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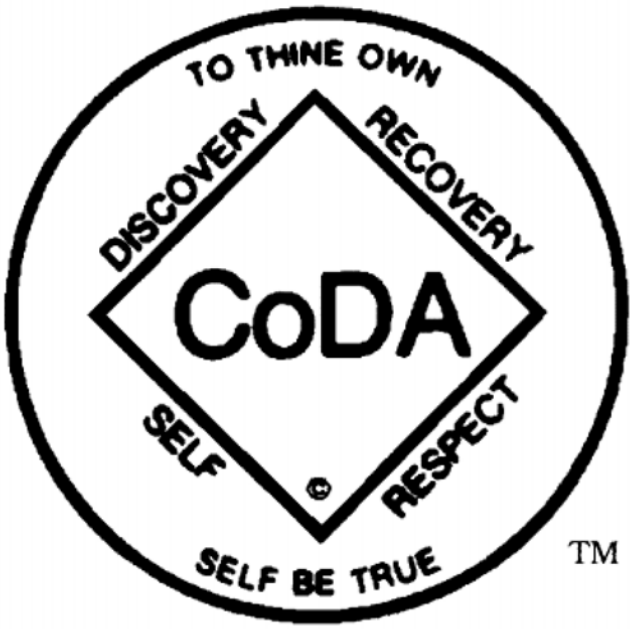
# CoDA
# Meeting Starter Packet

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# Welcome Letter

## Welcome!

We are pleased to receive your inquiry about starting a Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) group in your area. We are happy to see that you have decided to join our worldwide Fellowship of recovery from codependence. We hope that you will find the serenity and hope that we have found through Co-Dependents Anonymous. Enclosed are materials that will assist you in starting and conducting your CoDA meeting.

In order to let people who are looking for a CoDA meeting in your area know of your existence, we have included a CoDA Group Registration Form. Please complete this form and return it as soon as possible to the Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. so we can add you to the directory of meetings. Once we have received your registration, you will be assigned a group number. This number is important, and should be used as identification in all your correspondence between your group and CoDA service bodies. You may also register your meeting on our CoDA website at www.coda.org.

We will also send you a *Fellowship Service Manual (FSM)* upon registration of your new meeting. Additional copies may also be downloaded for free at the CoDA website. We suggest that you refer to it regularly as you conduct your meeting. The *Fellowship Service Manual* is a fabulous resource that contains all kinds of information a CoDA group might need.

You may download an order form for CoDA Conference Endorsed literature from the CoDA website, such as workbooks, pamphlets, booklets, tapes, anniversary medallions, posters, the book Co-Dependents Anonymous (commonly known as the CoDA Book), and other items. We also have an ordering system in place online at www.coda.org/estore. Another option is to send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:

CoDA Resource Publishing, Inc. (CoRe)
Order Forms
P.O. Box 670861
Dallas, TX 75367-0861 email: coreorders@coda.org

In keeping with the *Twelve Traditions*, it is recommended that you use only CoDA Conference Endorsed literature in your meeting, as this promotes CoDA unity.

As stated in the Seventh Tradition, CoDA is self-supporting through contributions from the Fellowship. CoDA service bodies can offer assistance only when they have adequate financial resources to do so. CoDA encourages each meeting to follow these suggested guidelines:

Pay your expenses and set aside a prudent reserve to pay for the expenses of your CoDA group for two or three months. With the balance left over, the Seventh Tradition donations may be divided in the following way:

60% to your local Community Service Group (Intergroup)
30% to Co-Dependents Anonymous,
Inc. PO Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577
10% to your Voting Entity

If your Voting Entity does not have a community or Voting Entity service office, we recommend sending funds in excess of the prudent reserve to the CoDA address.

We welcome you to the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. If you have other questions not answered by this packet, please contact us either by mail or website. We believe that with our Higher Power's guidance, each of us and the CoDA program will grow healthier, one day at a time.

With best wishes for serenity and joy,
In service and with the spirit of fellowship,

The trusted servants of Co-Dependents Anonymous

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# Getting Started

## **Section I -** *Meeting Starter Packet*

In this section you will find information you will need to get a new CoDA meeting started.

**A. *"Starting a New CoDA Meeting"*** This CoDA service item pamphlet is reprinted here in its entirety and provides an overview of what is involved in starting a new CoDA meeting.

**B. Types of CoDA Meetings** contains information about different focuses for meetings such as Speaker Meetings or Step Study.

**C. Commonly Asked Questions** provides answers about such things as what constitutes a "home" group or a "closed" meeting, and what to do with the money collected.

**D. Guidelines for Service Positions** explains the principles of service work in CoDA and describes what jobs typically need to be done to keep a meeting going. Every group must have people to do the work that allows the meeting to continue. That work is known as service.

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**Section I-A -** *Meeting Starter Packet*

## *STARTING A NEW CoDA MEETING* © 1998 All Rights Reserved

This is a CoDA Conference Approved Service Item

*Thinking about starting a new CoDA meeting? Consider the following:*

**Where**

Meetings can be held almost anywhere. Try area churches, synagogues, counseling centers, hospitals or places where other groups are held. Though each group is autonomous, for reasons of safety and anonymity, CoDA cautions about holding meetings in individual homes. When choosing a meeting place, please keep in mind personal safety.

**When**

Based on a time that's best for you to serve, choose the day and time of the week you want to hold the new meeting.

**Rent**

It's important that rent (no matter how small) be paid for the meeting place. In this way, we honor our Seventh Tradition: Every CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. Since you won't know how large a meeting will be at the start, try to keep rent to a minimum. Rent may be a percentage of the meeting's collection, a monthly or quarterly fee, or anything to which you and your landlord agree. Some places let you use the space more as a courtesy than as a revenue source, so don't be afraid to negotiate. At the same time, don't abuse their generosity.

**Help**

Ask for help, especially in the beginning. Invite people from other meetings to help you get the new meeting going. It helps to have several people present when newcomers show up. And be sure to post a sign at the new meeting location each week so that people can find your room easily.

**Announce**

Let people know about the new meeting. Visit other meetings with the necessary information (e.g., date, time, directions and/or a map). Place announcements in counseling centers and hospitals. Some local newspapers publish meeting notices at no charge. Just remember the Eleventh Tradition: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. As people see the announcements and hear about the meeting, they will come.

