

PROGRESS

# Getting from Wanting to Having

USING LANGUAGE FOR LEVERAGE

**A LOT OF PEOPLE** come to see me when they are in a state of Want: wanting a relationship, wanting to communicate better, wanting to trust their partner. One client consistently broke down in tears in my office, lamenting his life with the mantra “I can’t have what I want.” After hearing that for the umpteenth time, a light bulb went off inside me: Naturally, he can’t have what he wants; no one can. Language makes that impossible.

Part of my job is to help clients understand how their words affect their choices, and vice versa. I believe that changing the words we use—and thus more consciously choosing them—can create subtle leverage in

moving out of a predicament and toward possibility. Here is a list of words we commonly invoke and ways to think about them more deeply.

**Want:** Embedded in this popular word is a state of longing, of not having. Implicit is a sense of deficiency and a belief that what we desire is “out there” somewhere. This may be the hallmark of ego-driven thinking. The ever-vigilant ego is always wanting something: mainly power, approval, security. Wanting is the language of media manipulation, telling us we are not enough as we are and need to buy something.

**Wish:** Ever pick an opened dandelion seed pod, make a wish, and blow? This is the sweet energy that comes from a heart-centered state of being. It is the aspect of us that

is open, hopeful, and appreciative. In a sincerely wishful state, we allow the magic of Life to conspire on our behalf, without so much attachment. We let the universe know our preferences as we adopt a “wouldn’t it be nice?” posture toward Life.

**Will:** I consider this word a foundational stage of self-empowerment. It requires courage to challenge the status quo, both inside and around us, and engage our personal will. This is the choice point where we give up being passive observers or pawns to our conditioning, choosing instead to collaborate with Life as a full partner—or better yet, as an enthusiastic apprentice. Activating personal will can be both liberating and a potential trap. Life frequently invites us to tango with the Mystery, where it gets some of its juiciest inspiration. This can trigger a jealous ego to cut in, thinking it knows best how to choreograph our next steps. Ego willfulness leads to a misuse of personal power, which is sometimes tricky to spot in the moment. The results of overexerting personal will eventually become apparent: Flow diminishes as tension and exhaustion arise. When we align our will with the forces of Life, “my will becomes thy will” and flow resumes.

**Commit:** For me, commitment is an energetic phenomenon. When I am committed to something, it is because my head, heart, and gut are in agreement. So I regularly invite clients to

## HAVING WHAT YOU WANT

Name something that you are deeply wanting. It could be physical, emotional, spiritual. For example, perhaps you want a loving relationship. Allow yourself to acknowledge this out loud. Notice how your body responds to the experience of want. Then try saying it while embodying the other words below. See which word most mirrors where you are. Remember that judging yourself for not having something only intensifies wanting. See if you can be curious and explore how it might feel to consciously embody another verb instead!

**I WANT...** (a loving relationship)

**I WISH FOR...** (a loving relationship)

**I WILL...** (create a loving relationship)

**I COMMIT TO...** (having a loving relationship)

**I HAVE...** (a loving relationship)

**I AM...** (in a loving relationship)



*Her Words Came Out in a Muddle*   
Julie Liger-Belair

“try on” various “powerhouse commitments.” After speaking one of these commitments aloud, they observe and acknowledge how their body-mind responds. In this potent process, the goal is not to use words as an affirmation, but to explore what is evoked when the commitment is uttered. Is the commitment embodied or not? The insight is often profound.

**Have:** This is the state of easeful receiving that comes when there is no resistance to an idea or outcome. No longer wanting something, we allow ourselves to have it, and take responsibility for stewarding it. I believe everyone has a unique “havingness quotient” that varies wildly, depending on ingrained beliefs. Have you noticed that some people can have a closet full of clothes and material objects but can’t seem to pay the rent—while someone else has loads of money but

can’t seem to have a meaningful relationship? The stories we tell ourselves about what we can and can’t have reveal a lot about our conditioning.

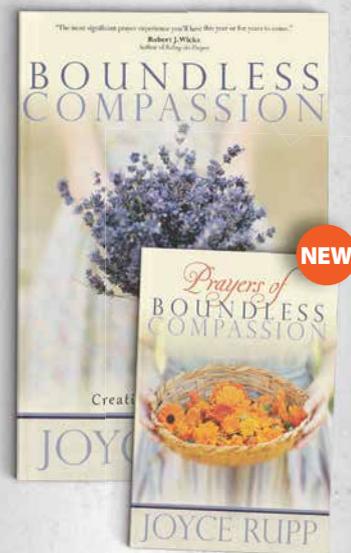
**Am:** One of our most ancient words, it is the first-person singular of “be.” When we speak from this state of be-ing, we reference our essential nature. How we use “I am” reveals our experience of selfhood. When we speak clarifying statements such as “I am courageous” or “I am here to be of service,” we verbally stake a claim. There is no need to qualify or justify; we are just naming “what is.”

Words are symbols imbued with meaning. Each time they’re chosen carefully, what you might call their momentum of meaning increases. In remembering how to apply their power, we invite alignment in accordance with our deepest truths.

—JOY HOSEY

**“I felt my heart relax into sweetness.”**

—**Sylvia Boorstein**  
Author of *It’s Easier Than You Think*



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