

## Synopsis of

# Commitments

by Clifford Brody

In *Commitments*, published by Time and Thought Publishing House, author Clifford Brody poses three very tough questions:

- Why do we make commitments only to end up breaking so many of them?
- Why does it hurt so much more when others break their commitments to us than when we break our commitments to them?
- And why, after all the hurts, do we then make even more commitments without any assurance that things will work out better the next time around?

To find out why, the author takes readers on an unusual journey of discovery based on events in his own life and also in the lives of others ... most of whom readers will know by name, but occasionally a few others whom they won't.

There is a purposefully accommodating structure to the book. Presented in 21 short chapters each opening with a brief personal vignette (including candid accounts of the author's coming to grips with commitments that failed ... failed *him*), *Commitments* defines and links every key element that makes up all commitments, and the unhappy consequences when people believe that only some of these elements really count, and that all the others can safely be ignored.

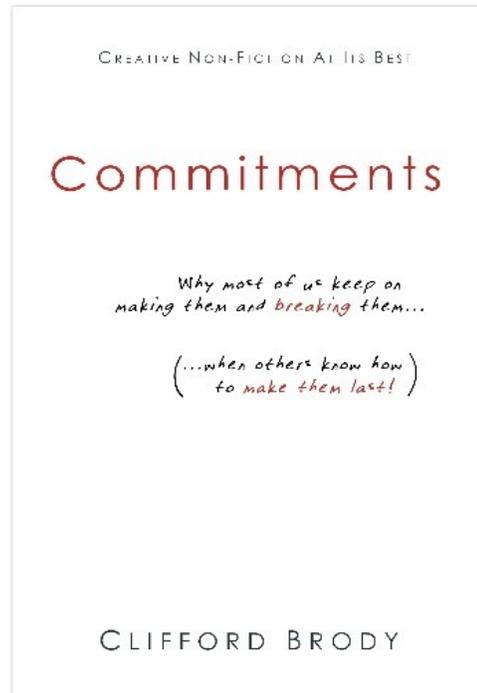
Each chapter's vignette is followed by a single page of a few telling quotes, from people famous or not, keyed both to the personal account the reader has just read and also the words to follow.

Following the quotes, readers uncover the next piece of a commitment "puzzle", how that part fits to the whole, and what happened to people, mostly well known, who in frustration or anger ignored some of those puzzle pieces ... but at their peril. To make his points stick, Brody recounts a selective, sometimes humorous, but often grim history of marriages, movies, rock music, slavery, the onset of World War II, the 1988 and 1992 U.S. presidential elections, Twitter, Ben & Jerry's ice cream, Broadway shows, even computer chips—things that no one would likely ever believe could blend together in any story.

Even a shipwreck fits in, the tragic 1956 sinking of the Italian liner Andrea Doria after it collided with a Swedish liner in the early-morning fog-shrouded waters of Long Island Sound.

The author then needs only two brief chapters, at the very end, to tie it all together. And, in his last vignette, Brody shares a private, sensual moment of impossible love and rediscovery, captured in words and a grainy photo of a Paris café where he learned how his commitment to the future made it impossible to rediscover the past ... no less re-live it.

The author draws a "bottom line" for readers of *Commitments* by confirming that although people will by necessity make different kinds of commitments passing through each stage of their lives, there are core



constants in *every* commitment that, when fully embraced, will lead to commitments that work and last precisely the way people want them to ... but only when those constants *are* fully embraced.

As the Table of Contents below confirms, **Commitments** ultimately provides a step-by-step understanding of *why and how* people get ahead not just simply when commitments succeed but also when they fail, and why the author believes it is smart to trust others to deliver on their commitments even when there is no concrete proof that they ever will.

Preface and Acknowledgements	12. Commitments That Work: The Last Two (Not-So-Secret) Ingredients
Prologue	13. What Glue Holds All The Commitment Ingredients Together?
1. A Tale of Two Commitments	14. Commitments Are Too Complicated! Can't We "Uncomplicate" Them?
2. Promises, Vows, Oaths, and Commitments: Aren't They All the Same?	15. When It Looks Like the Commitment Is Really Failing!
3. Commitments and What Religion Tells Us...or Not!	16. So The Commitment Failed After All! Who's To Blame?
4. Commitments and Six Royal Wives	17. After the Failure? It's Practice Without Perfection (Huh?)
5. Can the Silver Screen Tell Us What Commitments Are?	18. It Matters A Lot Who You Were Then...and Who You Are Now
6. Commitments and What The Beatles Tell Us	19. Self-Commitments and Your Two Selves
7. Commitments, Laundry Detergent, Ice Cream and the Great White Way	20. What Hurts the Most When Commitments Fail
8. Commitments, Trust Well-Placed and Trust Misplaced!	21. Where To From Here
9. Trusting Ourselves to Ask for Help with Commitments	Epilogue
10. Why Most Commitments Don't Work the Way We Planned (or at all!)	Appendix 1: Commitment Checklists
11. Successful Commitments: Two Secret Sauces	Appendix 2: What is Behavioral Delivery?
	About the Author / Notes

**Brief Author Biographic Information.** Born and raised in New York City and a long-time resident of Washington, D.C., Clifford Brody has been an Army officer, U.S. diplomat, entrepreneur, business and marketing consultant to big and small companies (including Citibank, HP, and Avon), and husband, father, brother, and uncle. Not all of these jobs, he is quick to admit, worked out quite the way he or anyone else expected. And like many others, he believes, the failures he encountered along the way taught him far more valuable lessons than did any success. Brody has been spotted in his driveway all too often doting over two aging high-mileage BMWs even when it is below freezing outside, probably because they won't start despite his tinkering, or maybe because of it! He also spends a fair amount of time working with Washington D.C. area not-for-profits to advance their missions in improving water resources, childhood education, and health services for the less fortunate. For more biographic information, see [www.cliffordbrody.com/media-room/](http://www.cliffordbrody.com/media-room/).

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**Commitments**, published by Time and Thought Publishing House, Washington D.C., was first published under the title "Burned" in December, 2013. **Commitments** is available from independent bookstores, on line sellers, and chain bookstores, and at <http://www.cliffordbrody.com>, both in print and in e-book format for all popular e-readers, smartphones, tablets and PCs. The author's website and blog are at [www.cliffordbrody.com](http://www.cliffordbrody.com).

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