**Format**

After a few initial meetings, take a group conscience to choose a meeting format. Several different types of meeting formats exist:

- ***Speakers Meeting:*** A speaker meeting features one individual's story of recovery. Speakers share their experience, strength, and hope with the group. Depending on the length of the individual's story, the meeting may or may not include open sharing after the speaker has shared.
- ***Open Share Meeting:*** The open share meeting often has no topic or individual speaker. This gives group members an opportunity to share their experience, strength, and hope on any subject of their recovery.
- ***Topic Share Meeting:*** The topic share meeting opens with a facilitator or group member suggesting a specific topic (e.g., the Steps, setting boundaries, sponsorship, etc.). The facilitator usually begins the sharing.
- ***Step Meeting:*** The Step meeting makes use of our CoDA conference approved literature or the CoDA Book. The group may elect to read a portion of the material out loud before open sharing.

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## Structure

After the first meeting or two, it's best to reach a consensus on the structure of the new meeting. Note that this can always be changed at a future business meeting. Some questions may include: What guidelines will be used for sharing? How might the meeting deal with crosstalk? How will newcomers, literature, and other issues be handled? When will regular business meetings take place? The ***Meeting Starter Packet (MSP)*** (below) provides information and guidelines. CoDA recommends that every meeting have a copy of this packet. It contains the basic documents that support CoDA unity. Also, a helpful ***Fellowship Service Manual (FSM)*** is available. You may download both of these items for free from the web site www .coda.org. By request, our Fellowship Services will send one hard copy of each to newly registered meetings.

The CoDA Literature Order Form, also available on CoDA's web site, can be used to order other helpful pamphlets and literature as well as extra copies of the MSP or FSM for a fee.

The contact information for ordering CoDA literature is:

CoRe Publications
PO Box 670861
Dallas, TX 75367-0861
Fax (214) 340-6066 email coreorders@coda.org

## Registration

You may register your meeting online at www.coda.org or use the forms in the ***Meeting Starter Packet*** . In addition to a suggested meeting format, the packet contains all the forms you will need to apply for a registration number. Once you have an official number, the meeting will be listed in the CoDA Meeting Directory. If you have a Voting Entity organization or Intergroup, tell them about your new meeting so that it can be added to that community's meeting lists as well.

## CoDA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions

Just as the *Twelve Steps* offer guidance for maintaining healthy relationships, our *Twelve Traditions* offer guidance for maintaining healthy meetings. The CoDA Book contains commentary on all the Steps and Traditions. Rely on the wisdom embodied in the Steps and Traditions. Keep in mind that trusted servants take direction from the Fellowship. A group conscience can be a powerful tool.

## Jobs

Define what tasks must be done, such as:

- ***Key Holder:*** The key holder lets people in and locks up after the meeting.
- ***Chair/Meeting Leader:*** The chair/meeting leader runs the meeting.
- ***Treasurer:*** The treasurer holds all Seventh Tradition donations, pays rent, and sends excess funds beyond a prudent reserve to the local Intergroup, Voting Entity and/or Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.
- ***Secretary:*** The secretary takes notes at business meetings and keeps records.
- ***Literature Person:*** The literature person orders and keeps track of the group's CoDA literature.
- ***Phone Contact Person:*** The phone contact person responds to inquiries from people asking about the group.
- ***Group Service Representative (GSR):*** The GSR is elected by the group to represent the meeting's group conscience to Intergroup, Voting Entity and CoDA Service Conference. Since GSRs act as liaisons to CoDA as a whole, they are also known as contact persons

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## Growth

In the beginning, people may be called to do service work in more than one job. This is okay on a temporary basis, but may cause "burn out" or resentments over the long term. Jobs in CoDA are usually rotated to prevent "burn out." Job rotation also supports the concept that each meeting depends on all who attend. Let different volunteers perform each task, rotate positions regularly, and limit terms of service. More information about trusted servants can be found in the Bylaws and the *Fellowship Service Manual*. If at any time the group wants help or support (or has questions), call your local Intergroup, Voting Entity, or email Outreach Committee at outreach@coda.org. Our Higher Power will surely make available a member experienced in service, with whom you may consult Higher Power is present at all Fellowship meetings.

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**Section I-B -** *Meeting Starter Packet*

# CoDA Meetings

The sense of community and belonging, which are the gifts of our program, begin at the group meeting level. The CoDA community uses the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* , which are the foundation for our program, and are guides to our personal behavior and attitudes. They teach us to be respectful and honorable with one another.

A CoDA meeting is much more than a place to sit and tell your troubles, it is a place to meet people like yourself and to learn from those who are different from you; a place to interact with people focused on learning to have healthy and loving relationships.

A CoDA meeting is a group of people who come together around their shared desire for healthy and loving relationships. The meeting uses the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* of Co-Dependents Anonymous as the basis for working toward recovery. It is a place to find sponsorship and fellowship as well as the sharing of experience, strength, and hope. A strong sense of acceptance and community makes a meeting attractive both to the newcomer and old timer.

CoDA meetings remain strong and have the ongoing participation of long-term members when they demonstrate the qualities of acceptance and community. Members are encouraged to carry on fellowship outside of the meeting by going to coffee afterwards or working with a community committee to plan community events such as picnics, potlucks, campouts, or other events.

## Some Different Types of CoDA Meetings

**Speaker Meeting:** This type of meeting features a personal story of recovery shared by one individual. Speakers share their personal experience, strength, and hope in the program. The meeting may or may not include open sharing after the speaker, depending on the length of story shared.

**Open Share Meeting:** This type of meeting often has no topic or individual speaker, giving members an opportunity to share their experience, strength, and hope on their recovery as they wish.

**Topic Share Meeting:** This type of meeting opens with the facilitator or a member of the group suggesting a specific topic, i.e., the Steps, setting boundaries, sponsorship, etc. The facilitator will usually begin the sharing.

**Step or Tradition Study Meeting:** In this style of meeting, the group uses our Conference Endorsed CoDA literature and/or the CoDA Book as a foundation for study, discussion, or sharing related to CoDA's Steps and /or Traditions. For example: the group may elect to read a portion of this material out loud and then have an open sharing session.

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## "Open" and "Closed" Meetings

A CoDA meeting may be "open." This means that anyone can attend. "Anyone" means codependents, non-codependents, students, or representatives of other organizations (including the media), etc. (It is expected, and may be specifically asked, that all such visitors agree to respect our need for anonymity and confidentiality.)

A "closed" group, however, is a group attended only by people who are codependent or think they may be codependent. Newcomers who think they may be codependent can attend a closed meeting.

