

## **LOVE AGREEMENT TEMPLATE v.1**

*For readers of the book:*

It's Not You, It's Us:

A Guide for Living Together Without Growing Apart

by

Sophie Winters

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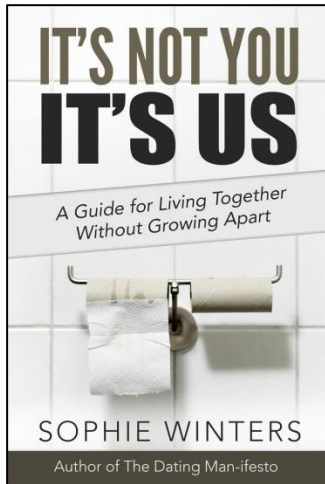
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**Edited from Chapter 4 of *It's Not You, It's Us: A Guide for Living Together without Growing Apart* by Sophie Winters**

**WHAT IS A LOVE AGREEMENT?**

Love Agreements are written agreements about what each of you needs to be happy in your relationship – sexually, emotionally, physically, and financially. Anything is on the table for discussion, preferably over a bottle of wine because *In vino veritas*, as they say (Latin for “In wine, there is truth.”).

Love Agreements do several things:

1. They make us more aware of our own (sometimes latent) needs and desires.
2. They let us explore new attitudes and ideas and give us permission to abandon ones that don't work anymore.
3. They're surprisingly sexy conversations.
4. They open up communication.
5. They breathe fresh air into a relationship.
6. They lead to greater intimacy.

Love Agreements can be changed at any time. In fact, they should change, as people mature and gain life experience. Tastes change, people change, and so must the terms and agreements of your union. If you expect your partner to remain the same person year after a year – a perfect fossil of their younger self – then you're in for a big disappointment. After all, what doesn't grow, dies. That's true of plants, people and relationships.

**PEARLY WISDOM:** Your Love Agreement is highly personal and doesn't need to be shared with others. If you're concerned about the information getting out in a public way, you can do one of two things: **1. Don't write down anything sensitive;** **2. Include a confidentiality clause.** If the threat of humiliation crosses your mind, you may wish to engage a lawyer. Don't want to use a lawyer? Then adhere to point **1**, especially if your Love Agreement is sexual in nature.

**Putting Together Your Love Agreement**



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Anything and everything is on the table when it comes to a Love Agreement. Here are some ideas:

- How much quality time you will spend with each other per week
- How much video-game time your partner wants per week
- How much sex you want each week
- Vacations – separate and apart
- How much time to spend with the in-laws
- Churchgoing: Will you go separately or together, and how often?
- Food and nutrition: junk food, alcohol consumption
- Body weight: goal of not putting on more than 10 pounds, etc.
- Adultery
- Pornography
- Personal goals
- Private time
- Boys' night out or girls' night out
- Privacy
- Hygiene
- Division of labour

By creating space for conversations like this, you would be surprised at what bubbles up.

*A good agreement does not try to change reality  
but provides for adjusting to the truth as it is and as it changes.*

— David Viscott

I really do believe that in a healthy relationship, you want to make each other happy and fulfilled. So why not tell your partner exactly what you need in order to thrive? In fact, why not write it down?

**Next – Instructions to get started.**



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# YOUR LOVE AGREEMENT

*Allow yourself time to think about yourself. Write down both what you want and need from your relationship with the other person and what you want out of life. After you have a list go over it carefully, asking yourself about each item. "How much does this mean to me? Do I really need this? How long have I wanted this? Why haven't I gotten this before?" Your partner should be making a list and thinking about it in the same way. When you finally discuss your lists together, don't rush or pretend to understand something you do not. Don't allow your partner to pretend for the sake of pride that something is unimportant to him when you know differently. **Each of you must look out for the other's rights as well as your own.***

— David Viscott, M.D., *How to Live with Another Person*

I recommend starting simple when you make your first Love Agreement. Pick a few topics you would like to address, and leave some areas blank. Trying to do too much too soon can result in failure.

When you renew your Love Agreement (I recommend six months from the first, or as things change for you), you can address other topics.

Remember – it's your relationship, your rules.

## INSTRUCTIONS TO GET STARTED:

Print three copies of the Love Agreement Template at the end of this document: one for you and one for your partner. The third you can tuck aside for later, when you will compare notes and merge ideas.

Read through the rest of this document. Jot ideas down without sharing them with your partner until you have your talk (these need to be YOUR ideas, reflecting your values, needs and wants).

Set a date to discuss.

## SET THE TABLE: DISCUSS YOUR LOVE AGREEMENTS

1. Light a candle, pour a bottle of wine, and pull out your separate agreements.



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*Head's up: the first talk is the hardest and most awkward.  
That's why I recommend wine.*

