

How do power dynamics affect us?



Do Now

Date

What can cause someone to have more power than another?



What can cause someone to have more power than another?

- age
- authority e.g. police officer, teacher
- physical strength
- wealth
- education
- having more support than others
- protected characteristics
- popularity
- attractiveness

Lesson ground rules



-  Listen to others without interrupting
-  Be open and honest
-  Respect each others ideas and opinions
-  Encourage and support everyone
-  Think carefully before sharing anything personal about yourself
-  Don't ask personal questions to students or staff
-  Don't share anything personal about other people

How do power dynamics affect us?



Knowledge

Power differences can be healthy or unhealthy.

Life Lesson



I can notice power dynamics, and ensure they are healthy.

British values

Mutual respect



Key terms



power dynamic		the difference in power between people
unhealthy		something that isn't good for our wellbeing
responsibility		having a duty to deal with something, or to control someone



What should power dynamics look like in a relationship?



Listen out for

- #
- #
- #

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/1218714517/4b3987af00>

Video summary



Ryan says power in a friendship/relationship should be equal. In matters where something relates to you, however, you have more power.



Tara says respect is important, having mutual respect is key to equal power dynamics.



Abigail says it links to people's strengths in relationships. For example, one person may be more emotionally mature and may make better decisions in that area. However, we shouldn't be overbearing.

Power dynamics

A **power dynamic** is when there is a difference of power between two people. For example:



teacher and student



difference in strength



people who need support

Power dynamics in relationships

If someone has more power, other people are more likely to agree with them and go along with what they want.

Sometimes, **power dynamics** are healthy and necessary.

 Discuss

A

Why might these **power dynamics** be healthy?



Why might these **power dynamics** be healthy?

- Teachers are older and more educated than students, so it healthy for them to lead learning.
- Parents/carers are older and have more life experience than children, so they can make important decisions for children that keep them safe and healthy.



When is power in a relationship unhealthy or dangerous?



Listen out for

- What should power look like in friendships?
- What can happen if there are unhealthy power dynamics?

Video link: <https://vimeo.com/1218715726/da7c515dde>

Video summary



Ryan says unhealthy dynamics can look like someone dictating things about another person's life, such as what they should wear and how they should act. He says equal power in certain relationships is important



Tara says in friendships and romantic relationships there should be equal power, and in friendships you shouldn't feel inferior or superior.

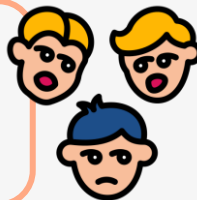


Abigail says it is when someone is controlling, they think they know better, and maybe have a superiority complex. A sign may be boundaries becoming 'thin'.

Unhealthy power dynamics

Unhealthy power dynamics can occur when someone uses their power to manipulate or be unkind to someone else.

Someone in Year 9 persuading someone in Year 7 to do something dangerous.



A popular person bullying someone with fewer friends.

An uncle pressuring their 14 year old nephew into watching an 18+ film.



Which examples do you think show **unhealthy power dynamics**? Why?

A parent telling their child to do their homework.

Someone in a friendship group deciding who is allowed 'in' and who is excluded.

A sports coach embarrassing a teenage player publicly when they miss a goal.

Quick think - possible answers

Which examples do you think show **unhealthy power dynamics**? Why?

Someone in a friendship group deciding who is allowed 'in' and who is excluded.



One person in the group has more power than the others, and is using it to make whole group decisions.

A sports coach embarrassing a teenage player publicly when they miss a goal.



The sports coach is in a position of authority and is older than the player. They are using their power to humiliate someone with less power.

Why might someone use their power to manipulate or influence others?

Why might someone use their power to manipulate or influence others?

- want something
- enjoy the feeling of power
- don't realise they are being manipulative
- feel out of control in other areas of their life

Unintentional unhealthy dynamics

Sometimes a **power dynamic** can be **unhealthy**, even if no-one is deliberately trying to manipulate someone else.

Megan is expected to help her parents run their shop. Sometimes, Megan isn't able to study because her parents ask her to work.



If we are experiencing a **power dynamic** like this, it's important to seek support.

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to look after
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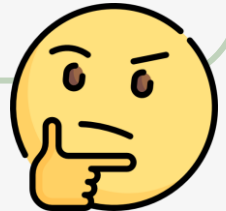




In this case study, identify the **power dynamics** and whether they are healthy or **unhealthy**.

Lewis is 16 years old and has asked 13 year old Ana on a date. Lewis is really popular at school, whereas Ana is still making new friends - she has recently arrived at the school, and is still learning English.

Lewis has been helping Ana to settle in at school, and has said that if she doesn't go on a date with him, she might find it hard to fit in.



Activity - possible answers



1



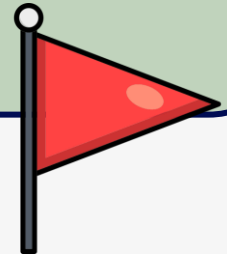
Do

In this case study, identify the **power dynamics** and whether they are healthy or **unhealthy**.

power dynamics:

- age
- gender - he may be taller and stronger than Ana.
- Popularity
- language
- Lewis has been at the school for longer than Ana.
- Ana has been relying on Lewis for support.
- Lewis is putting pressure on Ana to go on a date with him by saying that she may not fit in if she says 'no'.

