

Commitment Cleanup Process

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(Revised: 01. December 2013 by Nicola Neumann-Mangoldt)

FORMAT:

Whole group process done in dyads.

Duration: 120 minutes

PURPOSE:

A meeting technology in which people learn to be vulnerable and clear resentment.

SETUP:

This is a whole-group process from Possibility Management, done in dyads. People sit in chairs or on cushions facing each other in two parallel rows. Reserve 2 hours for this. You may want to go longer after a break, depending on how many people are involved. You may want to have tissues available. You will need one extra chair at the left end of Row A. The facilitator can also participate in the process but must keep track of time. Participants have pen and paper ready.

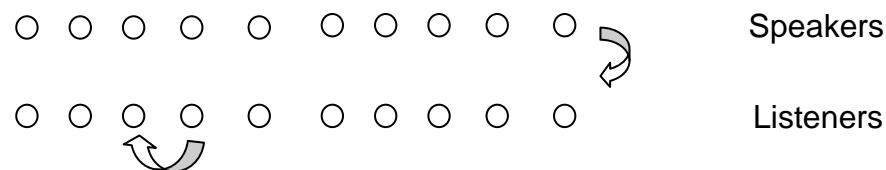
INTRO / BACKGROUND:

There is a meeting technology which is called "I can't commit to you". You can apply it in organizations, families or communities and it is even more powerful than the "Stamp Cashing" process.

In this exercise you tell the other person exactly what the reasons are why you would hesitate to commit to them. It doesn't matter for how long you have known the other person. Even if you got to know them only a couple of minutes ago you can do this exercise with them. You experience their box and Gremlin right now. And that's enough to know right now.

INSTRUCTIONS / PROCEDURE:

Please find a partner and sit facing each other and at the same time forming to lines:



Please sit as close together as possible without touching.

This side is Row A. That side is Row B.

Row A, imagine that starting tomorrow morning we will put all of our money, possessions, projects, time and energy together. We are moving in together and will

be living and working together. Please tell the person sitting across from you exactly why you cannot commit to them. Be personal and precise. Give them practical examples of what you are talking about.

You start the conversation by saying "I can't commit to you, because..." or "What stops me from committing to you, is..." The reason you name can be either about the other person, or about you. You could e. g. say "I cannot commit to you, because I have this story about England and you are from England. So I cannot commit to you, because of me....." I encourage you to not say "I am afraid to commit to you", because it is not strong enough.

Row B, you listen. No explanations. No discussions. If you wish you may take notes. If something hits you and you want more precisions, say, "Could you please say more about that?"

Please begin.

(Give Row A about 4 minutes to explain why they cannot commit to the person sitting across from them. Then say:)

Please come to a stop. (Pause a moment to let people finish up.) People in Row B, if you want, you can say, "Thank you."

Now change roles.

Row B, it is your turn to tell the person sitting across from you exactly why you cannot commit to them. Row A, you just listen. Please begin.

(Give Row B about 4 minutes to deliver their communication to Row A. Then say:)

Please come to a stop. (Pause a moment to let people finish up.) People in Row A, if you want, you can say, "Thank you."

People in Row A please stand up and move one chair to your left then have a seat. If you are at the end of Row A or Row B and there is no one sitting across from you please wait this turn out.

Row A, it is your turn to talk to Row B again. Row B, just listen. Please begin.
(Keep repeating this process, but alternate between Row A and Row B as to which row moves to the left. You will figure this out.)

Imagine you were supposed to e. g. move in together next week / do a project together. What hinders you from fully committing to the other person?

DEBRIEF/WRAP UP:

This process does its own work on people within a day. There is not much to discuss. What a person cannot commit to in someone else may reflect more about themselves than the other. Ask for any personal sharing about the process for a few minutes but then end it and let things take their course. This process is a miracle worker.