

Network Programming Proposal

Reunion

"Holding a grudge is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die."

--- Malachy McCourt ---

Background: Several months ago, my wife and I were visited by my cousin, his wife and two beautiful young girls. At that time, he told us that he hadn't seen his father (my uncle) in years, and that his kids had never met their grandparents because of an argument that occurred over a decade earlier. More recently, friends of ours told us about their daughter's wedding which was nearly derailed because of a last-minute administrative issue which forced them to find another venue for the ceremony. Unfortunately, a very many of their family members decided not to attend because the service wasn't held in, and was thus not sanctioned by the church which created a schism that hasn't been resolved to this day.

You can't turn on the television, listen to the radio, or participate in nearly any activity without encountering animosity between individuals or groups. It's worth noting that just as technology develops more ways for us to connect to one another, we are imagining more reasons to separate ourselves. Just as we discover more about how much we share on the inside, we perceive more superficial things to offend us. Ironically, the one thing that every group seems to agree upon is that human beings were made for communion and that we are happiest and healthiest both individually and as a society when we share our life and love with others.

Logline: Produce a show committed to demystifying differences, resolving conflicts, promoting forgiveness and bringing people together.

Concept: Facilitate the healing of deep-seated wounds by reuniting irreconcilably alienated loved ones. Each show would introduce a story pair of ordinary family members or former friends or work partners, in parallel with a high-profile celebrity estrangement as they all attempt to reestablish healthy and lasting relationships.

Format: Four one-hour segments per story pair co-hosted by an acclaimed relationship professional and a celebrity personality that has overcome similar challenges. The typical story progression would be: 1) narrated back-stories of the conflict, 2) in-depth discussion of the issue/s, 3) counseling (private and on-camera), 4) issue resolution, and 5) culminating event detailed as follows:

Segment/Week 1:

1. *Co-hosts* (in-studio) - Introduce common sources of friction between families, groups and societies to be discussed that month (ex. money, inheritance, divorce, religion, politics, race, homosexuality, etc.).

2. *Co-hosts* (in-studio) - Introduce and provide background narrative for volunteer guests seeking conflict resolution assistance as chosen from written submissions.

3. *Co-hosts* (travel site or in-studio) - Introduce and provide background narrative for celebrity guests agreeing to participate in conflict resolution assistance. Some examples of potential subjects might include Angelina Jolie and John Voight, Lindsay and Michael Lohan, Jennifer Anniston and Nancy Dow, Kate and Bill Hudson, Drew and John Barrymore, Jessica

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Parker and Kim Cattrall, Taylor Swift and Kanye West, Tonya Harding and Nancy Kerrigan, Earnest and Julio Gallo and bands like Steely Dan, Van Halen, Smashing Pumpkins, Pink Floyd.

4. *Field Reporter* (travel site) - Recount the story of a well-known historic feud like the Hatfields and McCoys, Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr, Charles Darwin and Richard Owen, Thomas Edison and Nikola Tesla, Van Gogh and Gauguin, Zora Hurston and Langston Hughes, Al Capone and Bugs Moran, Billy Martin and George Steinbrenner, Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots.

Segment/Week 2:

1. *Co-hosts* (in-studio) - Conduct a Question and Answer (Q&A) period with the volunteer guests, and interview invested witnesses in an attempt to determine the root cause of the issue.

2. *Co-hosts* (in-studio) - Conduct a Q&A period with celebrity guests, and interview invested witnesses in an attempt to determine the root cause of the issue.

3. *Field Reporter* (travel site) - Develop and conclude the story of the historic feud with the objective of showing the harm that can occur when disputes are left unsettled.

**Conduct private counseling as required.*

Segment/Week 3:

1. *Relationship Professional* (in-studio) - Discuss specific strategies and way-forward for volunteer guests.

2. *Relationship Professional* (in-studio) - Discuss specific strategies and way-forward for celebrity guests.

3. *Celebrity Host* (travel site or in-studio) - Conduct an interview of celebrities who maintained a positive relationship while being adversaries like George Bush and Barrack Obama, or competitors like Magic Johnson and Larry Bird.

4. *Field Reporter* (travel site) - Conduct an interview of ordinary people who overcame similar challenges.

Segment/Week 4:

1. Host a culminating “**Reunion**” event for volunteer guests (ex. family reunion, renewing wedding vows, “Coming Home” celebration, child christening, etc.).

2. Host a culminating “**Reunion**” fundraising event (ex. music concert, in-studio cast reunion, celebrity sporting event, etc.) that goes to celebrity charity of choice.

3. *Relationship Professional* (in-studio) - Discuss general strategies and resources that viewers can use to help solve similar issues.

