

Keeping YOUR Agreements

"Your life works to the degree you keep your agreements."

Werner Erhardt,

Founder of the Landmark Forum

"Never promise more than you can perform."

PubLilius Syrus

It used to be that one's word was one's bond. Agreements were made and kept with a minimum of fanfare. People thought carefully about whether they could deliver on their promises before agreeing to anything. It was that important. Today, keeping one's agreements seems to be a hit or miss affair.

The cost of not keeping agreements must be learned in an intention manner. Setting up guidelines and agreements for an interaction also helps keep order and sets expectations of behavior for the parties.

Worksheets

Broken Agreements and Promises

Context

This exercise illustrates the importance of keeping your agreements. When you do not keep your agreements, you pay both external and internal costs. These costs are high and can lead to loss of one's self-esteem, self-confidence and self-respect.

Overview

Every agreement you make is ultimately with yourself. Your integrity and self-esteem are tied directly to your decision to maintain your agreements. By understanding the value of your integrity, you won't make agreements that you don't intend to keep, you will make fewer agreements and you will do whatever it takes to keep the ones you do make.

Introduction

In my trainings, I have a few key Guidelines and Agreements such as review an Agreement of Participation (in time and by executed form), Operating Agreement, the Prime Directives of the Unconscious Mind, Presumptions of Genotype Change Therapy; you can determine what guidelines



and agreement are best suited for your purpose.

Example: Guidelines and Agreements

1. Be on time to all sessions.
2. Attend all sessions and complete the training.
3. No alcohol or drugs until the end of the training.
 - Keep taking doctor's prescribed medications.
4. No side talking.
5. No advice giving.
6. Turn cell phone off or put on vibrate.
7. Follow all the facilitator's instructions.
8. Complete all the homework.
 - The homework is an integral aspect of the training. For you to receive maximum value we request that you commit to completing all the homework.
9. Confidentiality.
 - Whatever anyone says during the training about him/herself is to be held in the strictest confidence. You are welcome to talk about your own experience, the processes and the training itself. Do not talk about exercises that have surprise "AHA" endings.
10. Communicate any upsets about the training to Jessica either verbally or in writing.
11. Hand in your completed evaluation form by the end of the seminar.
12. Write or email a letter to Jessica by XXXX (30 days post-training).

We really want to hear from you, how you are doing and what results you are producing from the training. We also want to know if there is any way we can better serve you.

We very much want your feedback about the training and support in perfecting the effectiveness of the training.

Send your letters (or an email) to:

drj@drjvera.com

Signed

Current date

Review the agreements you set in place with your group. I ask my students to repeat each agreement out loud, and to acknowledge when they agree to the entire list and sign the page. This is a way for them to physically acknowledge that they are making an agreement, and a way for them not to be able to say later that they didn't hear me when we went through the agreements.



Half way through the training, I ask everyone who has broken one of the ground rules to identify themselves either by a show of hand or written acknowledgement. We then look at what we can learn from the experience. What becomes apparent is how casually we give our word—and then how casually we break it.

What I find even more interesting is that most people know they are going to break at least one of the guidelines before agreeing to them; yet they agree to them anyway. Why? Most people want to avoid the discomfort of questioning the rules. They don't want to be the focus of attention. They don't want to risk confrontation of any kind. Others want to take the training without really following the rules, so they appear to agree, but they don't really intend to follow through.

The real problem is not that people give and break their word so easily; *it's that they don't realize the psychological cost* of doing so.

When you don't keep your agreements, you pay both external and internal costs. You lose trust, respect, and credibility with others—your family, your friends, your colleagues, and your customers. And you create messes in your own life and in the lives of those who depend on you for getting things done—whether it's showing up on time to leave for the movies, getting a report done on time, or cleaning the garage.

After a few weeks of not following through on your promise to take the kids to the park on the weekend, they begin not to trust you to keep your word. They realize they can't count on you. You lose authority with them. Your relationship deteriorates.

