

The Ten Commandments Of Square Dancing

This article written by Chris Froggatt was printed in the South Pacific Square Dance Review in 1997.

This thought provoking set of "Ten Commandments" is taken from a very old American Square Dance magazine. I have found that the philosophy and meaning behind them is the important thing, rather than the literal translation.

A wise man once said that you will get out of life what you put into it. There is no doubt that this applies to Square Dancing too! The following "rules" are meant as good advice, and should be seen as a way of keeping our activity courteous, fun and fulfilling.

1. You will Square Dance only for the fun that you will find in it.
2. You shall not be a snob by considering yourself too good to dance with any and all by sitting out mixers, or by leaving a square lest you be required to dance with those you deem unworthy of your talents, for the gods of retribution will visit mischief upon you and you will be the one to goof in the square.
3. You shall be exuberant, but shall act your age. Do not offend others by your high flung legs, out flared skirts, or by over zealous endeavors to help others who may hesitate by pulling, grabbing, or pushing upon them or speaking loudly to them.
4. You shall go abroad and dance to other callers so that your opinions expressed as to the merit of this one and that one are based on fact.
5. You shall be conscious of the feelings of those around you, and shall not let the stranger in your midst sit on the side lines nor fail to speak to him or her.
6. You shall bathe diligently, that the sweet aroma of soap and shaving lotion may assail the nostrils of your associates. You shall similarly take care that the words of your mouth are not scented with strong smelling herbs such as garlic, or strong smelling beverages such as beer. Men shall wear long sleeved shirts so that their arms may be more pleasant to grasp.
7. You shall guard carefully the utterances from your lips while dancing, lest you add confusion to your square and cause yourself or others to hear the next call, for there is but one designated caller in the hall.
8. You shall honour your club and give your loyalty, for if you cannot do this, it would be better to separate yourself from it and join yourself to another whose methods, members and caller are more to your liking.
9. You shall not kill your club by bickering and fault finding, or by pointing fingers of blame for errors in dancing or club operation, at any member or fellow dancer, for, in so doing, such a finger may thus be due in your direction
10. You shall never forget that you were once a beginner and that others helped you to become a good dancer by tolerating your mistakes. You shall always remember that if you are able to continue in square dancing for a long time there must always be beginners and new dancers joining your hobby, and they need your patience and assistance.