

# IDEAS 20

**International Online Teachers Society  
Debate  
Educational Materials For  
Advance and Upper Intermediate  
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society  
Publishing Committee**



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## WHY PEOPLE FEAR COMMITMENT

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I used to work with a great woman in the office before. She was intelligent, had a wonderful attitude, enjoyed life with her friends, and loved her job. What was really surprising about her though, was that, at 38, she had neither a steady boyfriend nor a casual relationship. Now, this surprised me because I knew she had everything any guy could want in a lady. So once, I went and asked her.

Her answer was plain and simple: she wasn't looking to get hitched, and she was enjoying her single-blessedness. I was amazed at how simple it all was to her. Even when I asked her if she didn't fear getting old alone, she seemed optimistic about the fact that she had many nephews and nieces who would help her when she gets to that stage. She's been helping a lot of them go through their schooling. I jokingly gave her a rejoinder, "You're just afraid of getting into a commitment!" She laughed my remark off, good for her.

I guess that's just how it goes with a whole lot of other people who value their single-blessedness, or their being single. They prefer to spend their lives with the greatest freedom, to do whatever it is they wish to do unhampered. They are happy that way, mainly because they've got family and friends who make them feel blessed enough being single.

Some married individuals may find it difficult to fathom why single people choose to stay so way past their marrying age. But there have been stories of spinsters and bachelors who end up getting married later in their lives, too. The simple reason for this is that they may have been able to find the person they were meant to be with. Those are great love stories.

And then there are also those who remarry despite a failed relationship. That's fine, as long as they're happy and they work hard to keep their second marriages. These people are not scared of getting committed a second time because that's what they find to be the essence of living--to have someone to share their lives with, nurture till they grow old, and share their dreams with.

As for those who choose to remain unattached, let us leave them to their choice. They are entitled to it after all. As my perpetually-single office colleague once told me, "It's pointless to get married just because I am getting old or I need someone to grow old with." In other words, she hadn't really found a good reason to get married, or a wonderful man to get married to. She is, to this day, still happily single. She doesn't find it odd, as I have, that she is still so. I have come to understand her reasons, and have accepted them fully as she has.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. In your opinion, what is the best age to commit to getting married? Why is that so?
2. Do you think you can stay single till you grow old? Why or why not?
3. Does commitment to a relationship sometimes scare you? How and why?
4. Have you ever had a serious relationship? Or are you in one right now?
5. Why do some marriages fail?



## WHY KEEPING COMMITMENTS IS IMPORTANT

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We are often faced with a lot of commitments—at work, in the family, with our relatives and friends, with other people. The challenge to keep them is sometimes great, because we do have other priorities to take care of. There might even be instances when keeping one commitment could prevent us from keeping another. During such times, we ask ourselves if we can ever get out of the other commitment.

Unfortunately, a commitment to do something should be kept. Oftentimes, trying to get out of a commitment could spell disaster, a bad reputation, lost peace of mind, or worse, erosion of a relationship. So before committing to anything, ask yourself some basic questions.

First, is the commitment time sensitive? If it is, tell the other person from the onset how you want to go about everything within your time frame. If the other person feels that your plan is fine, then you can go about doing what you have to do to keep your commitment. You are under obligation to do so now, because the other person has given you free rein. On the other hand, if the other person does not feel that your time frame is not in keeping with his, and you've already presented everything to him in honest terms, then do not make a commitment that you would just end up not keeping. Be sure to do this in the most gracious way possible so that the other person feels assured that you would still like to work with him on another commitment in the future.

Second, are there possible hindrances to keeping the commitment? It is good advice to anticipate what could come between you and your commitment. Are there resources you do not have just yet? Do you have enough information? Are there problems at the onset? Are there people you might need to find first for information? For instance, if you commit to see a friend at a specific time, ask yourself if you can make it to that appointment. Consider preparation time and travel time. The most common scenario: Friend asks, "Where are you now? I've been here for 30 minutes." Your reply, "I'm coming. There's just too much traffic." If this scenario happened in a professional setting, such as a job interview, you'd end up not getting the job. Make sure that when you make any commitment, you will do the necessary preparations and follow through.

Third, in the event that one way of keeping the commitment fails, is there another way you can keep the commitment? Exhaust all within your reach so that you wouldn't end up with egg on your face. It can be tempting to make a commitment at the spur of the moment, but what happens when you have to break that commitment? Always have a Plan B, like I always say.

In sum, the commitments we make are not as important as the commitments we keep. Those we keep build our reputation, those we make only add up in number.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Have you ever made an appointment you couldn't keep? Be able to tell the story in class.
2. Why is it important to keep our commitments?
3. How would you feel if someone didn't keep their commitment with you?
4. What are possible hindrances to keeping a commitment?
5. What advice can you give to people who get into commitments and fail to fulfill them?