2. Once you've talked about your wants and needs, merge them into a new Love Agreement (that third copy you tucked away). Your final agreement should reflect both of your goals, things you both want to achieve in your relationship. Now sign it. Sounds goofy, I know. But the act of signing your name to a document formalizes it. You're telling yourself and your partner – consciously and unconsciously – that you take your relationship and happiness seriously!
3. Before you call it a night, set an appointment for a follow up meeting in two weeks. Check in with each other – how well are you doing the Agreement? What doesn't get monitored tends to slip.
4. I recommend setting another date, six months from your first Love Agreement, to review and make a new one. Now that you're thinking about your relationship more, things will pop into your head as you find ways to improve it. If you want to amend your Love Agreement before six months, no problem. The point is to not get into auto-pilot and forget about your commitments.
5. Your next Love Agreement should reflect what's working, what's not, and what you want to change for yourself and your relationship. There is a possibility what you thought you wanted isn't all the important, or needs to be defined differently. This is a great opportunity to discuss this insight with your partner, and tweak your Love Agreement to fit your new state of mind.
6. Remember: there is no such thing as perfection. Love Agreements are meant to evolve. The only thing that gets easier is asking for what you want – which is a good thing to practice!
7. You may feel amorous after finishing your Love Agreement. It's a good idea to prepare for the possibility. 😊

*Be kind to one another. Listen and support each other's desires.  
What may seem silly to you may be a big deal to your partner.*

*Your relationship is in your hands now. With a Love Agreement, you've got a road map.  
Your destination? Intimacy. Respect. Happiness.*

**Next – Conversation starters and generating ideas.**



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## CONVERSATION STARTERS:

When you think about it, the entire book, **“It’s Not You, It’s Us: A Guide for Living Together without Growing Apart”** is written as one big Love Agreement to work through with your partner. Each of the chapters is meant to spark conversations about what’s working in your relationship and what areas could use attention. So, if you’ve read the book, you have a great springboard for forming your own Love Agreement. If you need inspiration, re-read any of the following chapters:

Chapter 1 – The Happy Couple

Chapter 2 – Communication: Good Talk, Bad Talk

Chapter 3 – Communication: Kindness and Love Languages

Chapter 4 – Communication: Love Agreements

Chapter 5 – The Division of Labour: Fairness and Respect

Chapter 6 – Hygiene: Behind Closed Doors

Chapter 7 – Money, It’s a Kick (in the Ass)

Chapter 8 – Property and Possessions: Finding a Love Nest

Chapter 9 – Living Together versus Marriage: How Committed Are You?

Chapter 10 – Covering Your Ass(ets)

Chapter 11 – Sex and Desire: The Science of Falling in Love

Chapter 12 – Sex and Desire: The Science of Staying in Love

Chapter 13 – How to Feel Sexy and Sensual

Chapter 14 – Trust



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Chapter 15 – Privacy and Personal Space

Chapter 16 – Personal Growth and the Pursuit of Happiness

Chapter 17 – Mental Health

Chapter 18 – Heal Your Wounds. Claim Your Power. Get More Love.

Chapter 19 – Exes, In-laws and Relatives, a.k.a. “You Mess with One Bean, You Get the Whole Burrito”

Chapter 20 – Spiritual Matters

Chapter 21 – Kids, Step-kids and Furry Kids

Chapter 22 – Vulnerability

Chapter 23 – Criticism and Defensiveness

Chapter 24 – Resolving Conflict

Chapter Bonus – The Art of Difficult Conversations

Chapter 25 – Compromise

Got some ideas cooking? Good. Now pick three or so areas and list them in the template at the end.

Write down one thing that is working and one thing you would like to change about your relationship (or lifestyle) or even yourself. It’s important to know what’s good so you continue to rock that part of your life.

**Next – some Love Agreement examples.**



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### **Example 1:**

**Topic #1:** Communication

**What's working in this area:** I love talking on the couch and cuddling.

**What I would like to see changed or added:** I would like us to stop talking through the bathroom door at each other.

### **Example 2:**

**Topic #1:** Lifestyle and Finances

**What's working in this area:** I enjoy eating well and trying new ethnic foods with you.

**What I would like to see changed or added:** We eat out a lot, which I enjoy, but it also costs a lot of money. I would like to save a little more money without totally sacrificing this aspect of our lives. I propose the following:

- We eat out no more than once or twice a week.
- We make 3 home cooked meals a week. You make one, I make one, and one we prepare together. We can have leftovers the next day.
- I would like to try different ethnic recipes and maybe take a cooking class together as a date night.
- We find recipes online that look good.
- We put the money we save into something else we want to do but never seem to have enough money for, like a vacation.

See how simple your requests can be? Simple but powerful.

*Note: if you think my book would make a great wedding gift, or know a friend who should read it, please consider gifting them a copy. Print editions will be available in December 2015.*

*Also, if you have any questions or want to share your story in a blog post, feel free to email me at [thechachaclub@gmail.com](mailto:thechachaclub@gmail.com). My website is: [www.thechachaclub.com](http://www.thechachaclub.com).*

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**Next – YOUR actual Love Agreement Template.**



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# LOVE AGREEMENT TEMPLATE

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOVE AGREEMENT BETWEEN: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

**Topic #1:**

**What's working in this area:**

**What I would like to see changed or added:**

**Topic #2:**

**What's working in this area:**

**What I would like to see changed or added:**

**Topic #3:**

**What's working in this area:**

**What I would like to see changed or added:**

**Topic #4:**

**What's working in this area:**

**What I would like to see changed or added:**

**Topic #5:**

**What's working in this area:**



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What I would like to see changed or added:

Topic #6:

What's working in this area:

What I would like to see changed or added:

**ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:** (anything at all that occurs to you – dream a little, rant a little, love a lot.)

Review this love agreement on: \_\_\_\_\_

Date to create a new agreement: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATED: \_\_\_\_\_ DATED: \_\_\_\_\_



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