



# LOVE PEOPLE

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# HUMILITY

## Introduction

You speak your mind with him, but not with her.

You have no problem receiving advice from her, but not from him.

You can lead in this situation, but freeze in that situation.

We are a complex people who respond differently to different people at different times, but we do have our bent. The exercise that follows is very simple. You are asked to prayerfully and thoughtfully consider key relationships and how you are doing at both asserting and deferring.

Look and listen for themes. Is there an area of insecurity or arrogance that comes up in different places, but in unique ways? If so, what's that about?

As always, hear the questions carefully, and follow your thoughts if they take you off the page.

## First Stage Identify People

... As we read in this week's reading, "*We lead We follow We don't always lead. We don't always follow. We do both.*" In this First Stage, you're asked to personalize this thought to your own relational world.

### Your Leaders

Make a list of leaders and influential people in your life. Include formal roles—such as supervisors or bosses—but also consider relationships that are not formal—life friends or siblings—where that person is looked up to and has influence in your life.

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### Your Followers

Make a list of those you lead and influence. As with the previous category, include both those you formally lead and those you informally influence.

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## Second Stage

### Evaluate Relationships

In this Second Stage, prayerfully and thoughtfully consider how you're doing in asserting and deferring.

#### **ASSERTION**

First, evaluate your assertion in relationships—both toward leaders and followers. Use the questions below to guide your self-evaluation.

#### **Assertion Toward Leaders and Influential People**

For each of the leaders and influential people in your life that you listed in the First Stage, consider the following questions. Thoughts will vary from person to person, so consider each person on your list.

- Does he/she know your thoughts, opinions, and preferences (whether or not they agree with them)? Do you speak up in meetings and in conversations? Why or why not?
  
- If you were to catch this leader doing something unethical or if your leader asked you to do something against your personal convictions, how would you respond? Why?
  
- How do you think you're doing in asserting yourself with the leaders and influential people in your life? Do you struggle asserting yourself with some leaders more than with others? If so, which leaders do you struggle with the most? Are there any areas where you are being negligent by under asserting yourself?



## Assertion Toward Those You Lead and Influence

For each of the people you lead and influence, consider the following questions. Thoughts will vary from person to person, so consider each person on your list.

- Does your follower know and understand your vision, views, or desires? Have you given him/her clear direction? Do you openly communicate your thoughts, dreams, ideas, and preferences? Why or why not?
  
- When someone who follows you blatantly disregards your vision and direction, how do you handle it? Do you go with it or correct it? Do you speak up or go silent? Why do you handle it this way?
  
- In general, how do you think you're doing in asserting yourself with those you lead and influence? Do you struggle asserting yourself with some more than with others? If so, which people do you struggle with the most? Are there any areas where you are being negligent by under asserting yourself with a follower?



## **DEFERENCE**

Evaluate deference in your relationships—both toward leaders and influential people in your life and toward those you lead and influence. Use the questions below to guide your self-evaluation.

### **Deference Toward Leaders and Influential People**

For each of the leaders and influential people you listed in the First Stage, consider the following questions. Thoughts will vary from person to person, so consider each person on your list.

- When leaders and influential people disagree with your thoughts, ideas, or opinions, how do you respond (both externally and internally)? Why?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- Do you find yourself frustrated with decisions that leaders and influential people make around you? If so, does this frustration come out (either passively or actively) in your interactions with them? How does this affect your relationship with them?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- In general, how do you think you're doing in deferring to leaders and influential people in your life? Do you struggle deferring to some more than others? If so, which people do you struggle with most? Are there any areas where you are being controlling by not appropriately deferring to a leader?



## Deference Toward Those You Lead

For each of the followers that you listed in the First Stage, consider the following. Thoughts will vary from person to person, so consider each person on your list.

- How often and how deeply do you listen to the thoughts, opinions, concerns, and preferences of those you lead and influence? *Why?*
  
- How well are you doing serving those you lead and influence in putting their needs and interests above your own?
  
- In general, how do you think you're doing in deferring to those you lead and influence? Do you struggle deferring to some more than others? If so, who do you struggle with the most? Are there any areas where you are being controlling or overbearing by not appropriately deferring to a follower?



## Observation and Themes

What have you observed? Are there any themes? If so, record them here.

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## Third Stage Invite Transformation

Ask and invite God to help you overcome any gaps in “Assert” or “Defer” that you discovered. Start by confessing to God any ways that you’ve been controlling or negligent in your relationships. Ask God to direct you to any changes you need to make in the way you respond to others in your life.

Use the space below to write a prayer to God or simply journal your insights.

