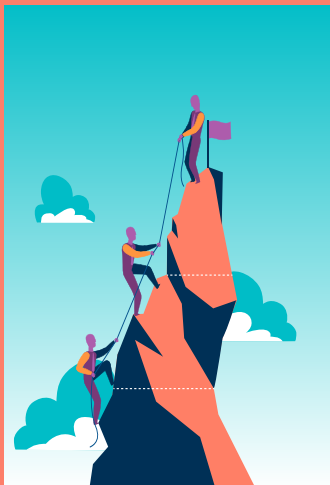


the nature of
TRUST





the concept

Everyone is trustworthy in the sense that *how they act* is the intersection of *who they are* and the *contexts they occupy*. You may get eaten by a hungry tiger if you get in its path, but it's not because the tiger is untrustworthy. It's because that's the nature of the tiger.

When trust isn't rooted in an evolving sense of the other person's nature and what that means as conditions change in and around the relationship, we make agreements that don't take enough into account. And when those agreements fracture, we feel let down—or even betrayed—and may completely withdraw our trust.

Making an agreement with a tiger to not get eaten doesn't take into account what happens when it gets hungry—when it experiences an intense need. And yet, we frequently make flawed agreements like this in relationships and are then mystified why we got bit.

This tool seeks to deepen the conversation about what trust is—and what it is not.

1

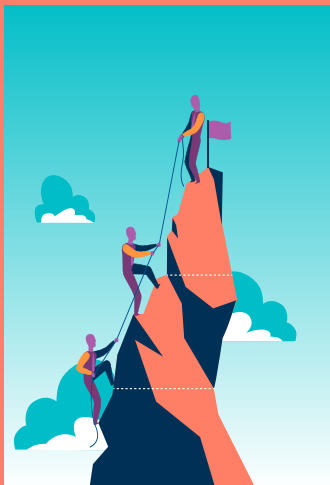


Where are you on the spectrum of trustworthiness?



1. Would you mark yourself on the *trustworthy* half of the spectrum?
2. Do you think almost everyone in this room would mark themselves on the *trustworthy* half of the spectrum?
3. If we randomly selected 100 people off the street, what's your guess on how many of them would mark themselves on the *trustworthy* half of the spectrum?
4. What does it mean that we struggle to trust so many people who perceive themselves as trustworthy?

2



What Trust Is

Openness to possibility.

Something that is informed by the other person's nature.

The space we hold for relationship.

Allowing something to be what it's *supposed to be*.

The lifeblood of good agreements.

What Trust Is Not

Something that is *lost* rather than *continuously morphing*.

Something that is *earned back*.

Insistence that people follow agreements that make us comfortable.

A way to control people.

Others exclusively following the rules you impose.

3



What Agreements Are

A container within which a relationship exists.

Informed by trust.

Fixed or malleable based on the situation.

Spoken or unspoken—explicit or implicit.

Specific and detailed—or general and principled.

What Agreements Are Not

A reason to *withdraw trust* instead of *inform trust* when they are broken.

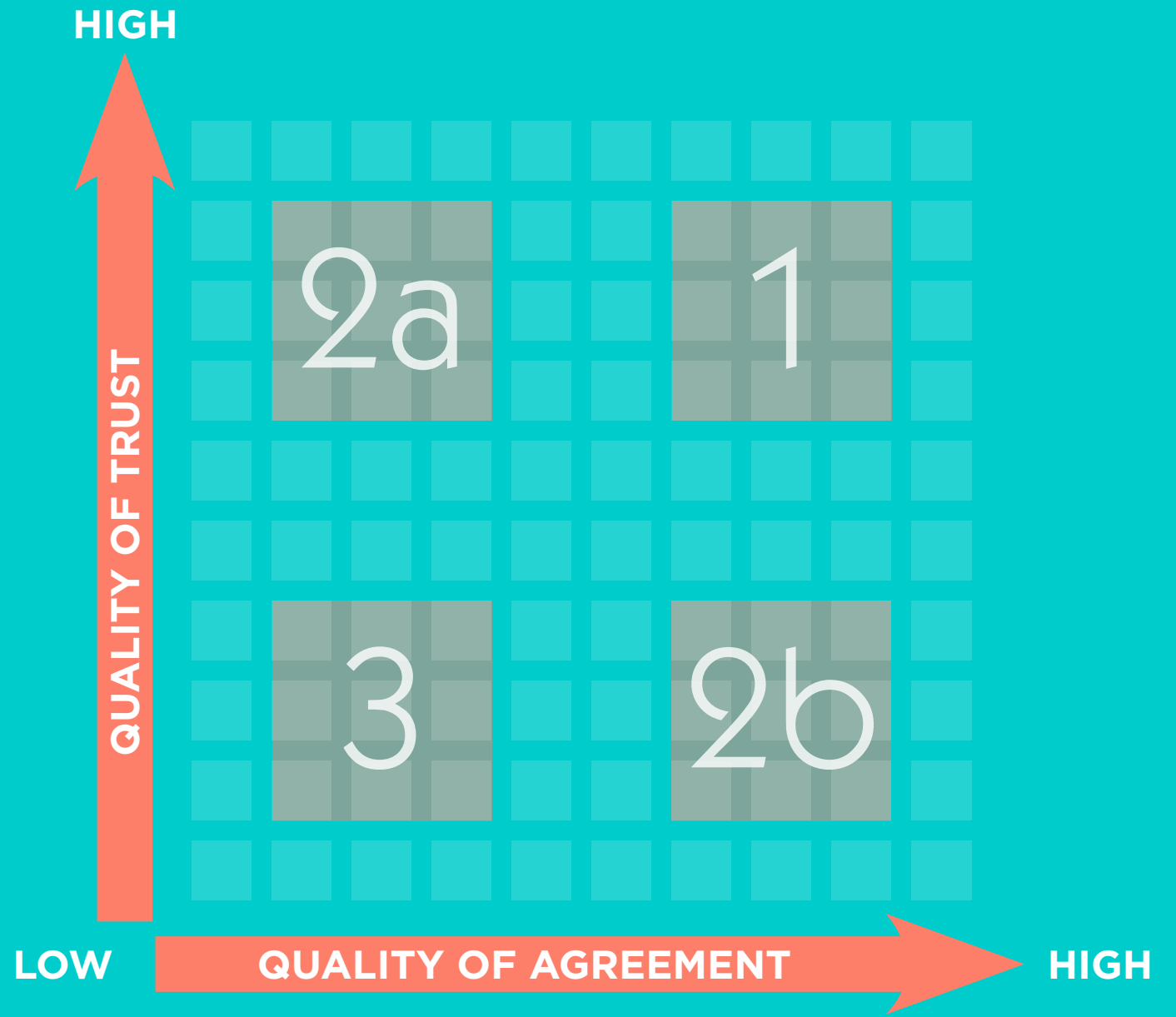
A wise way to control core relationships.

