

Boomerang effects

Partner wants more closeness, but the other keeps moving away due to not feeling comfortable with that amount of closeness (cycle).

Children can still have power – sometimes we need to advocate for their power.
Need to be careful that you are using an ethical use of power and authority.

Power as perception

- people can engage in powerful communication, but if others do not perceive their power; their behaviour is not dominant.
- Others are powerful only to the extent that we believe they are powerful.

Power as a relational concept:

- power exists in relationships
- Power is always a relational concept; one individual cannot be dominant without someone else being submissive.
- In relationships, the issue is often how much relative power a person has in comparison to one's partner.
- Egalitarian (less restricted) – families more happy
- Power often seen as power over someone – try to see as power with someone (support goals of client rather than seek out your own). Makes it more egalitarian.

Power as resource base

- Power usually represents a struggle over resources
- The more scarce/values resources are, the more intense power struggles
- It is important to be transparent in how you make decisions (may have power to allocate resources, remove children, or connect with other services).

Power and dependence

- If someone is dependent on others they hold less power
- Young adults who still depend on parents – frustrating
- Not just financial. Sex can be used as a form of power.
- Families that should separate but they are too enmeshed (must have to build up individual's agency so they have more independence)

Power can either be enabling or disabling.

- People can use power to achieve success; power is part of the human spirit that infuses us with agency and potency.
- Excessive power or frequent power plays often cripple close relationships
- We have to find the balance, as over using power can backfire or cause the 'disabled' person to withdraw.

Power and prerogative

- About being able to break the rules (person with most power able to break rules)
- What parents are allowed to do vs. what kids are allowed to do
- Prerogative: what power you have depending on position held