

SPARK 045

(Matrix Code: **SPARK045.00** for StartOver.xyz game.)

DISTINCTION: Relationships thrive when you commit to what the other person is committed to.

NOTES: A thriving relationship is dynamic, grows broader and deeper, evolves, and is a conduit for vast amounts of archetypal energy. By feeding your relationship with attention, communication and care, the relationship responds by feeding both you and your partner's four bodies with physical contact, intellectual discovery, emotional joy and inspirational wonder. Your relationship becomes an experimental laboratory of reciprocal delight.

Awakening such a relationship involves committing to what the other person is committed to. Committing to what the other person is committed to does not mean that you give up your commitment to what you yourself are committed to. It does not mean that you are being adaptive, playing small, giving your center away, or enmeshing your personal space with the other person's space! Committing to another person's commitment comes as a side effect of your own dignity, respect and joy, both towards yourself and towards the other person.

As simple and as rewarding as this sounds, we almost never do it. For example, if I asked you right now to tell me what your partner is truly committed to, what would you say? What about your kids? Do you even know for sure? What about your boss? (It is amazing but I cannot actually ask if you would commit to your boss' commitment. You probably would not. This is because the way many of our organizations are designed we mostly assume that our boss already has a life of what he is committed to. Climbing the hierarchy is about being jealous of our boss not committed to our boss. We see ourselves forced into a survival competition with our boss. The hierarchical design forces us to try to take away from him what we think he has that we do not have, and it forces him to try to defend his position. There are many other designs for organizations that produce entirely different results, but that is the topic for a different SPARK! So, back to your partner...) What would it look like for your partner deep down in their soul to have you committed to their life being about what matters most to them? Most of us haven't a clue. So let us start at the beginning. Before you can commit to what another person is committed to you will need to first learn what they are committed to.

How can you learn what another person is committed to? Such discovery requires a special kind of listening, called "listening for commitment." Mostly your listening is shaped by what you yourself are committed to. You listen for what you already want to hear. You listen for evidence that supports the stories required by your Box for its ordinary defensive strategies. Learning to listen to what *someone else* is committed to is a different kind of listening entirely, especially with those people closest to you. Committing to someone else's commitment puts both of you on the same team (even if you started out being "enemies"!).

EXPERIMENTS:

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SPARK045.01 Learn to listen to what someone else is committed to. Listening for commitment starts with you being centered. Commitments speak to a person at their center. Commitments provide impulses for movement directly at a person's center. If you yourself are centered then you feel your own commitments. Through feeling your own commitments you can feel other people's commitments. "Listening" in this case turns out to be more of an empathic whole-body feeling sense. When you successfully hear another person's commitment you have experienced a clear sensation of their commitment from their own perspective.

During this next week, gradually listen for the commitments of everyone who is closely involved with you in your life. You can safely assume that you do not yet already know what they are committed to. You get to start completely over again from zero, as if you were all strangers.

In listening for their commitment you may find yourself standing still looking at them with non-analytical eyes, not particularly saying or asking anything. Just scanning. Find your own center and be with them in such a way that you are listening for what they are committed to.

It can help your ability to listen for commitment if you stop sending in interference signals. Stop your demands, stop your assumptions, stop your expectations, and stop your projections. Stand out of their way silently and invisibly. Do not make any sudden moves. Relax your filters. Open your receptors and observe what that person's inspiration moves them to do. Listen between their words to what they are saying. Since commitment is more physical than intellectual you will sense another person's commitment as an impression or an image that arises in your own perception like someone slowly appearing out of a dense fog bank. Do not try to hunt it down to figure out the answer like a math problem. That will only chase it away. Instead let it come to you.

It can be easy at first to fool yourself about what you are sensing as their commitment, or to not be certain about what you have perceived, so check it with them. Repeat back what you heard them say, or what you heard them imply between the lines. Make what you say simple and short. Then stop speaking and wait. Give the other person plenty of space to create clarity for themselves about what they really want. A person easily knows what is not accurate about what you say. Do not take it personally if you are way off. Just try again.

Your boss might be angry about your performance, but what he really wants is a smoothly working team. Your colleague may complain about some problem, but what he really wants is more recognition and communication with you. Your mate or child may have an accident or get sick, but what they really want is to have some private time with you or some physical intimacy.

When it becomes clear what someone's commitment is, then move to commit to that. Make your gestures as smoothly and invisibly as possible. Your commitment may take many forms, but it must always show up in some kind of action, not just words. If you

do not act in a way that is consistent with your commitment, then you are actually committed to something else.