

TRADITIONS (IN RELATIONSHIPS) CHECKLIST

ONE - Our common welfare should come first – a healthy relationship depends upon unity.

Checklist for Tradition 1:

- What am I willing to sacrifice for our relationship?
- What affect to my actions have on our relationship? Our family?
- Am I a giver or a taker?
- Do I do unifying things? Or am I quick to criticize? Slow to praise?
- Do I use silence as my refuge or punishment while expecting my mate to read my mind?
- Do I listen when my mate has something to say?
- Do I admire and approve of my mate? Does he/she KNOW that?
- Am I a healing, mending, integrating force in our relationship, or am I divisive?
- Am I a peacemaker? Or, because of my own insecurity, is it critical to my ego that I be right?
- Can I be flexible? Trees bend in the wind – to be rigid is to break.
- Do I try to be understanding when my mate rubs me the wrong way or does something that upsets me? Or am I abrasive, or passive-aggressive?
- Do I share all of me – good and bad?

TWO - For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express himself in our group conscience – each of us is God’s trusted servant – neither governs.

Checklist for Tradition 2:

- Do I insist on being the leader? Do I feel it’s my place to govern?
- Do I speak for my mate without consulting him/her?
- Do I criticize my mate? Or do I trust him/her?
- Am I absolutely trustworthy? (try this prayer: God, treat me tomorrow the way I treat my mate today)(or this one: God help me not to do anything today that I can’t tell my mate about tonight)
- Is my ego so strong that I must have credit for more than I do?
- Am I so insecure that I must always have praise for my actions and ideas?
- Do I do my share? And is that my opinion or my mates?
- Does the thought of God being in charge of our relationship cause me any discomfort or do I like and rely on that idea?

THREE - The basic requirement for a good relationship is a mutual desire to participate in the life we create together.

Checklist for Tradition 3:

- Do my actions say that I have a desire to be in this relationship?
- Do I set myself up as a judge of my mate's intentions or sincerity?
- Do I approach my relationship unselfishly or do I depend on my mate's language, looks, race, education, job, or other such things for my own self-esteem?
- What does my mate have to do to keep my ego fluffed up?
- Am I committed to and do I encourage my mate's spiritual, professional, and individual growth and freedom?
- Am I able to share my feelings? Can I listen to my mate's feelings with an open mind?
- Am I reluctant to work on my part of the relationship – Do I wait for him/her to do his/her part first?

FOUR - Each of us should be autonomous except in matters affecting the other, our family, or society as a whole. Neither of us as individuals should ever take action that might greatly affect our relationship without conferring with each other and our sponsors.

Checklist for Tradition 4:

- Do I feel like there are only certain ways to do things? And are they MY ways?
- Do I always think about how or if my decisions will affect my mate? And, if so, do I communicate with my mate and come to agreement?
- Am I willing to go to any lengths – his/her lengths not mine – to protect the integrity of the relationship?
- Do I carefully avoid injuring my mate emotionally, physically, and spiritually?
- How do I deal with my mate's anger over something I have done autonomously? Am I defensive? Do I try to subdue him/her with still greater anger? Do I point out previous mistakes they have made?

FIVE - A relationship has but one primary purpose – to support each others' spiritual growth and serve as an expression of God's love.

Checklist for Tradition 5:

- Do we have a “primary purpose” and do we know what it is?
- Do I resort to emotional blackmail? Do I ever start sentences with the phrase “if you loved me you would...”
- Do I demand precise equality? And if so, do I monitor MY share as closely as I monitor my mate's?
- Do I really understand that my troubles are of their own making?
- Do we express God's love in our relationship and do we share it with others?
- How important is liking myself to my relationship?
- Am I a patient and uncritical listener?
- Can I see my mate through God's eyes and listen through God's ears?

SIX - We ought never single-handedly endorse, finance, or lend our name to any outside enterprise (or person) lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our commitment to each other.

Checklist for Tradition 6:

- Do I encourage and support my mate?
- What is motivating me when I try to be all things to my mate?
- Do I allow my mate the dignity to fail?
- Do I pretend to agree just to keep things going?
- Do I take responsibility for my own spiritual, emotional and physical needs?

SEVEN - Each of us ought to strive to be fully self-supporting spiritually, emotionally, and physically.