A closed group may be "restricted." For example, a meeting may be listed as "closed - women." In this example, only women who are codependent (or believe they may be codependent) may attend this meeting.

However, in respecting the spirit of Traditions One, Three, and Five, we honor one exception. No member of our Fellowship shall be turned away from even a closed or restricted meeting, if there is no other meeting available to this person.

## Crosstalk

In our meetings, we speak about our own experience, and we listen without comment to what others share. We work toward taking responsibility for our own lives, rather than giving advice to others. This is why crosstalk is strongly discouraged during our meetings. Crosstalk guidelines help keep our meetings a safe place. For more information, please refer to the Newcomer's Handbook. Examples of crosstalk may include, but are not limited to:

- Giving unsolicited feedback
- Advising
- Answering
- Making "you" and "we" statements
- Interrogating
- Debating
- Criticizing
- Controlling
- Dominating
- Minimizing another person's feeling or experiences
- Physical contact / touch
- Body movements such as nodding one's head or other gestures
- Verbal sounds / noises
- Referring to someone present by name

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**Section I-B -** *Meeting Starter Packet*

# COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## What constitutes a CoDA Group?

A CoDA group is composed of two or more individuals whose purpose in meeting is a desire for healthy relationships. A group applies the principles of the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*, as adapted for our purpose from Alcoholics Anonymous. A CoDA group reads *CoDA's Twelve Steps*, *Twelve Traditions*, and the copyrighted "*Welcome*" and "*Preamble*" as they are written. These readings, along with the availability of CoDA Service Conference Endorsed literature at your meeting, help to support a sense of CoDA unity as called for in CoDA's First Tradition. In addition, CoDA groups register with Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. in order to stay in contact with CoDA as a whole. With respect to other questions about group organization (date, time, type of meeting), each group is autonomous except in matters affecting CoDA as a whole. Because the *Twelve Steps* are the basis of our recovery, we strongly suggest that each meeting set aside at least one meeting per month for Step Study.

As Tradition Four states, ("each group should remain autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole"), it is important that a CoDA meeting present familiar aspects that communicate, "This is CoDA." While it is rare, some meetings have chosen to adopt a format that varies significantly from CoDA guidelines. This presents confusion, particularly to the newcomer, regarding the nature of our program. If a community service group feels it necessary, a meeting may be informed specifically how it does not appear to be following the unifying principles of CoDA Tradition. If the meeting decides, by group conscience, not to change, they need to understand that they may no longer be recognized as, nor call themselves, a CoDA meeting and will be removed from Intergroups, and CoDA listings.

The community service group can, by group conscience decision, remove a meeting from their meeting list if it is determined that that meeting is not following the principles of CoDA and does not choose to change.

The community service group can then recommend that the meeting be removed from the Intergroup meeting lists.

The Intergroup can decide by group conscience whether or not to remove that meeting from their meeting list.

If the Intergroup or regional assembly decides to remove that meeting from their list, they can recommend to the CoDA Board of Trustees that that meeting be removed from the Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. meeting list.

The Board may decide by group conscience whether or not to remove that meeting from the CoDA meeting list.

## How does our Group register with CoDA?

Fill out the GROUP REGISTRATION/CHANGES FORM, found in the *Meeting Starter Packet*, and return it to CoDA. Your group will be assigned a number and placed in our directory. If any changes in your group information occur, use the same form and return it the CoDA address, so that our records remain current. Please use your assigned group number on all correspondence with CoDA The above forms, as well as Internet based registration alternatives and information, can be found on our website (see note below).

Note:

If you do not have contact information for your CoDA community service group, Voting Entity (VE), or do not have copies of the above mentioned forms, you may write to Co- Dependents Anonymous, P.O. Box 33577, Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577, or visit the CoDA web site at www.coda.org for free downloads.

## What is a "Home Group," and why might I want one?

While having a "home group" does not afford us any special rights or privileges at the meeting, many of us find that having a particular meeting where we focus our participation and service work is helpful to our recovery. CoDA is about building and maintaining healthy relationships and those relationships can develop most easily among people we see frequently. CoDA is a community, and this is most evident at the meeting level. Because of this, many of us choose to identify a home group, which we attend regularly.

## How can we let people know about our meeting?

Contact your CoDA community representative or Voting Entity Delegate to have your meeting listed in the local Intergroup or Voting Entity CoDA meeting schedule. This is the best avenue for gaining exposure and support. CoDA groups can be announced in local papers or on community bulletin boards. There is also a community outreach packet available for your use. This packet is available from CoRe, is included in this document in the "Attracting Members" Section, inside the starter packet, or from the CoDA website. Frequently, librarians allow groups to post notices or leave free material, such as "What Is Codependence?" which can include a group's meeting information. According to Tradition Eleven: *"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion."* We suggest simply stating "[Your Group name] CoDA Meeting" with the time, date, and location. Note that we do not use a meeting facility name as a group name, in accordance with Tradition Six. If a group called itself the Johnson Center CoDA Group, for example, this could be considered endorsement of an outside enterprise. Instead, the Hometown Tuesday Night CoDA group can post flyers saying that they meet in the Johnson Center.

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## Where do we get funds?

CoDA groups usually "pass a basket" during the meeting, reminding those attending about our Seventh Tradition, which states that each group is fully self- supporting and declines outside contributions. Occasionally, a group may pass the basket a second time if contributions are needed for rent, literature, or some other legitimate expense.

## What is a "prudent reserve," and what do we do with excess moneys collected?

A "prudent reserve" consists of two or three months' worth of group expenses. Group expenses include items such as rent, supplies, coffee, and Conference Endorsed literature. The prudent reserve is to cover expenses in the event that the group has unusually low attendance or donations. For excess funds left after the reserve amount is satisfied, a group normally makes a Seventh Tradition donation according to the following guideline:

- 60% to your local community service group (Intergroup)
- 30% to Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.
- 10% to your Voting Entity

## Is There A Limit to The Amount an Individual May Donate to CoDA?

Seventh Tradition cash donations are anonymous, and are not monitored or regulated in any way. The amount given by any individual in a meeting is personal and confidential.

Gifts of cash, goods (such as computers or books), or donations of services of value (such as auditing financial records or website maintenance) are subject to limitations on an annual basis. For optimal spiritual health, CoDA groups and service bodies adhere to our Seventh Tradition, which states that we remain self -supporting. Even though people donate with the best intentions, we are warned that problems of "money, property, and prestige" may "divert us from our primary, spiritual aim." If the group relies too heavily on one individual or a small group of donors, autonomy is compromised, and group unity may suffer. Therefore, limits are placed on individual contributions, and these limits vary according to the size of the body receiving the gift.

