

Designing the Alliance

Imagine a world, in fact, where all relationships begin with a consciously designed alliance, the purpose of which is to create a mutually successful experience. How might things be different if alliances had been designed from the start?

The concept of designed alliance is used in coaching to set the stage for a relationship that empowers individuals to be the most successful as they make changes in their work and personal lives.

For example, at the beginning of a relationship, one might suggest the most effective ways for their practice partner to support them when feeling scared, resistant or stuck. Bringing conscious communication and the willingness to listen to and meet each other's needs is a wonderful way to empower the relationship to serve each person. The notion of creating an "alliance" instills the understanding that "we are in this together," working to consciously design a successful experience for both individuals.

Once the alliance has been designed, it's important to revisit it as individual needs and desires change. Consider this a living document!

¹ adapted from

<https://nlp-leadership-coaching.com/designing-the-alliance-how-to-create-healthier-personal-and-professional-relationships/>

DESIGNING THE ALLIANCE

Schedule a 90 minute block of time to design your alliance – only about your partnership, not about work (preferably over lunch away from the office, or wherever makes sense for your partnership).

Choose 3 or 4 questions per person. Take turns answering each others questions. Make sure to allot enough time to answer the last two closing questions!

Identifying Intentions

- What assumptions do you have of each other?
- Name your highest hopes and dreams for this partnership.

Creating the Atmosphere

- What is the tone or relational environment you want to create?
- How do you each contribute in creating the experience you want?

Sharing Responsibility

- What expectations do you have of each other?
- What can you count on from each other? Be specific!
- What requests do you have of each other?
- What commitments do you want to make regarding confidentiality in this space?
- How do you offer and receive feedback?

Creating A Backup Plan

- How do you choose to be with each other when conflict arises?
- What discussion do you want to have if one – or both – of you breaks an agreement?
- What will help you get back to your alliance if it gets slippery or starts to break?
- If one – or both – of you chooses to break the alliance, what is important to remember/to occur in that discussion?

Closing:

Answer the following to close, in addition to the questions answered above:

- How do you appreciate and fiercely support one another?
- Acknowledge or champion each other now

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