

Traditions in Healthy and Loving Relationships

If the Traditions can keep together a whole group of dysfunctional people who would otherwise “usually not mix,” keep them from killing one another and self-destructing; why can't the Traditions keep a couple or a family group together and show them how can they best function? It makes sense that the Traditions can answer the question: How can our relationships with others best stay whole and so survive?"

The following is what was revealed to us through prayer and meditation and the study of CoDA literature in preparation for presenting a panel discussion on “The Traditions in Healthy and Loving Relationships” for Super Seminar Saturday. As with all things in our program, please *take what you like and leave the rest*.

TRADITION TEN

CoDA has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the CoDA name ought never be brought into public controversy.

10. EACH PARTNER IS ENTITLED TO THEIR OWN OPINION ON OUTSIDE ISSUES, HOWEVER, A RELATIONSHIP SHOULD AVOID HEATED CONTROVERSY OR POTENTIALLY DIVISIVE TOPICS.

Within the context of relationships, this means that we are careful about our opinions and rely on the “live and let live” slogan. We do not drag our relationship into public controversy. In fact, we try to avoid heated controversy completely. It is usually fueled by some form of fear and carries with it power-driven anger, resentment, and emotional damage. The next time you get into a heated argument with your partner, listen very carefully and you will hear his or her mind snap shut! Then ask yourself this question: **“How likely is it that God’s Will for me is to scream and yell at another one of his kids?”**

We also don't speak ill of each other to friends or in public. Being publicly critical gets to be a habit and is one of the symptoms of our disease of codependency. In our disease we are constantly railing away that it is someone else's fault. Besides, feelings are usually temporary unless stated publicly.

PERSONAL EXAMPLES

We don't bring controversial issues into our relationship unless it is necessary and relevant to the relationship. Example: Politics is off limits inside my marriage. As individuals, we have very different political views, but as a couple, we try not to bring those opinions into our relationship where they create controversy.

CHECKLIST FOR TRADITION TEN

- Do I give the impression that “we” have an opinion and **I** am its keeper?
- Am I careful to keep confidences given to me by my partner?
- If my relationship with my partner were not guided by this tradition, what would it be like? Where would I be?
- Am I publicly critical of my partner? If so, what evidence can I offer to substantiate that I have sound judgment? Am I not a member of a recovery program? Am I a role model or warning to others?
- If someone accused me of being a recovering person in a healthy relationship, would there be enough evidence to convict me?
- What would my partner say if asked whether or not I loved him/her?
- Do either of us have emotional scars from repeated heated controversy and/or struggles for power and control?
- How important is it for me to be right? Would I rather be happy?
- Do I expect or need my partner to see and feel the same way I do on issues?
- Can I let my partner disagree with my ideas *without feeling rejected* and **without getting defensive?**
- Do I have a ‘live and let live’ attitude or a ‘my way or the highway’ attitude?

Yours in service, Marti, Marilyn and Debbe