For individual groups, Intergroups, and Voting Entities Service bodies, the value for donated cash, goods, or professional services rendered is recommended not to exceed $1000 (one thousand dollars) per year. That limit is raised to $2000 (two thousand dollars) per year for Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. in accordance with the larger scale of operation. All gifts are to be receipted, and for service bodies that are incorporated nonprofit organizations, gifts may be tax deductible for the donor. For the spiritual health of CoDA, all donations shall be anonymous, to the extent permitted by the gift documentation process.

## Can our group use the CoDA Tax ID Number?

No. The Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. Tax ID Number, also known as the Employer Identification Number (EIN) is not for use by any other level of CoDA except the corporate level.

The EIN applies in the United States only. For other countries, please consult your tax authorities or corporate registration entity.
The Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. EIN is specific to the corporation of CoDA. The CoDA Tax ID Number, also known as the Employer Identification Number (EIN) is not for use by any person, group or entity other than Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. If your Voting Entity (VE) or intergroup/community organization is incorporated, you need an EIN. Find information and apply at the irs.gov website

## How do we open a bank account and obtain a Tax ID Number?

In order for a CoDA group, intergroup/community, or Voting Entity organization to open a bank account as a group entity, not just under the name of the treasurer, the bank will usually require at least four things.

1) A minimum balance.
2) A copy of the group minutes of your business meeting that includes the name of your organization.
3) A list of all officers of the organization and anyone else who may be a co-signer on the account, including some form of ID such as driver's license and Social Security Number on each person.
4) A Tax ID Number/ EIN for the organization.

## Alternatives to getting a Tax ID number/EIN for a bank account

Some groups use the social security number of the group's treasurer as the Tax ID for the group's bank account. A group may open a checking account, non-interest bearing, under the treasurer's social security number with a Doing Business As (D/B/A) name on the account (such as "Sunrise CoDA"). While this could have tax implications for the treasurer, usually the balance of a group's checking account is so low that there is no problem. For more information on taxes see TAX INFORMATION below.

Many meeting groups hold such a small amount of funds that they do not choose to open a bank account at all. The group's treasurer holds the money in a coffee can or shoebox or the group may keep the money in a locked file cabinet in their meeting location.

## What is a non-profit organization?

For the purposes of getting a Tax ID/ EIN, a "non-profit" organization is one whose major purpose or activity is to do things other than making money. This is not the same thing as being a federally recognized non-profit organization. That is a designation that requires application to the government.

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The Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. EIN is specific to the corporation of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. Having an "umbrella" tax status would require that each group submit all their information, including the identifying information of their officers, to for the official record. In addition, Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. would then be responsible for the groups' financial reporting and financial activity. We would have to establish a system of controls over the finances of each CoDA group, intergroup/community, and Voting Entity or regional service board. We would somehow have to ensure the use of all income solely for CoDA purposes and require regular re ... [1]

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# Tax Information

A group, intergroup/community or Voting Entity organization that has a Tax ID Number/EIN and a bank account may need to deal with federal income tax and various state taxes. Most meeting groups hold very little money in their bank account, and even if it is an interest bearing account, it will usually not earn enough interest to require income tax payment, although you may need to file for state or federal purposes. Since tax laws are subject to change (including the minimum income required for paying income tax and filing requirements), we suggest you consult with a tax professional concerning what state or federal tax requirements apply to your group.

Some larger groups and some intergroups/communities or state organizations do collect sufficient funds to require payment of income tax. Although some groups choose to seek tax-exempt status, it may be simpler and less expensive just to pay income taxes than go through the process of filing for tax exemption, incorporating (which usually goes along with the process of filing for tax exemption), and keeping up the records and reports required to maintain tax-exempt
status once it's granted. Consult with a tax professional regarding the best course of action for your group's specific circumstances.

A group, intergroup/community, or state organization that is involved in the sale of literature or other items may be responsible for paying sales tax on those items. Most meeting groups either give away literature or accept voluntary donations for literature, in which case there is no concern with sales tax. However, if you sell things like literature, tapes, tee shirts, such as at a workshop, then you are responsible for keeping records of sales and collecting and paying sales tax. Again, if you are unsure how to proceed with sales tax, we suggest that you consult an attorney or accountant in your state for further help.

## Tax-Exempt Status

CoDA groups are "non-profit" in their financial behavior but they are not automatically "tax-exempt". Obtaining tax exemption status is an expensive and complicated process that involves legal obligations, controversy about Traditions, and ongoing responsibility. Most meeting groups (and even most intergroups/communities) operate with minimal funds, and contributions are generally done in cash anonymously at the meetings. Most regular meeting groups rarely have any tax liability and do not need tax exemption. Even when you consider the purchase of literature and other materials, the added taxes are pretty minimal. So a tax-exempt status really wouldn't buy much at the local meeting level, and could also result in considerable paperwork by some meeting volunteer.

Large intergroups/communities or state CoDA organizations sometimes do form corporations and get their own tax exemption in some cases. If such a group is doing large conventions or has a large service office, it may be worthwhile to go through the process of obtaining tax-exempt status at the state and/or federal level. For example, if an intergroup/community or state organization hosts numerous workshops or a single very large event, and rents space, hires food service, purchases literature, coffee mugs, tee-shirts etc for the event and also, if any of that material is subsequently sold, then taxes would apply, and tax exemption may be viable.

If your group has determined that it needs to file for tax exemption but does not wish to incorporate, it may be able to operate as an *unincorporated association of individuals.* This may not be possible in every state as incorporation requirements for non-profit organizations vary from state to state. Your local tax consultant can provide you with specific information concerning the option of operating as an unincorporated nonprofit association in your state.

Establishing your group as a tax -exempt organization is involved. You may wish to contact the IRS and your state's tax, revenue or treasury office for more information. You may also want to

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read IRS publication 557, "Tax-Exempt Status for Your Organization" and Form 1023 and its instructions. Also, your state may require a separate application for tax-exempt status. Since tax exemption is complex and carries sizable legal responsibility, we encourage you to consult with legal and tax professionals who are familiar with the needs of small nonprofit organizations in your state when preparing your corporation papers, filing for tax exemption, and maintaining your nonprofit tax reports.

## Does CoDA have an "umbrella" insurance policy that would cover our meeting?

No, CoDA does not have an umbrella insurance policy that covers individual meetings. Intergroups or meetings may organize and purchase their own insurance.

Options that have worked:

- Asking the requesting facility if their insurance company could provide the needed coverage for an added fee or for free.
- Moving the meeting to a facility that doesn't request additional insurance. County health and human service agencies have had such facilities.
- Forming an intergroup, association or consortium to purchase a policy through a broker who writes binders for new meetings. The geographic area covered depends upon the resources of the broker involved.
- Signing waivers in lieu of insurance. This might lead to personal liability for group members. Outside legal advice about such matters is recommended.

## "I'm a therapist and I would like to start/facilitate a CoDA meeting."

We ask that therapists only start meetings or participate in meetings as an individual recovering codependent. CoDA is forever nonprofessional and does not affiliate with any outside facility or outside enterprise. 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- reminds us that no one individual holds authority over CoDA meetings. Tradition Eight Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers. Therapists and other professionals are asked not to dominate, attempt to facilitate meetings with professional authority, or use their position for personal gain.

Many vulnerable codependents come to CoDA meetings seeking advice and/or therapy. Having professionals lead meetings in an authoritative manner leads these CoDA members to believe that this is how CoDA works. Having professionals lead meetings in an authoritative manner leads these CoDA members to believe that this is how CoDA works.

In "*Building CoDA Community: Healthy Meetings Matter*" page 17 states: *In CoDA, no one is paid to share experience, strength, and hope, whether at meetings, as sponsors, or in any other Twelve Step related activity. Professionals attending CoDA meetings do so as members only, and do not use the Fellowship to further their business interests.*

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## What should we do if the group disbands?

In the unfortunate case of a group disbanding, the treasurer must ensure that current debts are satisfied. If possible, negotiate a reduction or forgiveness of rent due. Remaining funds and/or literature can be given to other local CoDA groups or to the community, regional, Voting Entity, or Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. office. If there is no other group close enough to easily give literature to, contact a Delegate or other CoDA representative for guidance, or donate literature to area libraries or institutions.

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**Section I-D -** *Meeting Starter Packet*

# GUIDELINES FOR SERVICE POSITIONS

A CoDA group cannot function without the efforts of our trusted servants. Service work starts at the group level. Service positions can be as simple as a month-long commitment to set up the refreshment table or literature table at each meeting, to a two-year commitment to represent the group each month at the local community service group meetings. This section contains some detailed descriptions of the tasks and responsibilities involved with service positions. These are guidelines and each group may decide to add, delete, or combine responsibilities as necessary.

## General Responsibilities of Trusted Servants

**Preserving continuity:** Outgoing officers are expected to work with the next person holding the position to insure that procedures, knowledge, and records are passed along.

**Responsibility of office:** When officers cannot attend a meeting or other service commitment, they find a substitute to handle the job. In the event a commitment is not fulfilled, the officer should be given a chance to explain to the group. If desired, a group conscience may then be taken to determine if the group wishes the meeting officer to continue or wishes to seek another volunteer to take over the position.

### Desirable qualities of Group Service Officers:

- Welcome and acknowledge newcomers
- Encourage Twelve Step attitudes.
- Promote adherence to *CoDA's Twelve Traditions* and principles.
- Conduct group conscience on new matters or to resolve disputes.
- Support CoDA's program of spirituality in the tone and style of the meeting.
- Promote principles before personalities.

## Guidelines for Typical CoDA Group service positions

These are recommendations. Each group may decide how to distribute responsibilities among the trusted servants of the group, combining or expanding positions as needed.

**Chairperson/coordinator/facilitator: (it is suggested that this position rotates with each meeting or at time intervals, i.e., monthly or biannually)**

- Takes a leadership role for the duration of the meeting itself.
- Assumes overall responsibility for meeting format.
- Invites speakers or finds a volunteer to handle speaker invitations.
- Guides the meeting according to CoDA-endorsed guidelines.

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**Secretary: (Suggested term of office - 6 months)**

- The business representative for the group and acts as liaison to the meeting facility.
- Obtains and maintains a meeting room.
- Plans and conducts "business meetings" regularly (agenda items may include: elections, meeting format, procedures, etc.) and keeps records of group conscience decisions.
- Provides the community service group with the full name, address, and phone number of all officers.
- **IMPORTANT:** Changes in the location, time, or day of the group meeting, or contact person should be updated. This may be done through a 'Changes in Group Information' form sent to CoDA or through the CoDA web site at www.coda.org.

  ***Note:** This personal data is used at the Intergroup, Voting Entity, and CoDA level only for communication purposes and is held in confidence.*

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**Group Service Representative (GSR): (Usual term 2 years)**

- The link between the CoDA group and CoDA as a whole. Ideally, a GSR is an established member of the group, with experience, knowledge, and understanding of CoDA's *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*…
- Attends the local CoDA Intergroup or Voting Entity service meetings.
- Carries the group conscience to the local CoDA Intergroup, Voting Entity service meeting; and then reports to the group on the outcomes.
- Notifies the group of any local or CoDA updates, announcements, and flyers.

**Treasurer:**

- Keeps accurate financial records of the group, and regularly reports to the group regarding income, expenses, and prudent reserve. (Note: A prudent reserve is determined by the group conscience of the meeting, usually two or three month's worth of group expenses).
- Pays rent to the meeting facility for use of the meeting room.
- Disburses Seventh Tradition funds in accordance with group conscience. A suggested guideline is offered in the Welcome Letter from the Board of Trustees in the Starter Packet (see Section 15).
- Turns over records and funds to new treasurer

**Literature Person:**

- Puts CoDA Endorsed literature out at the meeting.
- Keeps track of group literature supplies and re-order as needed.
- Obtains funds from the group treasurer to restock literature.
- Refers newcomers and CoDA members to available CoDA literature.

**Phone Contact Person:**

- Makes first name and phone number available on local and CoDA meeting lists.
- Is available to receive phone calls in order to give directions to the meeting.

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*The Meeting Starter Packet of Co-Dependents Anonymous* *Pending Conference Approval 2010*

# Attracting Members- Community Outreach

**Section II-** A-D **-** *Meeting Starter Packet*

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Our Eleventh Tradition reminds us that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. We do not advertise in the traditional sense in that we do not push for everyone to join CoDA. We do not pay celebrity sponsors to speak on our behalf. We do not tell people why they should join up. Instead, we let the program speak for itself. We let people know we are here and then we let them decide for themselves if they want to participate.

