



# **Creating Heart Agreements**



**Truth is an eternal conversation  
about things that matter.**

**– Parker Palmer**

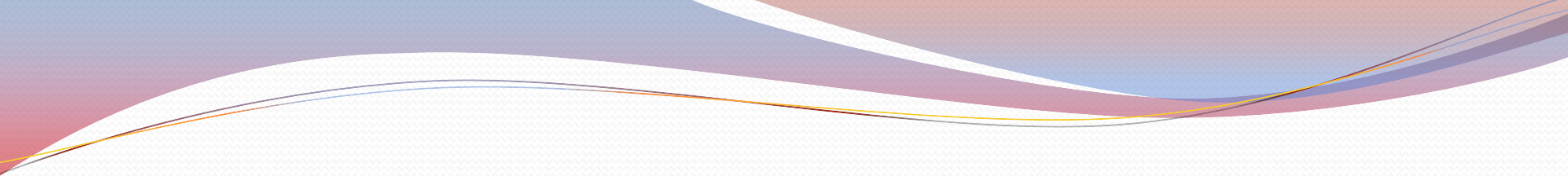
# Why Heart Agreements?

- Heart Agreements provide a ground work for authentic and productive communication and learning within the group.
- Heart Agreements create a sense of safety which allows the heart and the mind to open.
- Heart Agreements define how they will treat each other while in the group.



# Some thoughts about Heart Agreements

- Heart agreements may take a variety of forms. Several samples are included in this presentation.
- The Y.O.U. chapter exists as part of the larger church, therefore there may be some church policies that have to be incorporated in the Agreements.

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- It is essential to the well-being and on-going growth of your group that you create Heart Agreements for the group and revisit them as needed, revising as necessary.
  - As the people in the group change so do the dynamics of the group, therefore it is recommended that you revise the Heart Agreements at least every six months.



The following thoughts are from the *Uniteen Program Manual* available from Unity Worldwide Ministries

- Agreement cannot be imposed by a leader; it can only be facilitated.
- Agreements do not have to be adopted unanimously. But once adopted, everyone must agree to abide by them.
- If group members are not living up to the agreements, they aren't worth the paper they're written on.
- All agreements can be revisited and/or clarified in the future.

# Thoughts about confidentiality

- For many groups, confidentiality is an essential part of their Heart Agreements.
- Consider, however, if the agreement is “what’s said in the group stays in the group” can you *always* be in alignment with that? If you’re talking about an event outside of group meeting time then you are breaking agreements.
- Can confidentiality be kept for specific times only (ie – Heart Talks)?

# Confidentiality

- Any time there is an agreement of confidentiality there must also be an understanding that anything said that represents harm to any person (whether in the group or not) will need to be reported.
- If this step needs to be taken, the sponsor should let the YOUser know that they will be reporting it, and the sponsor must let the minister and/or YFM Director know that a report is being made. It is recommended that the YOUser be given the option to be with the sponsor when reporting, or even to report it themselves.

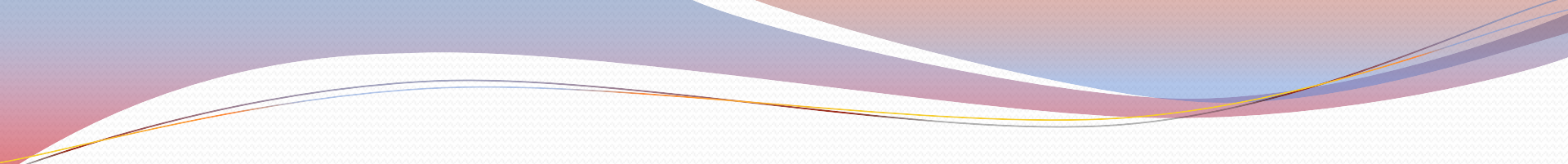


# How to create Heart Agreements

- Engage the group in the process
- Brainstorm agreements
  - Remember that everything is accepted initially, then through group discussion pare them down to the essential agreements.
- Write them down
  - Get creative in how they are presented and ‘posted’ in the room. Variety in presentation helps to bring them to awareness while in the room.
- Commit to the agreements by signing



# Sample Heart Agreements

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- Listen for understanding
  - Value multiple perspectives
  - Speak when you are moved, don't speak when not moved
  - No put downs of self, others, or ideas
  - Confront respectfully
  - Take responsibility for getting your needs, interests, and preferences met.
  - Speak personally, use I statements
  - Discern between fact and perception
  - Practice shared leadership and co-responsibility
  - Enjoy your learning and act on it!
  - Respect confidentiality

# Sample Agreements from The Learning Project

- Be Powerful
- Have Fun
- Play Fair
- Learn A lot
- Make this the Best Experience for Everyone

Which means....



# Be Powerful

- Develop the power within you and others
- Honor your uniqueness and the uniqueness of others
- Use power with others vs. over others
- Take appropriate risks
- Be authentic and fully present

# Have Fun

- Use your sixth sense – sense of humor!
- Reduce/eliminate unproductive stress
- Enjoyment is required/allowed/encouraged!
- Laugh with others, not at others
- Be creative

# Play Fair

- Protect confidentiality
- Value, honor and appreciate diversity and multiple perspectives
- No put downs
- Confront respectfully
- Fairness is what we agree upon – keep your agreements
- Practice shared leadership and co-responsibility

# Learn A Lot

- Do your best work
- Learn collaboratively
- Honor reflection time and the power of silence
- Discern between fact and perception
- Transfer learning and skills
- Persist





# Make this the Best Experience for Everyone

- Use the Platinum Rule – treat others the way they would like to be treated
- Release human potential, yours and others
- No gossip or triangulation
- Speak up and speak the Truth. If it's relevant, say it
- Use I statements
- Listen for understanding

# Possible additions to typical Agreements

- While you are in the group, you give the group priority
- Everyone participates and no one dominates
- Right to pass
- Everyone is given the right to their own opinion and all questions are encouraged and respected
- We stay open to new people at every meeting

# When in doubt

- For further clarification about Heart Agreements, contact your Regional Consultant on this website
  - Talk with your minister and/or YFM Director
  - Talk with other sponsors in other chapters nearby
  - Talk with former and/or current YOUTers



# Always remember

- Heart Agreements are the foundation upon which the group is built.
- With strong Agreements , appropriate for your group, strong connections can be built that will last a lifetime.