

Previously, we learned about “**what we did NOT know about**”
THE 5 STAGES OF RELATIONSHIPS . . .

- 1) Honeymoon
- 2) Disillusion
- 3) Misery
- 4) Awakening
- 5) Peace/Calm



. . . we were taught that in the “Awakening” Stage, one experiences:

“Listening with the heart” – a term we use to express the skill of empathy.

It involves remaining “present” with the person and hearing all he or she is saying - the deep feelings being expressed, their affect and fears and concerns as they relate to the relationship - without thinking about and trying to develop words you are going to use to respond.

In this practice of “*listening with the heart,*” it is also vital to learn from each other,

to learn what each needs - not wants, **but really needs** - to be in relationship with the other. In other words, what are the “basic needs” for that person to feel safe, secure and ready to fully participate in the relationship?

In a previous training *, I learned about **FOUR TYPES OF AGREEMENT** – Important in the Relationship Stages:

- Four areas we ask people to consider in terms of what they “need” in a relationship
- These are not the “wants” – we are concentrating on the real “needs”

NEEDS CRITERIA . . .

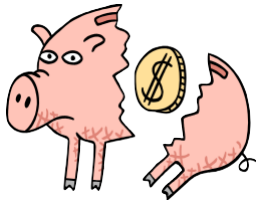
- Identify the real “needs” in these specific areas
- Ask your significant’s to identify their real needs
- Listen to your significant’s with no judgment or defense
- May ask clarifying questions
- Share your own needs
 - Ask each other if you can meet each other needs and if there are some adjustments that would help the relationship
- This is an “*Awakening*” exercise that can promote a relationship back to “*Honeymoon*”



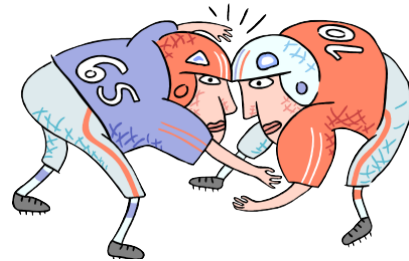
Four (4) Types of Agreement

(in one's relationship)

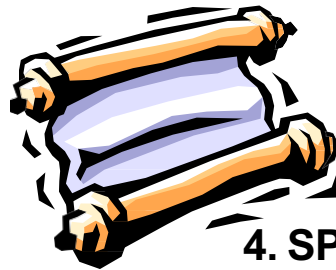
1. FINANCIAL



2. PHYSICAL/SPATIAL



3. EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL



4. SPIRITUAL

1. FINANCIAL AGREEMENTS:

- What do you need to be in financial agreement?
- Who works?
- What amount of money do you need for the household? (Don't fool yourself: if you are a \$75,000-a-year expectation person, and your partner only makes \$35,000, then there will be conflict.)
- Is it one joint checking account or two separate checking accounts?
- Is there savings, money for retirement and money for vacation?
- And what about donations? Is tithing something you believe in?

~ financial agreements continued ~

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT & BUDGET

- **Do you keep a budget that is agreed to?** (refer to the [Free PDF Download Budget Spreadsheets For Couples!](#)—on this website) Is it projected out?
- A budget will keep financial arguments down since there is agreement on what the budget will be. When considering a new purchase, go to the budget and ask “*Does it fit?*” It no longer becomes an argument of “you don’t want me to have this”; it becomes a discussion of the budget and whether a purchase fits.
- What about credit cards? Can you use them? How much can you use them? Have you and your partner agreed to internal limits?



If you share some or all of your expenses with a significant other, an effective budgeting strategy is essential for open communication. Using one of our free budget spreadsheets for couples will help you align your priorities and work as a team toward your shared goals.