A. **The Community Outreach Package Introduction** provides an overview of the principles and the process of how to let the community know about your CoDA meeting.

B. **The Press Release** is a form consisting of two press releases that can be used to announce your meeting in your local newspaper.

C. **Welcoming Newcomers** offers a list of suggestions for communicating to the newcomer that they are welcome as attending one's first meeting can be scary.

D. **The Flyer for Bulletin Boards** can be individualized with your meeting and contact person information and posted to announce your meeting.

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**Section II-A -** *Meeting Starter Packet*

## Community Outreach Package Introduction

**TO:** CoDA Members

**FROM:** CoDA Service Conference

**RE:** Community Outreach Package - to help increase membership in your area

**The Objective:**
The goal is to "carry the message". This Twelfth Step work means, in part, to get information about CoDA and CoDA meetings out into your community, so the information is available to other codependents who still suffer. When your meeting is listed in your local newspaper, and area mental health professionals know about CoDA, more people can learn about CoDA.

**Suggested Actions:**

1) Newspaper Announcement Form - Fill this out and send it to your local paper to have your meeting listed.

2) Mail the following information to therapists, hospitals, help-lines, libraries, community centers, and colleges etc, within a 5-10 minute radius of your meeting. Check your phone book for possible nearby locations.

- *"What is CoDA?"* pamphlet.
- Subscription form for a complimentary copy of a local CoDA newsletter. Offer to mail complimentary quarterly mailings to all professionals. A quarterly mailing might include the local CoDA newsletter, updated meeting lists, and flyers about upcoming events.
- CoDA flyer with meeting information "tear-aways.

3) Hang the CoDA flyer with meeting information "tear-aways" in your community. Some suggestions for locations: churches, supermarkets, community bulletin boards, libraries, doctor's offices. Remember to ask permission first.

**Any Questions:**
Please contact your Voting Entity Delegate, the Outreach Committee, outreach@coda.org, or the CoDA Board, board@coda.org.

Community outreach is a way to implement our Twelfth Step and Fifth Tradition, that a CoDA group *"has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to other Co-Dependents who still suffer."* These suggestions are within the guidelines of Tradition Eleven, which states, *"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion…."*

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*The Meeting Starter Packet of Co-Dependents Anonymous* *Pending Conference Approval 2010*

## Section II-B - *Meeting Starter Packet*

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**To CoDA members,**
This announcement form is in keeping with our 11th Tradition, which states, *"our public relations policy is based upon attraction rather than promotion."* You may use this form to notify newspapers about your meeting.

### Press Release:
**Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) Meeting Information**

Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) is a Twelve Step Fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is recovery from codependence and the development and maintenance of healthy relationships.

The CoDA meeting in the area meets:

On_____ at _____am/pm
(Day) (Time)

At _____ _____
(Place) (Address)

For further information contact: _____at (___) _____

CoDA is a non-profit organization supported by the voluntary contributions of attending members.

### Press Release:
**Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) Meeting Information**

Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA) is a Twelve Step Fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is recovery from codependence and the development and maintenance of healthy relationships.

The CoDA meeting in the area meets:

On _____ at _____am/pm
(Day) (Time)

At _____ _____
(Place) (Address)

For further information contact: _____at (___) _____

CoDA is a non-profit organization supported by the voluntary contributions of attending members.

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# WELCOMING NEWCOMERS IN CoDA MEETINGS

- ☐ Put up a sign in the building that indicates where the meeting is.
- ☐ Welcome newcomers. Include a statement in the format about when they can ask questions (after the meeting? during a break?)
- ☐ Give each newcomer a *Newcomer's Handbook* or "*Welcome*" chip or *What is CoDA?* pamphlet.
- ☐ Explain the "no crosstalk" custom as part of your meeting format every week.
- ☐ Suggest that newcomers try several meetings before deciding if CoDA is right for them.
- ☐ Make an effort to say something to a newcomer.
- ☐ If your meeting's members go out after the meeting for coffee or a meal, announce at the end of the meeting that everybody is welcome.
- ☐ Have meeting lists and phone lists available.
- ☐ Phone contact for meeting returns calls promptly.

*Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to other codependents who still suffer.*
*~Tradition Five*

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# Characteristics of Codependence
# Co-Dependents typically:

- Assume responsibility for other people's feelings
- Are not aware of how they feel and cannot identify their feelings
- Tend to minimize, alter, or even deny the truth about how they feel
- Tend to fear or worry about how others may respond to their feelings
- Bolster their self-esteem by trying to solve other people's problems
- Look to other people to determine what to do, say or feel
- Focus their attention on pleasing another person
- Have difficulty acknowledging good things about themselves
- Tend to judge everything they say or do harshly, by someone else's standards
- Have difficulty in forming and/or maintaining close relationships with others
- Have to feel needed in order to have a relationship with others
- Do not know or believe that asking for help is both OK and normal

**For a meeting list, search for meetings online at www.coda.org**

**or send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:**

For a meeting list
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to :

CoDA National Web page
www.coda.org
Local meeting at:

For a meeting list
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to :

CoDA National Web page
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Local meeting at:

For a meeting list
Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to :

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# Foundational and Meeting Documents

**Section III-** A- K **-** *Meeting Starter Packet*

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The documents enclosed in this section are the foundation upon which all CoDA meetings are built.

A. ***The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous***

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B. ***The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous***

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C. ***The Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous***

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D. ***Patterns of Codependence***

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E. ***Recovery Patterns of Codependence*** .

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F. ***The Preamble***

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G. ***The Welcome*** *(long version)*

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H. ***The Welcome*** *(short version)*

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I. **Prayers**

J. ***"For Safety Sake"*** **tent card**

K. **The Basic Meeting Format**

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## The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous ©

1. We admitted we were powerless over others - that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood God.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1.We admitted we were powerless over alcohol-that our lives had become unmanageable. 2.Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3.Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4 Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Make a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditations to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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## The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous ©

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.

2. 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.

3. The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.

4. Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole.

5. Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to other codependents who still suffer.

6. A CoDA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the CoDA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.

7. A CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. CoDA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

10. CoDA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the CoDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

11. 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.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The *Twelve Traditions* are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt this material does not mean that AA has reviewed or approved the contents of this publication, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only - use of the *Twelve Steps* in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise. *The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous* - Short Form 1.Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity. 2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority-a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. 3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking. 4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole. 5. Each group has but one primary purpose-to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. 6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose. 7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. Alcoholics Anonymous as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. 11. 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. 12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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## The Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous ©

I can expect a miraculous change in my life by working the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. As I make an honest effort to work the *Twelve Steps* and follow the Twelve Traditions...