## THE RUNAWAY BRIDE AND OTHER STORIES

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The Julia Roberts film entitled “The Runaway Bride” is a hilarious movie about a woman who literally runs away on the day of her wedding, sometimes even leaving her groom before the altar in utter disbelief and shame. She had already done this many times, earning her the moniker “The Runaway Bride”. Her problem was that she would suddenly get into a panic attack during the event because she was deathly afraid of the uncertainties she believed were part of being married. The story ends well, and is worth watching over and over again, if only to prove that commitments, though oftentimes hard to keep, can bring about happiness and contentment when they are kept.

In the family, we might find ourselves having to make numerous commitments: a new dress for a daughter; a new cellular phone for a son; a date with the spouse; a call to a sister; a visit to a parent/grandparent. Remember that when all other people leave us and the world crumbles, our family is all we have. Whatever commitments we make to any member should be kept. Otherwise, we might end up estranging ourselves from them. Do not make a promise you cannot keep, especially to your kids. Children are intelligent enough to understand when we say we can not make a commitment just yet. Just assure them that in the future, you could be able to commit to something for and with them. Or, try making a compromise. That way, you do not unduly disappoint them.

In the workplace, weigh your options carefully before making a commitment. If, for instance, the boss wants a report done within a certain period, you are under obligation to complete that report. But tell your boss at the onset if you expect any delays or possible unexpected problems. As for unforeseen events, immediately inform the boss of them so he knows you’ve been working on the report and have experienced some setbacks. If you do this, the boss gets updated accordingly on the progress of the report.

When we make commitments to our friends, it’s tempting to break them when we run into fortuitous episodes. Consider a commitment to see a friend you haven’t seen for a long time. If you’ve got pressing concerns that prevent you from keeping your commitment, tell your friend honestly about them. If he is a true friend, he will understand. But promise to make it up to your friend when you can.

Remember that a commitment is a promise you are obliged to keep. Getting out of a commitment can be like trying to unscramble an egg. It is therefore upon us to do what we can to fulfill our commitments.

### Questions for Discussion:

1. Has someone ever made a commitment to you that they have not kept? Talk about it in class.
2. How do you make sure that you always keep your commitments?
3. Is it easy for you to keep your commitments? What commitments are always the hardest to keep?
4. Talk about a certain time when you couldn’t keep a commitment. Share your thoughts about that episode.
5. What would you do if your boss gave you a task you honestly felt you wouldn’t be able to do?



## COMMITMENT – THE SINGLE-FACTOR TO SUCCESS

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Nowadays if we are so sluggish and volatile in the way we live, then, it is not far from achieving nothing at all. Whereas, if we keep on being enthusiastic, consistent, dependable and optimistic person (seeing the other side of the coin) that we are, who is hopeful and decided to pursue whatever he or she wants to happen, then it is not far-fetched to paving the road to success. Come to think of it, an individual who seeks to have a good life ought to have commitment in whatever endeavour or field he chooses to acquire. Then and only then can we say, “Yes, that person is on the right track and is highly-motivated. He commits himself in wherever or whatever he goes and does.

Who among us do not want to succeed? Most probably, this is every individual’s hope and dream, “To be a success.” There are a lot of factors to consider for an individual to attain success, but the most important single factor to individual success is COMMITMENT. Commitment ignites action. To commit means to pledge yourself to a particular purpose. Commitment is practicing what we believe, in a consistent and persistent manner. Stand in what we believe and the lesser will one get to experience downfall or a failure. Do we want to get good results in everything we do? Then one has to show his commitment. On the other hand, it is not easy to demonstrate commitment to others, to your work and to oneself. It will take hard work to do so, but there is a way to achieve a reputation for commitment, and that is through determination and persistence. Needless to say, commitment is most difficult and can be proven during tough times. How a person weathers the storms clearly demonstrates their basic beliefs. Therefore, the real test comes when you can hold on the line and trail the route to compromise. It follows then that genuine commitment stands the test of time.

True commitment is a heartfelt promise to oneself that you will not back off no matter what happens or whatever circumstances beyond our control may be. It is only through your willingness to commit that you can get hold and acquire that ability to achieve your goals and dreams. Steadily aim for your goal, go for that unwavering desire that you feel and cater to your passion for excellence. This is the kind of commitment that one should get hold of. If an individual is committed to his work, friends, family, and career and most especially to God, that person can and would definitely succeed.

Lastly, as Albert Einstein once said, “Only one who devotes himself to a cause with his whole strength and soul can be a true master. For this reason mastery demands all of a person. Commitment pays off for it surely makes us a person with integrity. Let us continue to have that vision and have that opportunity to stay committed, as Magic Johnson’s quote goes, “I was able to see what I wanted to do, I could see the opportunity, even when others could not, and I stay committed in doing it, and doing it well no matter what.”

