

SPIRITUAL CONSENT

Spiritual consent was one of the first tools taught to me by my sponsor Mark Houston. The idea of spiritual consent is that I am giving you the right to call me on any behavior that you see me exhibiting whether it hurts my feelings or not. "We'd rather step on your toes than stand on your grave."

One has to formally establish spiritual consent with another.

The considerations are always given in the spirit of love and compassion. Brutal honesty will not fit the bill.

With these comments we try to "follow the path of consideration". We try for the comments to begin with "Is it possible that..." or "I'd like to offer for your consideration that...". This method seems to effectively get past our defense mechanisms.

The last key element of the method is that when one is offered a consideration the only response allowed is simply "Thank you". or "Thanks, I'll take that under consideration". This keeps the ego from going into self defense mode. If one is allowed to respond to a consideration the only thing we are going to get is the ego trying to defend itself by telling you how you are looking at it all wrong. This usually comes with a long explanation or story. Responses to considerations need to come the next day or at our next gathering of the group.

I have a clear memory of calling Mark one day to report another members outrageous behavior at a meeting and how I should approach him. Mark asked "Do you have spiritual consent with him?" I said "Well, no." to which he replied "Then it's none of your business". Tough concept to accept for me. I had always operated under the theory of "If not me, who?" Mark was big on "A position of neutrality" in many matters.

Having spiritual consent with a small group or with another individual is a powerful tool for growth and it is an honor to be given spiritual consent from another. Avoid sarcasm and silliness at all costs. This tool can greatly aid us in our quest to grow in understanding and effectiveness.

Charlie P. 2012