

These 7 Powerful Agreements Can Redefine Your Marriage

Love agreements are real. You make them, and you carry them out. Once you have made these love agreements in your heart, the day-to-day behavior will begin to follow. As you make love agreements with your husband or wife, you will see different behaviors and attitudes show up in your marriage. Aiming at higher standards of behavior opens us up to improvement.

God has given each one of us the power to make and carry out our agreements. We choose whether we are going to invest this power in a positive agreement or a destructive one. The events of September 11, 2001, began when one heart determined to make an agreement to hate and kill others. Yet, it was also the power that Mother Theresa invested in a positive agreement that enabled her to love the millions of unlovable people whose lives she touched for good in India. God created both individuals, and each had one heart. Both made agreements in their hearts, and both successfully carried out those agreements. You too have a heart—a great big heart capable of incredible constructive or destructive agreements.

The agreements that you and your spouse make regarding your relationship, which I call love agreements, are critical.

The love agreements you make or don't make in your life can be the difference between having a great loving marriage or a distant, cold marriage.

Your love agreements will show up in your day-to-day behavior. Day in and day out, you will live out the agreements you make.

These seven love agreements will expose you to greater intimacy with God and with your spouse. Love agreements don't guarantee instant results, but they launch us on a process of bettering the marriage relationship. The process works best

when wife and husband choose the behaviors together. But one partner can make the agreements solo as a way of drawing closer to his or her spouse. The love agreements are not once-and-for-all promises. As humans, sometimes we fail to be patient or kind. It's better to review and renew the agreements frequently. One day at a time builds true love and intimacy.

The Seven Love Agreements

1. Faithfulness: I will be faithful to my spouse at all times in all circumstances.
2. Patience: I will not try to change things about my spouse that I do not like but will modify any of my behaviors that annoy my partner.
3. Forgiveness: When I have offended my spouse, I will quickly ask for forgiveness, and I will forgive my spouse's offenses in my heart even before being asked.
4. Service: I will anticipate my spouse's spiritual, emotional, physical and material needs and will do everything I can to meet them.
5. Respect: I will not act or speak in a way that ridicules or embarrasses my spouse.
6. Kindness: I will be kind to my spouse, eliminating any trace of meanness from my behavior and speech.
7. Celebration: I will appreciate my spouse's gifts and attributes and celebrate them personally and publicly.

When you fully understand these seven love agreements, you can direct or correct the course of your marriage. When you understand the love agreements, you realize you can make heartfelt choices that orient your will to act more Christianly toward your spouse.

Everyone has heard the saying, "if you aim at nothing, you'll hit it." I've heard several motivational speakers and pastors express the need for focus or aiming for goals.

As Christians, we ought to aim for the stars in our marriage—even if you feel as if you are only hitting the tops of the trees. At least you are headed in the right direction. Remember: The tops of the trees are higher than the ground from which you started. Let's suppose we know a guy named Luke who is making the love agreement to be patient. So he is going through his day focused on his agreement. When his wife is late once again from work, he chooses not to say anything. While she's talking on the phone to her sister when it's bedtime for the children, he writes a kind note, "Your children want your special hugs."

He avoids making the unkind remark that he would normally give her, saying, "Get off the phone and help me, now!"

You can see that Luke's agreement is starting to show up in his behavior. Luke is not giving his wife the typical look that says, "Get off the phone!" Luke is focused.

Even though Luke is the one making the love agreement, it has impacted their whole night together. Luke has avoided his usual questioning about why she is late and the shaming of his bride for being her typical 15 to 30 minutes late. As a result, his wife avoided her traditional comment: "You're a selfish husband! Can't you deal with the children for even a few minutes?"

This is turning out to be a different day, and Luke feels good because he knows he has contributed to making it a better day for both of them.

Once you make a love agreement, you place your heart on a different path. You begin to look for opportunities to practice the behavior prompted by the particular love agreement you have made. You start to find ways to improve in yourself. Improvement in you introduces a completely different dynamic into your marriage relationship. {eoa}

To learn more about these love agreements, purchase Dr. Doug

Weiss' book, The 7 Love Agreements.

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