1. I know a new sense of belonging. The feeling of emptiness and loneliness will disappear.

2. I am no longer controlled by my fears. I overcome my fears and act with courage, integrity and dignity.

3. I know a new freedom.

4. I release myself from worry, guilt, and regret about my past and present. I am aware enough not to repeat it.

5. I know a new love and acceptance of myself and others. I feel genuinely lovable, loving and loved.

6. I learn to see myself as equal to others. My new and renewed relationships are all with equal partners.

7. I am capable of developing and maintaining healthy and loving relationships. The need to control and manipulate others will disappear as I learn to trust those who are trustworthy.

8. I learn that it is possible to mend - to become more loving, intimate and supportive. I have the choice of communicating with my family in a way which is safe for me and respectful of them.

9. I acknowledge that I am a unique and precious creation.

10. I no longer need to rely solely on others to provide my sense of worth.

11. I trust the guidance I receive from my higher power and come to believe in my own capabilities.

12. I gradually experience serenity, strength, and spiritual growth in my daily life.

*"The Journey Continues"* on page 79 in the **CoDA Book** is an option to the above reading, or may be read in addition to the above reading.

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# Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence

These patterns and characteristics are offered as a tool to aid in self-evaluation. They may be particularly helpful to newcomers.

## Denial Patterns:

I have difficulty identifying what I am feeling.
I minimize, alter, or deny how I truly feel.
I perceive myself as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others.
I lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others.
I label others with my negative traits.
I can take care of myself without any help from others.
I mask my pain in various ways such as anger, humor, or isolation.
I express negativity or aggression in indirect and passive ways.
I do not recognize the unavailability of those people to whom I am attracted.

## Low Self Esteem Patterns:

I have difficulty making decisions.
I judge what I think, say, or do harshly, as never good enough.
I am embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.
I value others' approval of my thinking, feelings, and behavior over my own.
I do not perceive myself as a lovable or worthwhile person.
I constantly seek recognition that I think I deserve.
I have difficulty admitting that I made a mistake.
I need to appear to be right in the eyes of others and will even lie to look good.
I am unable to ask others to meet my needs or desires.
I perceive myself as superior to others.
I look to others to provide my sense of safety.
I have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects.
I have trouble setting healthy priorities.

## Compliance Patterns:

I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
I compromise my own values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger.
I put aside my own interests in order to do what others want.
I am hypervigilant regarding the feelings of others and take on those feelings.
I am afraid to express my beliefs, opinions, and feelings when they differ from those of others.
I accept sexual attention when I want love.

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I make decisions without regard to the consequences.
I give up my truth to gain the approval of others or to avoid change.

**Control Patterns:**

I believe most people are incapable of taking care of themselves.
I attempt to convince others what to think, do, or feel.
I freely offer advice and direction to others without being asked.
I become resentful when others decline my help or reject my advice.
I lavish gifts and favors on those I want to influence.
I use sexual attention to gain approval and acceptance.
I have to be needed in order to have a relationship with others.
I demand that my needs be met by others.
I use charm and charisma to convince others of my capacity to be caring and compassionate.
I use blame and shame to emotionally exploit others.
I refuse to cooperate, compromise, or negotiate.
I adopt an attitude of indifference, helplessness, authority, or rage to manipulate outcomes.
I use terms of recovery in an attempt to control the behavior of others.
I pretend to agree with others to get what I want.

**Avoidance Patterns:**

I act in ways that invite others to reject, shame, or express anger toward me.
I judge harshly what others think, say, or do.
I avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy as a means of maintaining distance.
I allow my addictions to people, places, and things to distract me from achieving intimacy in relationships.
I use indirect and evasive communication to avoid conflict or confrontation.
I diminish my capacity to have healthy relationships by declining to use all the tools of recovery.
I suppress my feelings or needs to avoid feeling vulnerable.
I pull people toward me, but when they get close, I push them away.
I refuse to give up my self-will to avoid surrendering to a power that is greater than myself.
I believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.
I withhold expressions of appreciation.

**The *Patterns and Characteristics of Codependency* may not be reprinted or republished without the express written consent of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. This document may be reprinted from the website www.coda.org (CoDA) for use by members of the CoDA Fellowship.**

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# Recovery Patterns of Codependence©

## Denial Patterns:

| Codependence | Recovery |
|---|---|
| I have difficulty identifying what I am feeling. | I am aware of my feelings and identify them, often in the moment. |
| I minimize, alter, or deny how I truly feel. | I embrace my feelings as being valid and important. I am truthful with myself. |
| I perceive myself as being completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others. | I keep the focus on my own well-being. I know the difference between caring and caretaking. |

## Low self-esteem Patterns:

| Codependence | Recovery |
|---|---|
| I have difficulty making decisions. | I trust my ability to make effective decisions. |
| I judge everything I think, say, or do harshly, as never "good enough." | I accept myself as I am. I emphasize progress over perfection. |
| I am embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts. | I feel appropriately worthy of the recognition, praise, or gifts I receive |
| I do not ask others to meet my needs or desires. | I meet my own needs and wants when possible. I reach out for help when it's necessary and appropriate. |
| I value others' approval of my thinking, feelings, and behavior over my own. | I have confidence in myself. I no longer seek others' approval of my thoughts, feelings, and behavior. |
| I do not perceive myself as a lovable or worthwhile person. | I recognize myself as being a lovable and valuable person. |

## Compliance Patterns:

| Codependence | Recovery |
|---|---|
| I compromise my own values and integrity to avoid rejection or others' anger. | I am rooted in my own values, even if others don't agree or become angry. |
| I am very sensitive to how others are feeling and feel the same. | I can separate my feelings from the feelings of others. |
| I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long. | I am committed to my safety and recovery work. I leave situations that feel unsafe or are inconsistent with my goals. |
| I value others' opinions and feelings more than my own and am afraid to express differing opinions and feelings of my own. | I respect my own opinions and feelings and express them appropriately. |
| I put aside my own interests and hobbies in order to do what others want. | I consider my own interests first when asked to participate in another's plans. |
| I accept sex when I want love. | My sexuality is grounded in genuine intimacy and connection. I know the difference between lust and love. |

