



The Formula Of The Sisterhood

What is the Code that the Sisterhood lives by?

Eight Core Beliefs, Six Vows, Four Cardinal Rules

Life is simpler when you have a code . . . even if that code means that you will lose lovely people who can't live by that code. Having a code means doing sometimes what you would rather not do, but you must do, to keep harmony. Living by the code has made this enclave grow more peaceful, more in step,

more marching together than ever before. While many families and structures are crumbling, we are tight. I think it's because of our code. We have eight core believes, six vows and four cardinal rules we live by:

Eight Core Beliefs

1. We organize our lives to be attuned with the natural rhythm of life forces marked by **the phases of the Moon** and the seasonal Quarters and Cross Quarters. (We make our medicines and organize our lives by the cycles of the moon; our holy days are the full moons and the quarters of the year.)
2. We recognize that our human intelligence gives us a unique responsibility toward our environment, and we seek **to live in harmony with nature**. (vow of ecology)
3. We acknowledge a depth of power far greater than what our eyes can see, a Creator and **connectedness between the people and the planet**. We believe that the hurt of one is the hurt of all, the honor of one is the honor of all.
4. We recognized both the outer worlds and inner, **the Spiritual World and the physical world** and see in the interaction of these two dimensions the basis for paranormal phenomena and magical exercises. We neglect neither dimension for the other, seeing both as necessary for our fulfillment.
5. We seek to control the forces within ourselves that make life possible in order to **live wisely and without harm** to others and in harmony with nature. (intentional lifestyle)
6. We are always aware of and concerned **with the past, present, and the future**. We revere the ancestors that have gone before us and tread gently upon Mother Earth,

in reverence for its current occupants and the generations to come.

7. We **eschew those who seek power through the suffering of others**. We do not accept that personal benefit can be derived only by denial to another. There is no belief in a Satan figure.
8. We believe in **treating people and their Spiritual Beliefs with respect**. The only animosity held by Beguines towards Christianity, or towards any other belief system is to the extent that its institutions have claimed to be 'the only way' and have sought to deny freedom to others and to suppress free will and free choice.



Six Vows

The six vows taken by the Sisters spell the word 'solace'.

Vow of Servitude

Being in service by making medicine and assisting the public in understanding the medicine; mitigating the fear resulting from generations of propaganda about the plant and putting Mother Earth back at the center of spirituality.

Vow of Obedience

As our ancient mothers would have done, we establish our medicine-making operations holistically. We grow the plants, we make the medicine, and we distribute to those in need. The vow of obedience is related to the vow of allowing the moon cycles and the plants to dictate our work days.

As well, the obedience vow includes the promise that no medicine work will be done by anyone who has contempt in their heart, anger burning in their soul. We have to honor the medicine like it is a strict task master and ensure we carry no contempt, no human darkness energies into our work.

As Sisters, we use word medicine and white sage, chants, songs, meditations, prayers, and exercise to heal and burn away those negativities before any work begins. When we work the plants and the medicine, we aspire to infuse good energy, love, and self-healing. And last, but not least, the vow of obedience includes the work that fuels sustainable farming and progressive activism.



Vow of Living Simply

This is a matter of focus. Generally, if one owns a lot of stuff, there is a lot of time and focus required to maintain, protect, insure, keep track of – those things. To the extent it is possible, the Sisters unburden themselves from those things, from those tasks, to be freed to focus on the making of the medicine. The farm of the Sisters is simple. The lifestyle of the Sisters is a life lived in humble commitment to serving the medicine. Ideas of yachts and shiny jewels or cars have no place here. Ideas for growing our own wine and tobacco, welcome. (Mother Earth's medicines come in all forms.)

Vow of Activism

In much the same way that the Welch had a custom fifty years ago of going to church on Sunday and then to their individual (male/female) activist meetings in order to bring upon social reform, in order to hold their officials accountable, we aspire the Sisterhood to be a place where spirituality and political awareness come together amidst a bee-hive of activities. The Sisters commit, through their vows, to spend some time every moon cycle devoted to progressive activism.

Vow of Chastity

There are many definitions of chastity; the one the Sisters of the Valley choose to identify in their vows is the one that is most empowering of women. This is a vow the Sisters take to privatize their sexuality.

The purpose of this order is to revive a concept (women in dedicated service, enclave living, Beguine-revivalism) that the people of planet Earth like and need but make it relevant and sustainable for the new age. Celibacy is not a requirement of being chaste. One can be chaste, without being celibate.



Vow of Ecology

We are committed to using the Earth in a respectful manner; we honor Mother Earth in our ceremonies and give thanks for her abundance. Leaves and by-product from harvests are always ground and returned to her. Her plants travel from hand to hand with respect and with love and with gratitude. The people who work her land are committed to renewability, to preservation. The purpose of the small farms, in addition to growing needed plants for needed medicines, is to find a more sustainable way of life, a return to ancient ways.

Four Cardinal Rules spell 'Anna'

1. Always be cleaning
2. No contempt
3. No surprises
4. Always apply good conflict resolution practices

An example of good conflict resolution is a subset to item four; that is the three-day / five-day rule. The 3 day / 5 day rule declares that if there is a disagreement and it is emotionally charged, neither party need seek resolution for three days following the incident (the cooling off period). However, both parties must come together to speak and resolve before five days pass.

It is the instigator of the conflict that must instigate the resolution conversation. An elder decides if the two parties can't decide on who the instigator was. Warning: Our experience is that those who thrive on drama and those who

feed the drama run away from system-driven conflict resolution processes and people. All too frequently, those who instigate pack and leave before day five comes. They probably don't see it this way, but they are doing us a favor. We greatly value our harmony, our peace, and our system-driven conflict resolution process.

If you are interested in learning more about the customs and beliefs of the Sisters, join the [fellowship program](#).