Questions for discussion:

- 1.Are you willing to pay the price of commitment? Explain your answer.
- 2.Can you consider that the commitment you display is par excellence with others? How?
- 3.What does it take to be committed?
- 4.Do you exert all your efforts to come up with a compromise and have true commitment? Explain further.
- 5.How can you show commitment in your own right?



I Do

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“I do.” This line is always being said in wedding vows which are very sacred and must not be violated. This line is a sign of commitment. Some people have this characteristic that when they start something and one thing goes wrong; they tend to waver and start losing the enthusiasm of doing that something and lead to procrastination. I won't be writing about commitment and success in life, this is about a love story that somehow, happened to touch my heart. I would like to share to you a movie and book that I have watched and read that I think is about commitment.

The Notebook is a very popular book written by the famous Nicholas Sparks and this same book was converted into a movie in 2004. This is a story of two people who fell in love with each other in one summer vacation. These two, Noah and Allie, fell in love when they were teenagers and were separated by Allie's parents because of Noah's stand in the society. Years have passed and they've already had their own life; Allie is about to get married and Noah is living his life alone finishing the renovation of his house. Before Allie's wedding, she went back to their house in South Carolina to visit Noah. She saw Noah there and began to fall for him again. Noah did the same. To make the long story short, they fell in love with each other and got married. They've had children and raised them well. But the thing is, Allie was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. Since Noah and Allie made a commitment to each other, Noah didn't mind that. He committed to go to the hospital everyday, where Allie was confined, to read her a story about two lovers who fell in love with each other in the summer of 1940. He never failed to do that, why, because he made a commitment. He loved Allie so much and will give her all his time just for her not forget their own love story.

Committing to something is not easy. It is something that you work for and work out. Love and time are inseparable because they always equal to commitment. When you commit yourself to someone, or maybe just to something let's just say, you will need to exert effort, devote so much attention, and fall in love with it. If not, you will lose everything that drives you to do it, to make it, to finish it, and to win it. The consequences are like in love and marriage.

It's like marrying the work you commit yourself into. You need to make sacrifices. You need to work hard for it. If something goes wrong, you need to fix it right away.

Commitment is something that you engaged to. You put your words on it; give your heart and time. You cannot commit yourself to something and leave it undone. It's like a love story; the real and everlasting love story. You will do whatever you can to make it work and last.

So, in the end, before you commit to something, make sure that you can handle its consequences. Committing to something is really hard to do but it's worth it.

Question for discussion:

1. Do you find it hard to commit on something?
2. Aside from marriage and love story, to what else can you compare commitment?
3. What can you say about Allie and Noah's love story?
4. Have you ever committed to something? Why?
5. What are the sacrifices you've done to finish what you've started?



## JOB CONTRACT

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He was so delighted when he got the news of employment. He knew he had a lot to do once signing the new contract such as finishing his last commitments, planning for a house move and get ready for his new position. He went straight home to bless his family with the news, and who, in return, were even more than happy to see him overjoyed.

The next day he resigned peacefully and his resignation was accepted with no hard feelings. He only had to wait three months to receive his end of contract benefits. He then contacted the new company asking them about certain matters concerning his employment file, and the human resources officer was more than pleased to help him. He was thinking of nothing but a fresh start with his family, and to put an end to his wife's financial agony.

The movers were in a rush to wrap up their job with this family as the wife was very worried with the way they were dealing with the furniture that she had to keep an eye on them all the time. Her husband then left to the other side of the town to hand in his full file as requested. When he reached the main gate, no one was there to greet him not even the security. He was looking for any sign that says 'Lunch Time' or 'In Recess', but to no avail. He then dialed the HR's number, but no one answered the first time and on the second try, the number was hitting busy! He was suspicious of this behavior that he refused to move away from the site until he gets some answers. He went around the company asking people if they know anything about it as well as asking passersby if they obtain any kind of information.

An elder man saw him and approached to him: "I believe you are asking about this place?"

"Yes! Thank God someone has something to say. I just got recently employed, but I find it weird that no one is around to open the doors."

"That's because they are cons. I am a victim as well...."

"Victim?" The man interrupted.

"Correct. They made you pay \$ 250 for a file application and make you believe that you are recruited. One man inspected them and he has luckily caught them, but they vanished. The police should be here in any minute."

"What? I don't believe you! Everything was so real and the people that interviewed me seemed professional...."

"I am sorry, pal. You got spammed!"

Questions for discussion:

1. Who do you blame? The forged company or the man?
2. What do you think might happen to the man next?
3. What does 'spammed' mean?
4. Where would the cons go next after being exposed?
5. What have you learned out of this story?





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