Borrowed from: <https://www.accrediteddebtrelief.com/blog/download-free-budget-spreadsheets-for-couples/#How-to-Build-a-50/50-Couples-Budget>

FINANCIAL PHILOSOPHY

- Is the other person from a family that had enough money to live on and the philosophy was “there is always enough”
- Is the other person from a family that struggled with money and people held tight to the money they did have?
- Who taught you what you believe about money?
- What are the rules?
 - Are there rules to save or spend?
 - How much money should be saved?
 - When is it okay to spend?
- Is there a rule about a savings account?

2. PHYSICAL/SPATIAL AGREEMENTS:

- What are your physical expectations for the sexual relationship, physical exercise, the manner in which you keep up yourself (body, hair, etc.)?
- What type of physical space do you need—a crowded room, a sparse room, a house in the open, a house in the woods or in the city?
- What about physical abuse? What is okay with you? What is not negotiable (such as pushing, shoving, beating, hitting, scratching, etc.)?
- What is physical safety to you and appropriate boundaries in your relationship for all the above areas?
- What about own “body bubble”? How close do you like your partner and how often? Are you a cuddler or do you prefer to have more space?

BODY BUBBLE

- We all have our own personal “body bubble,” formed as we grew up, that advises us how close we want others to come to us or when we get to the place when we know someone “enough” to allow them closer.
- People who have been physically or sexually abused might have a different experience of closeness.
- It is likely to take more time, trust and patience in allowing others to come closer.
- As you build a relationship with a person, it is important to learn his or her body bubble styles and respect them.



3. EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL AGREEMENTS:

- Emotional agreements also take into account those times when the other person is just “off” emotionally.
- We don’t always know the whys of it and just needing a little extra special consideration to get through whatever it is.
- This kind of emotional support goes both ways, for the nature of emotional agreement is reciprocal.
- Part of the discussion on the emotional agreement is to learn your partner’s emotional strengths and weaknesses.

EMOTIONAL/SOCIAL SUPPORT

- Are there certain situations (times of the year, seasons) that are more difficult emotionally for your partner? This might be related to a loss (death, divorce, accident, etc.).
- When does your partner feel he or she needs more support from you? In what type of situations?
- When does your partner want you just to listen, and (possibly) hold them, rub their back or just be “present” with them?
- What do you need from your partner for positive emotional support?
- Do you expect unconditional love and support?
- Do you expect understanding and a person to listen to your hurts?
- How is that played out at the end of day, on the weekend, after an argument?
- Do you go to bed on your fight or in anger?
- What do you need there in terms of resolution?

4. SPIRITUAL AGREEMENTS:

- Every person comes to this life with a spiritual piece
- How we relate to that spiritual side is dependent on the fabric of our background
- Not everyone identifies their spiritual side
- Yet, everyone goes about trying to fill it in some manner
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SPIRITUAL AGREEMENT SUPPORT

- What does spirituality mean to you? How do you want to express it?
- How do you want your partner involved?
- Where is your source of strength? How do you express it?
- Do you want to do this together or separately?
- Is there reading, praying or worship that you expect?
- What are your other spiritual expectations?

Completing the “Agreements” Loop

- Once this is done, it helps to write each of these on paper.
- **Put them in a dual frame** - and in the bedroom - so that when an issue or argument begins to rise, it can be agreed to revisit these agreements and to remind each other to ***put their needs first***, not their wants.
- When a couple makes these types of agreements, after really listening to each other, a peace and calm is achieved.
- There is a sense that they know how to resolve conflict, they know what is expected and they know how they can meet these, specifically, in each of those areas.
- **It does not mean that there won't be future disagreements or that everything will be peaceful and calm.**
- *The difference is that there is Agreement to work and live in peace, understanding, and mutual support for each other.*



NEXT TOPIC: **3 Elements of Relationships**

SOURCE:

*Training received by Coach OhMeDay - December 2022,,: a NAADAC two-day therapeutic VIRTUAL training, **Romancing the Brain: Conflict Resolution for Recovery (CRR)** --facilitated by Cynthia Moreno Tuohy, BSW, NCAC II, CDC III, SAP--Executive Director of NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals.