

THE FINE ART OF AGREEMENTS

An agreement is anything you said you would do, or anything you said you would not do.

Successful living and working depends, in part, on learning how to make and keep your agreements. Making agreements you do not intend to keep and not keeping agreements you make creates an energy drain, derails your success, causes relationship rifts and accumulates new debris requiring future attention.

It is all about integrity and keeping integrity alive – meaning living in every moment.

The Basics

1. Think carefully before you make an agreement. It is much easier to not make an agreement than it is to get out of one you no longer want to keep.
2. Make only agreements that connect to your heart. If you don't have your heart behind the agreement, whether it's your child's baseball game or attending the annual shareholder's meeting, why bother? Agreements that do not matter to you, but that you make anyway, come back and haunt you later because some intuitive person will perceive that you are not really there.
3. Scrupulously keep the agreements you make.
4. If you have a complicated life (and by the way, who doesn't?) be sure to capture your agreements in a clear form. Taking them out of your mind and putting them on paper, in your i-phone, some system, frees up more of your creative energy.

When you need to change an agreement, *and you will*, follow this clear and direct approach.

1. Tell the truth. Do not explain, apologize or complain.
2. Create the **revised** agreement the same way you **make** an agreement. Look to your heart for what you want and what matters. Make an offering.
3. Listen to the response. Get clear about the new agreement.
4. Record the new agreement.
5. Appreciate the practice of changing and creating new agreements.

Handling Broken Agreements: An agreement is an "US" thing, not a "Your" or "My" thing.

1. Face it and acknowledge the broken agreement to all concerned parties.
2. Take responsibility for the broken agreement and let go of excuses, justifications, and defenses.
3. Feel and communicate your feelings in a way that others understand.
4. Listen to authentic feelings and no-blame truth from others.
5. Handle the consequences.
6. Handle the source of the broken agreement so it doesn't repeat.

ACKNOWLEDGING THE MUTUAL CREATION OF THE BROKEN AGREEMENT ELIMINATES DEFENSIVENESS AND SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS.

Assess your “Agreement Aptitude” with this checklist

Explore which agreement skills you have integrated and embodied. Identify areas calling for development. A central skill is to connect your sense of energy (aliveness) with your integrity around agreements. Notice your body sensations, as you explore these statements; are you open or contracted? Notice your body sensations when in relationship, when you keep agreements, and when you choose to do something else.

- I know that keeping agreements increases aliveness rather than seeing agreements as the world (or someone) making me do something.
- I know how to make clear agreements with others.
- I know how to select agreements that I do want to make.
- I know how to see when an agreement is necessary and how to proactively create agreements that I want to make.
- I know how to make agreements that are important to me; that I feel my body align with.
- I do not make agreements that I don't want to make. (I notice jangles in my body when presented with agreements I don't want.)
- I enter into agreements initiated by others clearly and consciously.
- I keep the agreements I make.
- I can be counted on to do what I say I will do.
- I can be counted on not to do what I say I will not do.
- I know how to handle instances when I break agreements.
- I know how to handle instances when others break agreements with me.
- I know how to change agreements that are not working.
- I proactively create agreements that I want to make.
- Others keep their agreements with me, and if they don't, I know how to take 100% responsibility for creating and clearing up the situation.
- I am able to clearly formulate agreements and write them down. (Out of mind and on paper frees up my creative energy).

Why You Don't Keep Your Agreements:

1. You haven't seen the connection between broken agreements and decreased aliveness.
2. You have kept your agreements entangled with your anger toward authority figures (almost nobody has experienced fairness in their interactions with authority figures; therefore, unresolved anger is rampant.)

There is ultimately only one reason for the above; it is not personally convenient to you at the time. When stuck, ask yourself: what feeling(s) am I not experiencing deeply? In what way am I not telling the truth? Have I failed to keep an agreement?

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