Some of these things are not unhealthy, but the combination, and pressure, make this and unhealthy dynamic.





Halfway point

What do you think this quote tells us about managing **power dynamics**?

“With great power comes great **responsibility**.”



What do you think this quote tells us about managing **power dynamics**?

- Power is healthy when balanced with compassion and **responsibility**.
- Those with power have a responsibility to protect and care for those without power.
- It is not always easy to have power - it can sometimes be challenging.

Using power for good



As someone in Year 8, I do my best to look out for those in Year 7. I try and set a good example and help them if they look lost, or if anyone isn't being nice to them.

Sometimes, the girls in my class get spoken over when they're giving their ideas. I challenge my friends if they talk over other people.



Discuss

Can you think of any examples of using power for good in your school or community?

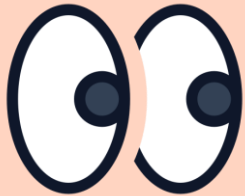
If someone uses their power responsibly, how might they behave?



- They might notice...
- They might use their power to...

If someone uses their power **responsibly**, how might they behave?

notice when we
have power



listen to others



make a positive
impact



Reflect on the power that you have, and any relationships where you have more power than someone else.

How could you use your power **responsibly**?



- younger siblings/friends/family members
- positions of authority e.g. school council
- popularity
- protected characteristics



Reflect on the power that you have, and any relationships where you have more power than someone else.

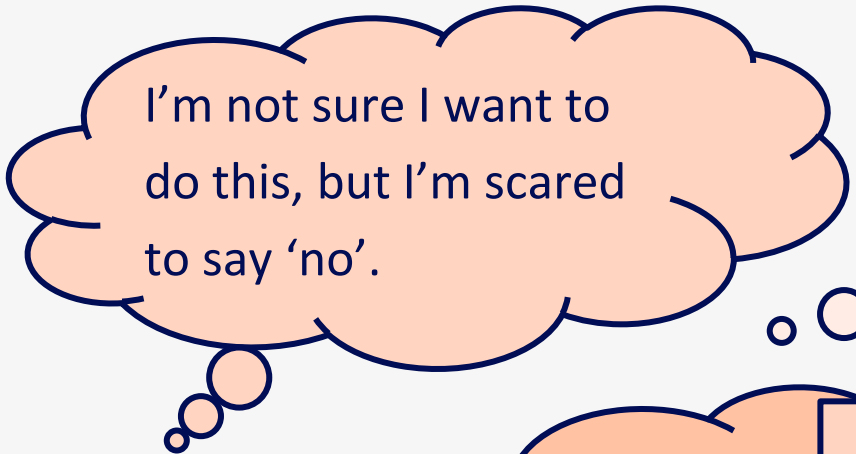
How could you use your power **responsibly**?

- I could be a good role model to my younger brother by encouraging him to work hard.
- I could challenge my friendship group when they say unkind things about someone else.
- I could make more of an effort to listen to people who are different to me.

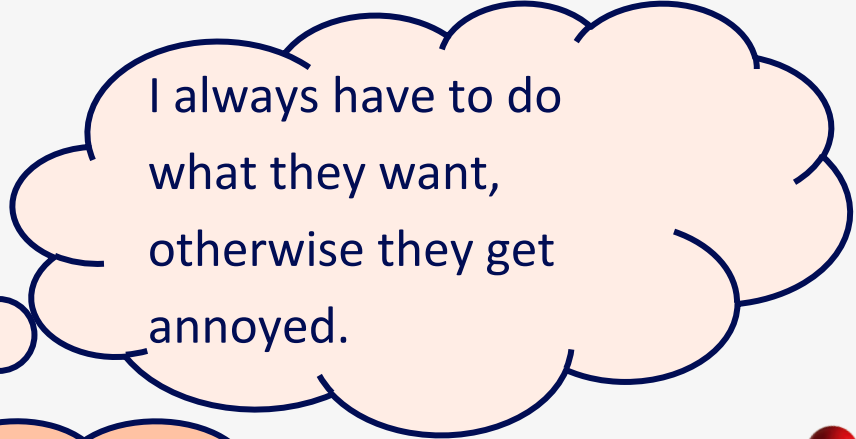


Noticing an unhealthy dynamic

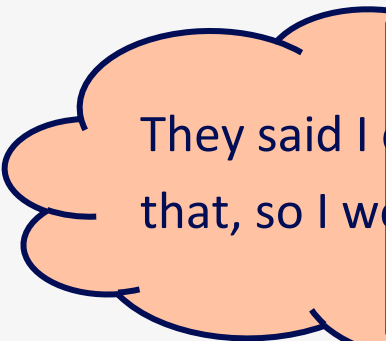
If we are in an **unhealthy power dynamic**, we might think things like:



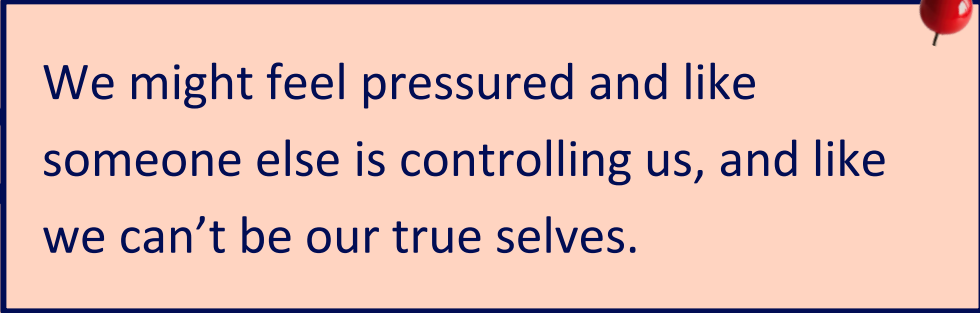
I'm not sure I want to do this, but I'm scared to say 'no'.



I always have to do what they want, otherwise they get annoyed.



They said I
that, so I w



We might feel pressured and like someone else is controlling us, and like we can't be our true selves.

I recognised that I was in an **unhealthy power dynamic** when my older brother asked me to do his homework for him. I said 'no', because this goes against my boundaries, and he didn't respect this.



Toby

 Discuss

What could someone do if other people are not respecting their boundaries??

What could someone do if other people are not respecting their boundaries??

- try again to explain our boundaries
- talk to them about how we feel
- get support from a safe adult

What defines an **unhealthy power dynamic**?

one person is older than the other

one person feels like they can't say
'no' to the other person



two people disagreeing with each
other

one person manipulates the other



Do you think there is anything that could make someone less resilient to unhealthy power dynamics?

Do you think there is anything that could make someone less resilient to **unhealthy power dynamics**?

- don't know their own boundaries
- lack of critical thinking skills - "What could this person want from me?"; "What do they gain?"
- lack of confidence and low self-esteem
- protected characteristics
- expectations / stereotypes

Where to get support



The Mix is here to make sure every young person has somewhere to turn — whatever life throws at them.

Find out more on the [Mix website](#)

childline

ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

We're here for you, whatever's on your mind. We'll support you. Guide you. Help you make decisions that are right for you.

Find out more on the [Childline website](#)

YOUNGMINDS

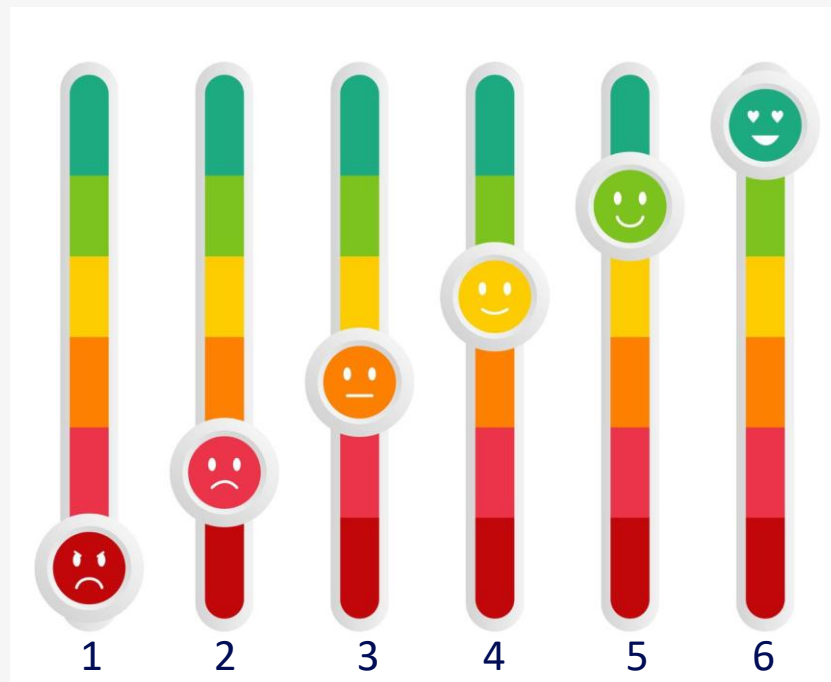
However you're feeling right now, things can get better. And we're here to help.

Find out more on the [Young Minds website](#)

How confident do you feel about this topic?



not confident at all



very confident



Feedback

We regularly update our lessons, to make sure that our resources remain relevant, appropriate and engaging for young people.

If you'd like to let us know what you think, please complete [this form](#). It takes as little as 30 seconds and you only have to answer the questions that are relevant to you.



Life Lessons supports teachers to deliver outstanding relationships, sex and health education.

We aspire to a world where all young people are equipped to be healthy, make good decisions and navigate the social and emotional complexities of life.

[Discover our approach to learning](#)