Always binding if conditions change.

Always a good way to assess the intention of other people.

Always inclusive of unspoken assumptions.

4



5



IMPLICIT AGREEMENT

EXPLICIT AGREEMENT



EXAMPLE

IMPLICIT AGREEMENT

EXPLICIT AGREEMENT



EXAMPLE

IMPLICIT AGREEMENT

EXPLICIT AGREEMENT



EXAMPLE

6



GREAT

STRENGTH AND RANGE OF AGREEMENTS

2a

1

3

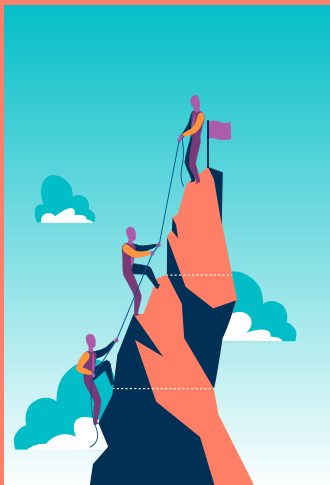
2b

POOR

KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR NATURE

GREAT

7



When things get difficult, how can mistrust reduce our chances of moving ahead successfully?

1. The miraculous may no longer be able to reach us as we create rigid boundaries and generally lock things down.
2. Our assumptions of what's possible are a subset of what is actually possible—we can't entertain the full field of possibility.

YOUR ANSWER

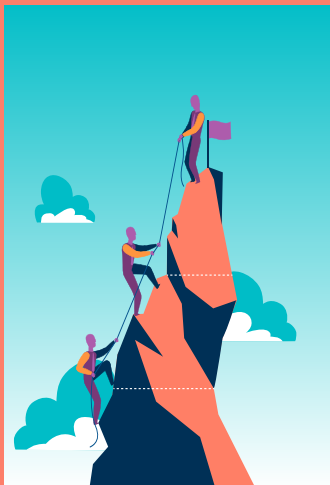
YOUR ANSWER

8



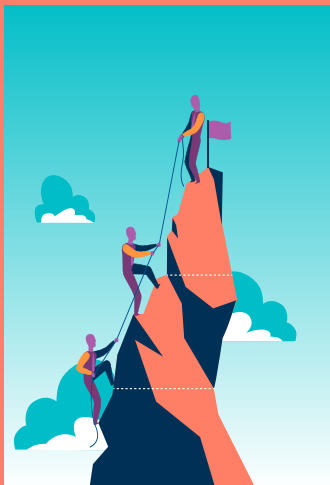
How can insisting that people “earn our trust” increase risk and decrease the odds of the best things happening?

9



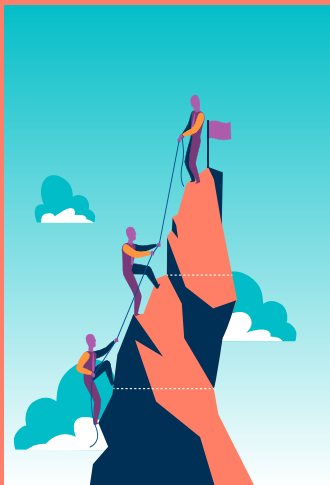
*How could a general posture of mistrust in life
make you more naive—not less?*

10



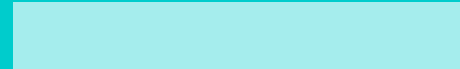
Why does mistrust make explicit agreements more likely and implicit agreements less likely? How can this create an undesirable feedback loop?

11



Think of a person who acted in a way that eroded trust in your relationship. How could you have increased the odds of a better outcome by understanding more about their nature—by taking aspects into account that are neither inherently good nor bad?

THIS TOOL BELONGS TO



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