Every Agreement You Make with Others Is Also Made with Yourself

More importantly, every agreement you make is ultimately with yourself. Even when you are making an agreement with someone else, your brain hears it and registers it as a commitment. You are making an agreement with yourself to do something, and when you don't follow through, you learn to distrust yourself. *The result is a loss of self-esteem, self-confidence, and self-respect. You lose faith in your ability to produce a result. You weaken your sense of integrity.*

Let's say that you tell your spouse you're going to get up at 6:30 in the morning and do some exercise before going to work. But after 3 days of hitting the snooze alarm, your brain knows better than to trust you. Of course, you may think sleeping late is no big deal, but to your unconscious it is a very big deal. When you don't do what you say you will, you create confusion and self-doubt. You undermine your sense of personal power. It's not worth it.



Testing Procedure

A day or two after the agreements have been set up, ask yourself (and in future your client) to stand up, raise a hand or just verbally acknowledge, if you have broken an agreement. Ask the following questions. It is helpful to have these questions visible.

1. Which agreement(s) did you break?
2. When did you first know you would have a broken agreement?
3. What did you make more important than keeping your word?
 - Comfort
 - Approval
 - Rebellion/Control

Every answer will come down to the three reasons states above: comfort, approval or control. Remember it is okay to ask for an exception, re-negotiate when an agreement cannot be met, and to now make agreements that we know we will not keep.

For someone who cannot conclude that they broke an agreement for comfort, approval or control, I like to lead them through one of the following scenarios. For a million dollars or to save the life of a loved one, they sure will make a change to keep the agreement and their word.



TIP: Sometimes clients might tell you they feel guilty when they admit to breaking the agreements. Remember to tell them this is not about guilt or shame, it is about awareness and to look at where else this might show up in their life. Where else do they have unmet agreements, or do they make agreements, knowing they will not follow through.

Broken Agreements and Promises Exercise

Dialogue with Self or Others: Can I see by a show of hands or written acknowledgment in the chat who did not keep all your homework/activities/participation agreements?

What agreement or agreements did you break?

When did you first know you'd have a broken agreement? What

did you make more important than keeping your word?

Discuss the following reasons why people don't keep their agreements:

Convenience

Comfort

Approval

Rebellion

Control

Ask: "What is the price you pay for not keeping your agreements?"

Integrity

Respect

Self-esteem

Confusion

Power



Discuss Typical Excuses:

Couldn't do it?

Tips for Keeping your agreements:

1. Don't make agreements you don't intend to keep.
2. Re-negotiate agreements as soon as you are aware that you can't keep them.
3. Write your agreements down.
4. Review them regularly.
5. Let person know as soon as you know you are going to break an agreement.
6. Don't over commit.

Rules of the Game Story

One of the most powerful trainings I ever took was one called “Money and You,” created by Marshall Thurber in the late 1970s. It radically changed how I related to money, business, and relationships.

Everything that you want to accomplish requires relationships—with your friends, family, staff, vendors, coaches, bosses, board of directors, clients, customers, partners, associates, students, teachers, audience, fans, and others. For those relationships to work, you need to set up what John Assaraf calls “the rules of engagement,” what Marshall Thurber, D.C. Cordova, and the other folks at Accelerated Business Schools call “the rules of the game.”

How are we going to play together? What are the ground rules and guidelines for the relationship going to be? Marshall taught us the following guidelines, which I have endeavored to live by ever since. If you and all the people you interacted with were to agree to the following rules, your level of success would soar.

- Be willing to support our purpose, values, rules, and goals.
- Speak with good purpose. If it doesn't serve, don't say it. No making people wrong, justifying, or defending.
- If you disagree or do not understand, ask clarifying questions. Don't make the other person wrong.
- Make only agreements you are willing and intend to keep.
- If you can't keep an agreement, communicate as soon as practical to the appropriate person.
- Clear up any broken agreement at the first appropriate opportunity.
- When something is not working, first look to the system for corrections and then propose a system-based solution to the person who can do something about it.
- Be responsible. No blaming, no defending, no justifying, and no shaming.

Broken Agreements and Promises

List below all people and institutions with whom you have broken agreements or lapses of integrity. Decide when you will communicate your acknowledgement of this broken agreement to them or communicate that you no longer wish to keep this agreement or negotiate a new time by which you will complete it. If it is a lapse in integrity, communicate the event plus anyway in which you would like to balance the situation. Check it off as done when you have completed the action or the communication.

Person	Agreement	Date	Done