**CoDA Service Conference 2011**

**Motion Form**

**Committee: Communication** **Date: 4/29/11**

**Motion Number: (data entry purpose only):_____**

**Result (data entry purpose only):**

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**Motion:**

Replace the three sections of the FSM related to communication with the new sections provided below in **Remarks**.

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**Intent:**

Ensure that the FSM reflects how we currently do business. All changes reflect our movement to doing much of our work online and utilizing newer available technologies that were either not available or not used consistently when the sections were written.

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**Remarks:**

Below are the sections to be replaced. Areas that have been changed have been highlighted.

Section 1

## Board Liaison to Standing CoDA Committees

**Description:** The Board assigns a member to serve as liaison, to provide a communication link between each standing conference committee, the Board, and the Fellowship

**Responsibilities:**

• Liaisons communicate pertinent information to their assigned committee, including: dates of Board meetings, CoDA Quarterly Service Report (QSR) publication deadlines, and any information related to the committee's goals or commitments to the Fellowship.
• Liaisons may serve in a consulting capacity between committees, providing guidance in such areas as financial management of committee budgets.
• Liaisons communicate changes in CoDA's overall financial status to committee chairs as soon as possible in order to allow for any expenditure adjustments.
• Liaisons provide guidance in adherence to the *Twelve Traditions* in all activities.
• Liaisons report on committee activities to the Board at the monthly con call or meeting, if no committee chair or representative attends. Liaisons submit written copies of standing committee reports to the Board before or at each scheduled Board con call or meeting.
• Liaisons review committee reports prior to presentation to the Board and Fellowship, and prior to publication in the QSR. Liaisons may suggest changes to any report.

**Conflicts:**

• If conflict arises within a committee, the liaison may assist the committee in the resolution of this conflict, relying on CoDA's *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* for guidance.
• Conflict resolution may involve the Issues Mediation Committee (IMC); (see Section 10) if the committee chair and liaison feel this is desirable.
• If conflict arises between the liaison and the committee, the committee chair or liaison may request IMC assistance in resolution of the conflict.
• If a liaison/committee conflict seems irresolvable, the IMC will advise the CoDA Board. This is recommended because the IMC represents an impartial perspective on the conflict, and may provide the Board with a clear understanding of the issues involved.
• In the case of irresolvable conflict, the Board may choose to assign a new liaison to the committee. This change will be reported to the committee immediately and the website will be changed accordingly. It will also be reported in the subsequent Quarterly Service Report.

## Section 2

## Section 12 Guidelines for CoDA Communications

### Communications within all of CoDA

Informative and timely communications are necessary for the growth and maintenance of any service organization. Lack of communication among our members can cause unnecessary conflict.

CoDA members have requested guidance in applying our Steps and Traditions to new forms of communication, specifically electronic mail (e-mail). The principles of effective

communication may be applied to all forms of communication among members, committees, and service boards of CoDA.

All e-mail/Internet and postal addresses are confidential and are for CoDA business use only.

**Email**

Because e-mail is less expensive and more efficient than Postal Service deliveries, its use is encouraged, provided boundaries are maintained. These boundaries include maintaining appropriate anonymity. Appropriate anonymity requires that we keep our CoDA business within CoDA and that our emails do not go to people outside the Fellowship. It also means that we do not forward any email to a wider audience than the original thread without the author's express permission.

Note: The one exception to the above policy may be an email is used as evidence in a dispute. In that case it may be sent to IMC.

Our 11th tradition states: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films. This does not say that we can not share our last names with members of the fellowship. Whether or not to do so is a personal choice,

Email providers may include your full name even if it isn't part of your email address if you have provided it when signing up. If this level of anonymity is important to you, use the tools provided by your email provider to hide your last name. If necessary, create a new email account and only use your last initial in the last name field.

Anyone in the CoDA Fellowship can request that his/her email address be placed on the CoDA Announcements email list. Because e-mail copies involve no additional cost, broad distribution of general information is enhanced. Communication is enhanced when at least two members in each Voting Entity have e-mail addresses and are willing to disseminate information received via e-mail.

Any communication may be sent via e-mail. However, care must be taken when sending copyrighted information via email in order to protect our copyrights. This should only be done with the permission of either the Literature Committee or by CoRe and they must properly protect all copyrighted literature before sending it.

Proper email etiquette should be used at all times while conducting CoDA business. The following items are suggested:

- Avoid offensive language, name calling and taking other inventories
- When using reply all that includes aliases remove individual addresses that are part of an alias to prevent people from getting multiple copies
- Do not use all capitals as that is considered yelling

**Social Networking Sites**

Because there are concerns about anonymity and privacy on social networking sites no CoDA literature or CoDA business should be posted or discussed on any site that is open to everyone. If anyone chooses to discuss CoDA literature or CoDA business on a private recovery site one should limit literature posting to very small excerpts to protect copyrights and use discretion when discussing CoDA business.

