- ▶ What changes for you when you choose to respect yourself or others in this situation?



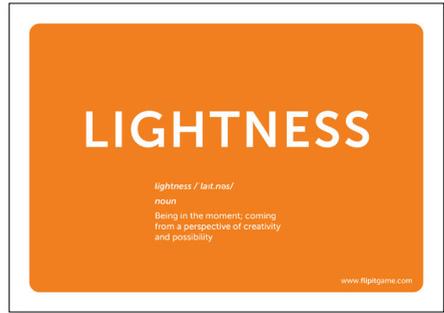
Significance is a bit like being 'stuck' in our own beliefs and not being able to see outside of them.

The significance we give to happy events in our life is empowering. We relive the moments so we can hang on to the joyful feelings.

However, when we give this same significance to life's hurtful or disappointing events, there is no lightness - it feels heavy, burdensome and draining. Life does not always go as planned - people make mistakes, accidents happen, the road sometimes gets bumpy or takes unpredictable turns. Significance shows up when we are overly attached to one pathway or direction and allow no flexibility within that. We also become significant when we bring our own baggage to a situation; when we come with a predetermined belief about how something should happen, or how someone should behave.

Prompts

- ▶ Why is your issue/challenge so meaningful for you?
- ▶ Is there a specific outcome you are attached to here?
- ▶ What is your investment in the outcome - i.e. what is at stake for you?



Have you ever walked into a pool of sunlight, closed your eyes and let whatever else is going on fade away?

That soul-nourishing moment is choosing lightness. Even in the grimmest of situations, where so many factors are beyond our control, we can choose how much 'light' to let in; how much to let a problem weigh us down. We can simply say, 'At the present moment in time, I choose to give this lightness.' Lightness is not negation or denial; it doesn't mean you don't care, or are unable to recognise serious situations, it is more about being free from the past while walking into your present. Lightness creates a space for a different emotional state and with that may come rest, creative thinking or mindful acceptance.

Prompts

- ▶ What happens if you adopt a perspective of lightness?
- ▶ Is there something you are attached to that you can let go of?
- ▶ What happens if you let it go?



“Could. Would. Should.” Procrastination loves the company of delay.

Finalising accounts for taxation, opening bills or completing an essay - at some point in time, most of us have chosen to put off a task and opted to clean the refrigerator instead. Delay is shaped by numerous factors including fear, boredom, perfectionism and inadequacy. Despite its popularity, a delaying tactic is the least effective solution to a problem. Sure, it may give us short term gratification but, deep down, it compounds our feelings of frustration and slows our progress. At its worst, delay turns us into a freezer where all our most valued outcomes and dreams are put on ice.

Prompts

- ▶ What delaying activities are tempting for you?
- ▶ While you are stuck in delay what is the most likely outcome for your issue or challenge?
- ▶ When you choose to delay, what do you lose?



Bicycles can carry you from point A to point B. However, it's the action of your legs that creates the motion.

Indeed, you will never reach your destination without pedalling in a chosen direction. Action is what creates our dreams, hopes and desires. Withdraw action and you are left with a wish list on your pinboard. It's so important to appreciate that action is a mind and body experience and it comes in all shapes and sizes with degrees of visibility. Being in action doesn't just mean 'big-ticket items' like running marathons, starting a business or finding a partner. It also means all the smaller actions required to achieve the bigger action.

Prompts

- ▶ If you were not in delay, but in action, what would your issue or challenge look like? How would it feel?
- ▶ What is the smallest, least difficult step you could take to be in action with your current issue?



What do others want for you? Each day we receive messages about how we should behave and what we should strive towards.

Often they are well-intentioned messages and sometimes they are shaped by expectations around age, gender, class or race. Like all good earworms, these messages wiggle into the reality of our lives so that we begin to pursue relationships, careers or goals that are not genuinely aligned with our deepest values and beliefs. Living fraudulently - by choice, circumstance or experience - offers us little time to identify what we truly want from life. It robs us of gaining our deepest happiness, and the world of our best endeavours.

Prompts

- ▶ Are you trying to live up to others' expectations? Or live by someone else's values?
- ▶ What are your top 3 values?
- ▶ Are they being honoured in this situation?

Five letters that may cause you to shift uncomfortably in your seat: Are you living your truth?

It's a question that asks you to look deeply into your beliefs and values and encourages you to discover what a truly meaningful life would look like for you. Better still, it is a question that helps you to reflect on how much of your life you are living just to please others. While it is sometimes easier to live according to values ascribed to us, it never leads to a happier life. The more challenging path is to "dance as if no one is watching" as the saying goes. Fully accepting who you are, and disregarding external or internal judgement is not easy, but it can be a case of short-term pain for long-term gain because ultimately there is nothing more powerful than living a fully expressed life based firmly in your 'truth'.

Prompts

- ▶ What would it mean to 'live truthfully' in this situation?
- ▶ Which of your personal values are tied up in this issue/challenge?
- ▶ If you decided to live by your values, what would change?



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