



Gaining The Power To Make A Difference

I had an interesting conversation with a client last week about making a difference. He said he wanted to but felt powerless to actually make it happen. Here are some relevant insights/options that might be relevant to what you are going through:

First of all, all power is actually based on the *influence* you have in a particular situation - either over things or people.

When I was in charge of Leadership initiatives for the Disney Institute, my team discovered that the most successful leaders at Disney first influenced people so that they could affect things and lead people (followers) accordingly.

That said, there are many different ways to gain power/influence:

- **What you have** - When you have money/resources, you are of value to others and can influence accordingly. Keep in mind that your "stuff" is *not* you. If your resources go away, so do you influence/power.
- **Who you know** - Are you influential with those who are influential? Meet them, get to know them, and be *worthy* of their trust/respect.
- **What you know** - Develop yourself so that you know information or have skills regarding something of value to others. An important thing to know is what matters to the people you want to make a difference with - and what is currently influencing that situation.
- **Who you are** - Do people care about you? Do they admire you? Do they fear you? If so, they will be willing to do things for you - including tap into *their* resources. (FYI: The fear condition is always short-term and *always* backfires.)

Bottom line: The most sustainable strategy is to be a person of integrity and connect with people - proving that you are trustworthy and care about them. Then develop yourself with what you know (education) and what you can do (skill). Who you know and what you have may ebb and flow with time, but relationships and abilities (when properly maintained) will provide all the influence and power you'll need to make a difference.

Have you identified what legacy you want to leave? What is your passion? What worthwhile goals do you have that help those you care most about?