These guidelines were developed with insight gained from the following Steps and Traditions:

**Step Ten:** *Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.*
Note; All I and My statements below were changed to We and Our statements.

If we fail to follow our guidelines, we admit our shortcomings and make amends wherever and as soon as possible. If we wronged a person in private, we make amends in private; if we wronged a person in front of others, we make amends in front of others.
**Tradition One:** *Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.* We ask ourselves, "Does this message promote CoDA unity, foster fellowship or promote recovery? Could it be interpreted as disruptive or divisive?" If we receive a message that we consider disruptive or divisive, we share that feeling with the author before seeking other remedies. We ask permission before copying an e-mail message or other communication to others. We review our responses for adherence to our Steps, Traditions, and principles.
**Tradition Two:** *For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority: a loving Higher Power as expressed to our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*
CoDA has procedures in place to determine the group conscience of a meeting, Intergroup, Voting Entity and even our CoDA structure. We determine our collective group conscience by selecting/electing representatives to serve the Fellowship. Our Higher Power gives us guidance in this way. Sometimes people may circumvent our process by claiming to be interpreters of our group conscience. To avoid future confusion, when we participate in a group conscience decision, we make written notes of the people who were notified and/or participated, identify the subject we discussed, and include the results of the decision.
**Tradition Three:** *The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.*
We need to be aware that not everyone in CoDA has access to telephones, computers, e-mail, or the Internet. CoDA is based on inclusion, not exclusion. Access to technology of any kind is not a requirement for participation in our program so we look for ways to distribute information, when requested, to those who do not have this access.. We make a sincere attempt to include all interested members in our discussions.
**Tradition Nine:** *CoDA, as such, ought never to be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*
As a member of CoDA, and when working as a trusted servant in any way, we are respectful to the members we serve and the members we associate with. We communicate with others on matters that affect other groups or CoDA as a whole
**Tradition Ten:** *CoDA has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the CoDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*

As a member of CoDA and when working as a trusted servant, we respect the careful use of Postal Service, telephone, fax, e-mail and the internet. We do not use personal correspondence of any kind to draw Co-Dependents Anonymous, any of its service boards, or any CoDA member into public controversy on any matter.

**Tradition Eleven:** *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.*

The Internet is not a private form of communication. It is a public medium. Publishing items to web sites is comparable to publishing in a newspaper. For this reason, we encourage members to seek anonymity in screen names, e-mail addresses, and postal mail addresses.

**Tradition Twelve:** *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

We respect the anonymity of others and ourselves. We consider the point of view of any writer or speaker. Is anyone cloaking personal opinions or concerns in our Steps and Traditions? Are we all respecting group conscience procedures? Is there a possibility of miscommunication? Could we be making erroneous assumptions? Does it feel right? If not, it probably isn't. When in doubt, check it out.

## Section 3

# List of Affirmative Communication Actions

• I respect the anonymity of others by not using a member's last name in the text of a message.

• I obtain permission before faxing or emailing CoDA identified materials to a member.

• I respect the personal integrity, anonymity, and privacy of each member, and I expect and deserve the same.

• I maintain civility and decorum in my communications to members of CoDA, as I practice developing and maintaining healthy relationships. I continue to practice healthy interpersonal behavior in communications via telephone, fax, e-mail, and the Internet.

• When in doubt about the content or intent of a letter, telephone call, e-mail, or other communication, I first request clarification from the author before discussing its content.

• When I participate in a group discussion (in person or by Postal Service, telephone, fax, e-mail or on the Internet), I maintain focus on the subject at hand. My attention and focus is a gift I offer other members.

• Recovery is a process; I respect each member for where that member is in recovery. I practice my program by sharing my experience, strength, and hope with others, not by pointing out faults and flaws in others.

• The text of any forwarded message is transmitted verbatim. I do not edit it. (For the purposes of committee work where editing work is in process, I clearly mark a previous, unedited version and include it with my suggested revisions.) Generally, emails are not forwarded to people not addressed by the original sender.

• I encourage others in their recovery, and do not "flame" them. Flaming is a written attack on a person, a person's opinions, or a person's point of view, distributed to multiple addresses, usually via e-mail. When my opinions differ from another, I share my experiences with that person, explaining how they are different or similar.

• When sending email to a list of addresses, I send the message to myself and use BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) for the list of intended recipients in order to protect the anonymity of the members.