

# Becoming Trustable

As a husband, a father, a man ... one of the things I crave most is for my loved ones to trust me. It's something I want with my team, my readers, my coaching clients, the members of my Sea Change and Fearless Training programs.

And I've worked hard over the years to become more trustable.

It's really a magical thing, when people start trusting you. When your wife and kids trust you, it can melt your heart. They can relax, and feel taken care of. When your clients trust you, you can go deeper with them. When you trust yourself, you can relax more in any activity.

There's magic in becoming trustable.

In this article, I'd like to share some of what I've learned. To be clear: I am not perfect, and I don't always do everything perfectly. This isn't about perfection, but about being someone that people can count on — including taking responsibility when you've fallen short of what they were expecting.

## **An Example: What Happens in a Marriage When You're Trustable**

A marriage is a great example of where the magic of trustability can transform things. In a marriage, one partner will crave the radiant love (not necessarily sexual love) of the other partner — a husband craving the abundant feminine love of his wife, for example. (Note: This can apply to any gendered relationship — I'm going to use man/woman because that's the one I know best.)

But she can't fully give her radiant love and affection if she can't relax. And she can't relax if she's always worried about whether things are going to be taken care of, anxious about whether her life is safe, whether you're going to follow through on what you said you'd do. I can't tell you how many men I've worked with who said this is one of their wives' main complaint!

When our partner doesn't trust us and complains that we don't do what we say we're going to do ... we can take that as criticism. We can say, "Why does she always have to complain about me??" But what we're missing is truly getting her experience, of having to worry about things she doesn't want to worry about. She feels tense, and she can't relax enough to give her radiant love.

When they can relax, and know that things are taken care of ... they can give their love more easily and abundantly. Which is what we crave.

And so the magic comes when we become trustable — all of a sudden, they can relax more. And their love flows more easily and abundantly. It's a wonderful magic!

It turns out, this is how all relationships often work, including professional relationships — when they can trust us and relax, a deeper relationship can form. Magic happens.

## **How to Become More Trustable**

When we understand how all of the above works ... then the question becomes, "How do I become more trustable?"

And my answer is that it doesn't happen overnight. And it's a never-ending process, like any kind of mastery. You're never done growing in this area.

But it is possible to grow tremendously here!

I'm going to give some of the key learnings here:

- **Do your best to practice keeping your word.** That means when you say you're going to do something, really commit to making that happen. Sometimes that means sacrificing some comfort to make it happen. But make it a top priority, and take it seriously.
- **When you can't keep your word, own up to it.** Let them know ahead of time if you're not able to do it. If you messed up, take responsibility and apologize, and let them know what you'll do going forward to avoid the same mistake repeating. Do what you need to do to fix things.
- **Breathe deeply and slow down.** When we're jumpy and anxious, they will feel it. When we stand solidly, breathe deeply, and go slower ... they feel this as solidity and trustability. As with all of this, it's a learning process — you'll have moments of anxiety, but you can learn to breathe deeply even here. You'll have moments of fidgetyness and jumpiness ... but you can learn to slow down even here, with practice.
- **Create structure for yourself and them.** When you are committed to making certain things happen (taking care of the car, getting the groceries, paying the bills) ... it will help greatly to have structure, like a schedule with reminders. When will this get taken care of? You might alter the structure, but having a structure for you and those around you helps them to know that things are in order and will be taken care of. Practice creating structure for others when it would serve them (without forcing it on them) — offer a plan, a schedule, a clear decision, an agreement.
- **When they complain about something you haven't done ... listen.** Hold space for their complaint, and instead of taking it personally, see if there's some way you can help them. But listen first, and get them. Then see what you can do to make it right, to create structure so they can trust it will get done, to clean up any mess you've accidentally made. You don't need to feel blame or shame, but just get them.

- **Take things seriously.** But not too seriously! OK, it's good to have a sense of humor ... but if you dismiss their concerns, or say, "Yeah yeah don't worry" ... they will worry. They can't trust that you're going to do your best. Give it your all. Hear their concerns. Make it clear that you're going to take care of it.
- **Take full responsibility.** Especially when you want to blame them. Instead of pointing the finger ... look at what you might have done to contribute to this, or to allow this situation to happen. Have you not been clear? Have you not created an agreement around this? Have you not been acknowledging them for how great they are? Have you not been taking care of things? When you think you shouldn't have to take on responsibility — that's when you can take on more.
- **Take care of yourself.** If you can't take care of yourself, how can you be trusted to take care of them? This means clean up your messes, put things in order, do some basic personal hygiene, take care of your emotions, give yourself rest when you're feeling stressed or burned out. Being trustable doesn't mean you have to take on so much that you're overworked.
- **Always look for ways to be more trustable.** Where have you dropped the ball? Is there something you could do to feel more solid to them? Where have you avoided taking on responsibility? Where have you let things lapse into a mess? This is a continual area of growth. You don't have to be perfect, but you can continue to grow. For life.

If you take some of this on, a little at a time, I would be willing to bet that things will magically start to change for you in all of your relationships. And it just feels freaking good to be trusted!