Checklist for Tradition 7:

- Do I try to be boss? Do I attempt to assume control of my mate and our relationship?
- Do my needs for comfort or a feeling of safety limit my mate's options?
- Do I accept responsibility for myself? Can I admit to my innermost self that my problems are of my own making?
- Do I try to manage and control through the purse strings?
- Am I managed and controlled through the purse strings?
- Do I deceive myself by thinking how unselfish and giving I am when in reality I am giving only when I can do it on my own terms?
- Can I remember that giving can be a position of control and receiving a position of powerlessness?
- Do I take responsibility for my own physical needs? (health, diet, exercise)
- Can I point to at least one thing, right now, that determines the degree of healthy independence I have?

EIGHT - Our relationship should remain forever an unprofessional, free, and giving relationship – each to the other. It is never to be 'paid for' by the other in any way.

Checklist for Tradition 8:

- Do these traditions accurately describe my behavior? If not, what needs changing?
- Do I try to sound like an expert on things? If so, why? Is my security at risk? Is my fear triggered? Is my ego threatened?
- Do I believe that one or the other of us should be in charge based on their gender? Or education? Or experience?
- Do I make an effort to understand my mate's opinions and views?
- Does my identity and feelings of self-worth depend on my relationship with my mate?
- Who or what was my role model for a healthy relationship?
- Can I give for fun and for free, requiring nothing in return?
- Do I charge my mate a 'fee' for being in a relationship with me? If so, what is it? How expensive is my love and companionship?
- Do I take hostages in my relationships? Do I feel that my mate belongs to me?
- Do I really understand that I reap what I sow? That my actions and attitude will be reflected back to me?

NINE - Our relationship is a fellowship not an organization, but we may create service positions directly responsible to each other. The relationship should never be under the control of only one partner.

Checklist for Tradition 9:

- Do I try to be the boss?
- Am I mature enough to understand and use the principles of AA in my relationship with a sense of personal responsibility?
- Do I exercise patience and humility in the things I do in my relationship?
- Do I assume responsibility or do I try to take 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 the relationship?

TEN - We each are entitled to our own opinion on outside issues. As individuals we do not express opinions as those of our relationship. We each stand in our own right and neither of us are self-appointed representatives of the relationship.

Checklist for Tradition 10:

- 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 mate?
- If my relationship with my mate were not guided by this tradition, what would it look like?
- Am I publicly critical of my mate?
- What would my mate say if asked whether or not I loved him/her?
- Does either of us have emotional scars from repeated heated controversy and struggles for power and control?
- How important is it for me to be right?
- Would I rather be right than happy?
- Do I expect or need my mate to see and feel the same as me on issues?
- Can I let my mate disagree with my ideas without feeling rejected and without getting defensive?

ELEVEN - We are guided by the principle of attraction and not self-promotion. Our individual contributions are not to be so set apart or presented as any more important than the other's.

Checklist for Tradition 11:

- Is my relationship treated with care in public?
- Do I think my relationship is attractive to others? Or does it appear shabby?
- Is my mate ever embarrassed or humiliated by my appearance or actions?
- Do I give relationships a bad name?
- Am I guilty of promotion (or self-promotion) rather than action?
- Can I go about my affairs without giving my mate advice on how he/she should conduct theirs?
- Can I do good things for my relationship anonymously? DO I do good things for my relationship anonymously?
- Can I give my mate the right to be wrong? Can I give my mate the right to be right?
- How do I feel when my mate tries to criticize the way I am trying to live my recovery program?
- Which do I give more of to my partner: positive strokes or negative zingers?

TWELVE - Anonymity, self-sacrifice, or selflessness is a spiritual foundation of our way of life as mates. May our blessings never spoil us, may we live in gratitude for God's love for us, and may we practice a genuine humility in placing principles before ourselves.

Checklist for Tradition 12:

- Is there a spiritual foundation to our relationship?
- Do I place our common welfare first?
- What would happen to me if my mate disappeared?
- Do I treat my mate in a way that I'm proud of?
- Do I treat my mate one way in public and another way in private?
- Would I want others to see EVERY aspect of how I treat my mate?
- What is meant by 'discounting the message because of the messenger'?
- Do I have personal integrity? Can I be true to my own beliefs?
- Is my relationship growing more healthy or getting sicker?

Conclusion:

You are what you repeatedly do.

Excellence then is not an act but a habit.

By doing our best to adapt these traditions and their underlying concepts of good attitude, humility, communication, fearlessness, love, tolerance, courtesy, and honesty, we have seen not only our marriage benefit, but all of our other relationships as well.