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# Traditions in Healthy and Loving Relationships

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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 NINE

**CoDA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards directly responsible to those they serve.**

9. A family or relationship should be flexible in its organization but our *informed* group conscience may appoint certain persons to serve various functions and to be directly accountable to those they serve.

With all this in mind, it follows that a relationship and/or family ought never be organized. It needs to be spontaneous, unpretentious, unrehearsed, flexible and candid.

Organization carries with it a certain level of safety but at the expense of a certain amount of flexibility and creativity. Organization is meant to avoid or pre-empt the unexpected. Organization leads to attempts at control - the nemesis of a happy and healthy relationship/family. These attempts to control in relationships/family are so futile as to be almost laughable and lead only to anger, rebellion, and resentments. A marriage, romantic relationship, and/or family is no place for a constitution, organizational chart, bylaws, or Robert’s Rule’s of Order.

This tradition is an exhortation to have fun, be playful, and lighten up. Don’t take yourself so seriously. Each member in the family and/or relationship is in a position to serve that family and/or relationship and is directly accountable to the other members.

Personal example:

Tradition nine suggests we not have too rigid a structure within the relationship, for example not dividing tasks strictly between traditional male and female roles. We need to have flexibility. \*\*We each take on service to the relationship as best fits the changing needs of the relationship. Example: I do a lot of the day to day cooking, but on Thanksgiving, my husband makes the turkey and stuffing because he enjoys it. When I was diagnosed with food allergies, he started making TWO turkeys with two kinds of stuffing and gravy, so I could enjoy one while staying on my food allergy diet.

CHECKLIST FOR TRADITION NINE:

- Do I try to be the boss in my family or relationship?
- Do I bring an attitude of service to my relationship/family?
- Am I mature enough to understand and use the principles of CoDA in my relationship/family – even if no one makes me do so – with a sense of personal responsibility?
- Do I exercise patience and humility in the things I do in my relationship/family?
- Do I assume responsibility or do I try to take on authority?
- Have I learned how and when to step aside gracefully when I begin to overstep my bounds?
- Who decides who does what in the day-to-day business of a relationship/family?
- Am I a “peace at any price” person? Doesn’t this get to be expensive at times?

Yours in service,  
Marti, Marilyn and Debbe  
Next month: Tradition Ten