

TRADITION ELEVEN: Our public relations policy is based on *attraction* rather than *promotion*; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films

11. EACH PARTNER BEST CONVEYS HIS OR HER BELIEFS AND PHILOSOPHY THROUGH ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION. EACH PERSON IS IN CHARGE OF HIS OR HER OWN ANONYMITY. ANONYMITY IS A VALUABLE ASSET TO THE MARRIAGE OR RELATIONSHIP.

Within the context of relationships, this tradition suggests that we rely on attraction to each other and to each other's ideas and philosophies. We don't hustle, jive or "sell" each other. This may have been our pattern/style in the past, something we tried in other marriages or relationships but it never worked well. We do not try to impose our ideas or CONVINCE our partner that our way is the better way, since we truly do not know what is best for anyone else. Attraction is defined as a force that naturally draws people and things together. We do not beg our partners for their time or promote how good we are for them. We each go about living our lives, trusting that who we are and how we live will continue to naturally attract our partners to us; We trust that time for the relationship will be something that we mutually desire.

Anonymity is a personal asset. In a relationship, anonymity is the ability to do something good and not have to advertise it. Anonymity is the ability to do good for goodness sake without having to take credit or receive special strokes for doing so. Anonymity can be having a positive attitude, not complaining when things are not just as we would have them. Anonymity is keeping silent when our partner makes a mistake. Anonymity is being happy and doing good without the expectations of reward, recognition, or return. A nice by-product of this practice of anonymity is the spiritual principle of 'what we sow, so shall we reap'. There is no room in a healthy relationship for self-glorification and pride but there is much room for great amounts of gratitude, humility, and a willingness to be of service to others.

Is our relationship a positive model of partnership? Would others want what we have? What kinds of people and relationships do we attract in our lives? What does that say about our level of health?

Personal Example:

When my now husband and I started dating, we had very different eating habits, which over time, have become more similar than different. Early on in our relationship, I noticed that when he made a salad at home for dinner, he would dump a bunch of pre-cut iceberg lettuce in a bowl, smother it with ranch dressing and call it salad. Considering myself a healthy eater and somewhat of an authority on nutrition (hah!), and KNOWING that there was nothing of nutritional value in that bowl, I was dying to tell him so. I wanted to tell him how much better off he'd be eating the way I ate. That would have been promotion. For some reason, probably God's intervention, I didn't say any of that, and instead, starting offering to make the salads when we had dinner together, using romaine lettuce, spinach, arugula, fresh tomatoes, cucumbers and light vinaigrette dressing to create the kind of salad that I preferred, which probably did have more nutritional value. I just did what I did with salad and offered to make him one too. When he offered to make me a salad, I'd just say, "No thanks, I'll make one for myself."

Pretty soon, I noticed that my then boyfriend really seemed to enjoy the salads I made for us, and in time, I noticed that he was no longer buying iceberg lettuce at the grocery store, but was bringing home romaine and red leaf lettuce instead! Today, married for almost a year, my husband and I make salads the same way. And without a confrontation, without a word from me, he had the opportunity to discover for himself something he liked about my eating habits and make his own decision to adapt accordingly. That's attraction in action.

CHECKLIST FOR TRADITION ELEVEN:

- Is my relationship treated with care in public?
- Do I think my relationship is attractive to others? Or does it appear shabby?
- Is my partner ever embarrassed or humiliated by my appearance or actions?
- Do I give relationships a bad name?
- Am I guilty of promotion rather than attraction in my relationships?
- Can I go about my affairs without giving my partner advice on how s/he should conduct hers/his?
- Can I do good things for my relationship anonymously? DO I do good things for my relationship anonymously?
- Can I give my partner the right to be wrong? Can I give my partner the right to be right?
- How do I feel when my partner criticizes the way I am trying to live my recovery program/conduct myself? ("Do you talk to your sponsees like that??")
- Do I try to convince my partner that my way is an improvement over her/his way? Do I make subtle or not so subtle suggestions about how my partner could improve their quality of life?
- How can / does my partner's being in touch with reality help me? (Is s/he?)
- Which do I give more of to my partner: 1.) Positive strokes Or 2.) Negative zingers?
- What happens when one partner in the relationship is getting noticeably healthier and the other is not?