# CoDA Service Conference 2011

## Motion Form 2

Committee: **Issues Mediation Committee (IMC)** Date: **July 5-8th, 2011**

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

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

**Motion:**

To replace FSM Section 2 (pg. 14): *"Disagreement, Mediation, and Resolution" in our Group Conscience Process,* as indicated on the attached document (added changes are highlighted).

**Intent:**
To reinstate key paragraphs and other minor editing corrections that were accidentally "dropped" during typing of the final copy of the CSC adopted motion. Also, add new verbiage to reflect new dispute experiences. The dispute process protects the trusted servant as well as CoDA's resources as a whole. Upholding Traditions 1, 3, 5, and 12.

**Remarks:**
The IMC is elected each year at CSC for the sole purpose of mediating disputes and provides an impartial perspective on conflicts. IMC needs to continuously review its processes to ensure it is up-to-date and relevant for the common welfare of our CoDA fellowship.

# FSM, Section 2: Disagreement, Mediation, and Resolution in Our Group Conscience Process

When we disagree, we express ourselves in non-personal, non-shaming ways. We do not attack an individual's point of view. Instead, we accept what the person says as true for them. In turn, we respectfully express our differing point of view. In this manner, we can share our experiences in a constructive way.

During the group conscience process, we reveal our commitment to CoDA by assuming responsibility for our behavior and accepting accountability for our actions. If we slip back into codependent attitudes and behaviors during this process, we admit it and make amends to those we have harmed. Thus, we gain a greater understanding of our *Twelve Steps*, *Twelve Traditions*, and CoDA's spiritual principles.

Occasionally, a member(s) may engage in unsafe behavior by not respecting the boundaries of others, or someone may perceive that to happen. In such a situation, any member may call for a "time out" or "thirty seconds." During a time out or thirty seconds, everyone ceases talking and spends time seeking guidance from Higher Power. At the end of the thirty seconds, someone calls "time," and members may choose to say the Serenity Prayer before resuming the meeting.

If a "time out" or "thirty seconds" does not eliminate the contentious behavior, it may be appropriate to ask for a group conscience decision on whether a person's behavior is threatening and/or offensive. If the group decides that the person is engaging in detrimental or disruptive behavior, the group can hold that person accountable by requesting that such behavior stop. Persons so cited are encouraged to work Steps Four and Ten, and act according to personal truth. Then, another group conscience may be requested to re-establish safety and CoDA unity.

If the contentious behavior continues, then mediation may be in order. Two or more people (to avoid allegations of impropriety, one person should be mutually agreed upon between the dissenting members) may meet privately with the offending member. It is recommended that the parties directly involved in the dispute recues themselves from the group that is attempting to offer options to resolve the dispute. These parties should also be recused from the final resolution decision making process if their unhealthy behavior is excessive; and/or they exhibit bias, and/or they prove to be uncooperative. The mediators will explain why their attitude and/or behavior are unacceptable in CoDA.

If mediation fails to resolve the problem, and an individual continues to behave in an offensive manner, the group can decide (through a group conscience decision), to suspend that individual's speaking privileges or even voting privileges. In extreme cases, the group may ask the individual to leave the meeting. Each person's right to attend meetings is guaranteed by Traditions Three, Five, and Twelve. Violations of the rights and boundaries of a meeting dishonors Tradition One that says, "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity." An individual may lose the rights and privileges accorded to them by that group for committing such violations.

A situation may arise where a trusted servant in a position of responsibility acts irresponsibly in performance of their duties or acts in a manner contrary to our program's principles. If so, that group (e.g. meeting, committee, board, Intergroup, IMC or Voting Entity etc.), may call for a group conscience decision to remove that individual from that position of responsibility for that group, meeting or CoDA entity (however, not from any other entity). In such cases, the individual(s) affected should be notified of a group conscience meeting and allowed to participate in the process. A temporary time period should be discussed with the trusted servant to allow for self development and a return to service. Depending on the nature of the act of irresponsibility and/or the level of responsibility of the position, there may be a need

for a permanent disqualification. A record of all actions should be maintained by the group and be made available to any CoDA member upon written request, or to the fellowship if deemed necessary by IMC. *(All of the above also applies if brought to the IMC level.)*

Groups, Intergroups or Voting Entities do not establish CoDA policy. CoDA policy is the responsibility of the CoDA Service Conference. When a conflict is referred to the group, Intergroups or Voting Entity, they may help the conflicting members to explore the guidance offered by our *Twelve Traditions*.

In summary, the first step in resolving a conflict is for the individuals involved to attempt resolution between themselves. If this is not possible, the next step is for them to ask their home group for guidance or mediation. If this proves unsuccessful, the next step is to seek guidance from the Intergroup. Beyond this, the Voting Entity may be contacted for assistance. As a final step, and only when necessary, members may seek guidance from our CoDA service structure by requesting assistance from the Issues Mediation Committee (see Section 10 or **IMC Main Page**). It is recommended that individuals contact their Voting Entity Delegates for assistance in forwarding the request to this CoDA Issues Mediation Committee.

By seeking resolution in this sequence, we encourage individual growth, support group autonomy, respect our Traditions and allow our program to work.