



Making a Shared Commitment

The beginning of a Life Share relationship is a time full of promise and potential - the perfect time for everyone to share with each other what they expect to give and get from the relationship. Taking the time to listen and respond to each other's expectations, and reach a shared commitment of how you will be in relationship with each other is a key first step in establishing a relationship of equality and mutual respect.

In each Life Share Relationship the commitment shared between the members will be created differently and will reflect the unique nature of the relationship. However, here are some pointers to consider when creating your Shared Commitment...

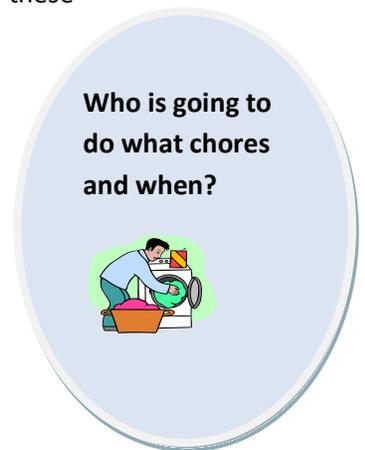
How do we create our Shared Commitment?

- ✚ Set aside at least two hours to create your shared commitment – it might not take this long – but you don't want to run out of time!
- ✚ Make sure that you gather in a place that is comfortable for everyone – share some food, - making a commitment is a celebration!
- ✚ Please invite everyone who lives in the home and is part of the extended family.
- ✚ Decide how you are going to make a record of your commitment – in writing, on tape, on video, write a song or a poem, do a piece of artwork, or even write you story.



What do we include in our Shared Commitment?

- ✚ Your hopes and dreams for the relationship (trust, honesty, respect – what do these mean to each of you?)
- ✚ What about privacy?
- ✚ How do we resolve conflict?
 - ✚ Favourite meals?
 - ✚ Personal deal breakers?
 - ✚ How to celebrate holidays – real tree, fake tree, no tree?
 - ✚ Bed time, up time?
 - ✚ Shower schedule – how much hot water is there?
 - ✚ Family – invited guests or 'the door's always open'
 - ✚ Pets - yes, never, maybe, unlikely?
 - ✚ Friends over– yes, never, sometimes?
 - ✚ Touchy stuff – sex, drugs and partying- yes, never, maybe, likely?



How do we honour our Shared Commitment?

Your LSN Team member may have been part of creating and recording your Shared Commitment, but if not, please forward them a copy and keep a copy for yourself and revisit it often. All relationships grow and change over the years as do the people in them, therefore it is important go back and check each year to see if your Shared Commitment is still true and reflective of your Life Share relationship – if it is, great! If not, have chat, renew your commitment and continue the journey.



What happens if we break our Shared Commitment?

A Shared Commitment is something that everyone in the relationship strives to honour and from time to time everyone is going to fall short. If the time comes when someone in your relationship isn't

honouring the Shared Commitment, the first step is to have a conversation. Try and uncover why the commitment is not being met. Ask questions, seek to understand, compromise. Don't draw lines in the sand, strike a position or make ultimatums. Check out the Contractor Conflict Resolution information and other valuable resources on the BACI LSN web page. Talk to each other, trusted friends and your BACI LSN Team member.



We began to live together. I did the cooking, so we didn't eat very well! We did everything together. We cooked, we worked in the garden together, we fought together, we prayed together, we forgave each other. And so, a whole sort of journey began. I began by thinking that I could do good for them, but then as the days and then the months moved on I began to discover, little by little, what they were doing for me – transforming me, changing me. I thought I was going to teach them something and suddenly I was discovering that they were teaching me quite a bit.

Jean Vanier