



Become A Change Master Step 2: Enlist Allies



Unless you already have all the encouragement, insight, assistance, and emotional and financial support you need, you need to enlist allies.

A group of powerful, trustworthy allies can make the difference between your desired change happening or languishing. Allies bring new information and insight. They bring new perspectives and possibilities. They add their skills and resources to the mix. Their excitement and enthusiasm help you maintain your commitment.

Yet many of us have difficulty getting the support we need. We don't know who to ask, how to ask or what to ask for. Sometimes we're afraid to ask.

Why Ask for Help?

In a brainstorming session, my students and I came up with a whole list of reasons we resist asking for help: If I ask for help, I'll lose control, I'll look like I don't know what I'm doing, I'll be obligated to help the other person in the future and I might not want to be available then. I'll be judged or dismissed. I'll create expectations I'm not sure I can live up to.

Any of those ring true for you? It's a good idea to identify the most significant sources of your resistance to asking for help. Then return to the Urgency Statement you prepared (in the last *Imagination InkLinks*) to remind yourself why it's important to make this change now. For each resistance, list reasons and ways to overcome it.

Accept the fact that you can't make change happen all by yourself. If you could do it easily, without help, you would have done it already. As one of my mentors, Luis Cordoba, once said, "If you were meant to do it alone, you'd have your own planet."

Change is necessary, and this 7 Step Process makes it simpler, but it's rarely easy. That's why you need allies. And why you need to keep returning to your Urgency Statement to remind yourself why you are willing to make the effort. One of the most helpful things your allies can

do is remind you why you're doing it and encourage you to keep going.

Who to Ask

Chapter 7 of *Dancing in the Dragon's Den* explores this in greater depth than we have space for here. In brief, you want to identify people who are committed to making changes for the sake of their creativity and personal growth. They are potential allies.

People who are not committed to their own journey cannot support you on yours. They may want to help you, they may say they will help you, but they can't. You can't give what you don't have. People who aren't willing to endure discomfort for the sake of their own growth won't understand what you're experiencing. They may even encourage you to quit in an unconscious attempt to justify their own lack of commitment.

They aren't your enemies, but they aren't your allies. Practice discernment with them. Don't talk too much about your commitment and don't expect them to help. If they do, it's an unexpected bonus.

Once you've identified people who are committed to their own change process, consider which of them might be willing to support yours. Some allies will be your friends and family. Some might be people you meet in classes, clubs, associations, networking groups. Some might be people you hire as a coach or advisor. You'll want a lot of allies with different perspectives and skills.

What to Ask For and How to Ask

First clarify the different kinds of help you might need: encouragement, accountability, information, resources, help with specific tasks, etc. You don't know yet exactly what the whole process will require and that's okay. But do consider what you might need and who among your potential allies is best suited to give you different kinds of support.

Complete the top half of the Ally Agreement form. Tell a potential ally about the change you're committed to and why it's important for you to take action now. Explain how you'd like this person to support you and ask if he or she is willing to do that. Review the form together, discussing and negotiating how your ally is willing to help.

For example, I've asked my friends Claudia and Julie to read chapters of my novel and tell me what they like about the story. Neither one of them is a writer, so I'm not asking them to give me 'critiques'. What I most need from them now is open-hearted encouragement, and they have both agreed that that is something they want to give me.

The more specific you and your ally can be, the better. Set dates for when you'll check in about specific

tasks. Talk about when and how you'll communicate. Do you want an encouraging email once a week? Do you want to meet in person or talk on the phone?

At the same time, allow the relationship to evolve as you move through the rest of the change process. The whole reason for involving allies so early in the process is because they'll help you figure out what your next steps are as you continue your journey. And like any trip, change is more enjoyable when you have traveling companions.

You won't want to miss Step 3: Discover Your Vision and Develop Your Strategies, so be sure you send your email address to Rosanne@RosanneBane.com or mail a \$10 check to cover production and mailing costs for the rest of the Become a Change Master series.

Ally Agreement Worksheet



I, _____ would like _____ to be my ally. In this role, I would like _____ to take the following action:

I, _____, agree to be _____'s ally. I am willing to take the following action to support _____:

Need More Allies? Consider This! Become a Change Master

We will apply the 7 Step Process of Personal Change to give you the tools, skills and support you need to:

- ⊙ Stop procrastinating and start living the life you want
- ⊙ Remove obstacles and take action to make your dreams reality
- ⊙ Develop habits that support your creativity and your spiritual and personal growth
- ⊙ Honor your promises to yourself and live with integrity, authenticity and power!

Mondays, 6:45 - 8:45 p.m.
July 1 through August 12

612-722-4139 or www.RosanneBane.com