

What Happens to Us When We Feel Powerless

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The Huffington Post:

Control is an important aspect of our psychological well-being. Many of the most frustrating situations in life involve cases where events are happening around you, and you have no say in how they turn out. Patients suffering from significant illnesses must come to grips with the lack of control they have over their disease. Low-level employees in a business may be frustrated by their inability to control their work day.

An interesting paper in the August, 2011 issue of *Psychological Science* by Ena Inesi, Simona Botti, David Dubois, Derek Rucker and Adam Galinsky examines two sources of control in our lives: choice and power. They suggest that the motive for control is so important in our lives that choice and power can substitute for each other.

Their logic is straightforward: If the goal that is important to people is control, then in situations in which people do not have power, they should seek situations that give them more choices. In situations in which people have limited choices, they should seek power.

Read the whole story: [*The Huffington Post*](#)