

## Mighty in Contradiction: Love Powerfully by Patty De Llosa

As we see more deeply into our inner drives and defenses, we discover that the choices we are faced with aren't all black and white. Life teaches us that our decisions aren't necessarily based on "this" or "that." We come to understand the truth of "both/and."

The assumption that things are either good or bad, true or false, that I'm either happy or miserable, lovable or hateful, has been replaced by astonishing new facts: I both want to be good but my efforts can have bad effects; there's falsehood mixed in with my truth; I want and don't want whatever is my current desire; and I can both love and hate another person at the same time.

What about the two primary human drives, love and power? I used to think the opposite of love was hate. But life experience tells me that's not true. Hate is so tinged with other emotions, including love! No. In my understanding the opposite of love is power. Love accepts and embraces. Power refuses and crushes opposition. Love is kind and knows how to forgive. Power is competitive and takes others into account only when it stands in the Winner's Circle.

What's most disturbing is that both of these feelings can exist in me at the same time. Power seeks dominion. It's about winning, owning, controlling, running the show; while love is about caring, taking in the message, finding what's needed, seeing what wishes to appear and helping it to flower.

Yet, if I'm honest, both live in me. That means there can be a drive for power behind the caring, helpful person, the one who wants to please, as well as in the take-charge kind of guy. We are lovers in love with love but also in love with power.

Perhaps Martin Buber said it best:

"We cannot avoid using power,  
Cannot escape the compulsion  
To afflict the world.  
So let us, cautious in diction  
And mighty in contradiction,  
Love powerfully

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