## Control Patterns:

| Codependence | Recovery |
|---|---|
| I believe most other people are incapable of taking care of themselves. | I realize that, with rare exceptions, other adults are capable of managing their own lives. My job is to let them. |
| I attempt to convince others of what they "should" think and how they "truly" feel. | I accept and value the differing thoughts, feelings, and opinions of others. |
| I become resentful when others will not let me help them. | I feel comfortable when I see others take care of themselves. |
| I freely offer others advice and directions without being asked. | I am a compassionate and empathic listener, giving advice only if directly asked. |
| I lavish gifts and favors on those I care about. | I carefully and honestly contemplate my motivations when preparing to give a gift. |
| I use sex to gain approval and acceptance. | I feel loved and accepted for myself, just the way I am. |
| I have to be "needed" in order to have a relationship with others. | I develop relationships with others based on equality, intimacy, and balance. |

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## Preamble of Co-Dependents Anonymous©

Co-Dependents Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is to develop healthy relationships. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and fulfilling relationships. We gather together to support and share with each other in a journey of self-discovery -- learning to love the self. Living the program allows each of us to become increasingly honest with ourselves about our personal histories and our own codependent behaviors.

We rely upon the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* for knowledge and wisdom. These are the principles of our program and guides to developing honest and fulfilling relationships with ourselves and others. In CoDA, we each learn to build a bridge to a Higher Power of our own understanding, and we allow others the same privilege.

This renewal process is a gift of healing for us. By actively working the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous, we can each realize a new joy, acceptance and serenity in our lives.

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## Welcome to Co-Dependents Anonymous©

(long version)

We welcome you to Co-Dependents Anonymous, a program of recovery from codependence, where each of us may share our experience, strength, and hope in our efforts to find freedom where there has been bondage and peace where there has been turmoil in our relationships with others and ourselves. Most of us have been searching for ways to overcome the dilemmas of the conflicts in our relationships and our childhoods. Many of us were raised in families where addictions existed - some of us were not. In either case, we have found in each of our lives that codependence is a most deeply rooted compulsive behavior and that it is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional family systems. We have each experienced in our own ways the painful trauma of the emptiness of our childhood and relationships throughout our lives.

We attempted to use others - our mates, friends, and even our children, as our sole source of identity, value and wellbeing, and as a way of trying to restore within us the emotional losses from our childhoods. Our histories may include other powerful addictions which at times we have used to cope with our codependence.

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We have all learned to survive life, but in CoDA we are learning to live life. Through applying the *Twelve Steps* and principles found in CoDA to our daily life and relationships, both present and past, we can experience a new freedom from our self-defeating lifestyles. It is an individual growth process. Each of us is growing at our own pace and will continue to do so as we remain open to God's will for us on a daily basis. Our sharing is our way of identification and helps us to free the emotional bonds of our past and the compulsive control of our present.

No matter how traumatic your past or despairing your present may seem, there is hope for a new day in the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. No longer do you need to rely on others as a power greater than yourself. May you instead find here a new strength within to be that which God intended - Precious and Free.

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## Welcome to Co-Dependents Anonymous©

(short version)

We welcome you to Co-Dependents Anonymous - a program of recovery from codependence, where each of us may share our experience, strength, and hope in our efforts to find freedom where there has been bondage, and peace where there has been turmoil in our relationships with others and ourselves.

Codependence is a deeply-rooted, compulsive behavior. It is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional family systems. We attempted to use others as our sole source of identity, value, well being, and as a way of trying to restore our emotional losses. Our histories may include other powerful addictions which we have used to cope with our codependency.

We have all learned to survive life, but in CoDA we are learning to live life. Through applying the *Twelve Steps* and principles found in CoDA to our daily lives and relationships, both present and past, we can experience a new freedom from our self-defeating lifestyles. Our sharing helps us to free the emotional bonds of our past and the compulsive control of our present.

No matter how traumatic your past or despairing your present may seem, there is hope for a new day in the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. May you find a new strength within to be that which God intended - Precious and Free.

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CoDA has three suggested prayers that are
Conference approved as CoDA literature:

**The CoDA Opening Prayer** ©

In the spirit of love and truth, we ask our Higher Power to
guide us as we share our experience, strength and hope.
We open our hearts to the light of wisdom,
the warmth of love, and the joy of acceptance.

Conference Endorsed 9/13/91

**The CoDA Closing Prayer** ©

We thank our Higher Power,
for all that we have received from this meeting.
As we close, may we take with us
the wisdom, love, acceptance, and hope of recovery.

Conference Endorsed 9/13/91

Another prayer commonly used at CoDA meetings is the Serenity Prayer, as follows:

**The Serenity Prayer**

God, grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
and Wisdom to know the difference

Conference Endorsed 1989

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FOR SAFETY SAKE

I use "I" statements when sharing. (I feel; I believe.)

I share my own experience, strength, and hope—no one else's.

I refrain from commenting on what others share.

I share for three to five minutes, keeping the focus on myself.

I help myself and others by being emotionally present and honest.

I let others experience their own feelings; I keep my advice to myself.

# FOR SAFETY SAKE

**I use "I" statements when sharing. (I feel; I believe.)**

**I share my own experience, strength, and hope—no one else's.**

**I refrain from commenting on what others share.**

**I share for three to five minutes, keeping the focus on myself.**

**I help myself and others by being emotionally present and honest.**

**I let others experience their own feelings; I keep my advice to myself.**



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# Basic Meeting Format

This meeting format is included as a guideline. The style of program your meeting wishes to use (whether Speaker, Sharing, Topic or Step) can be a group conscience decision made by the members of your group. Bold sections are for the chair or meeting leader to read aloud; plain text sections are optional extras. You may also copy and display our "*For Safety Sake*" tent card during meetings.

## Opening Section

1. **"Good evening (morning, afternoon) and welcome to the meeting of Co-Dependents Anonymous. My name is and I am a codependent. I am your meeting leader tonight (today). CoDA asks those with cell phones and pagers to please turn them off or to silent ringing for the duration of the meeting, so we can keep our focus on the meeting without interruptions. Please help me open this meeting with a moment of silence followed by the**

**(***This is the meeting leader or group's prayer of choice: the Serenity Prayer or the CoDA Opening Prayer***)**

| **The CoDA Opening Prayer** © | **The Serenity Prayer** |
|---|---|
| In the spirit of love and truth,<br>we ask our Higher Power<br>to guide us as we share our experience,<br>strength, and hope.<br>We open our hearts to the light of wisdom,<br>the warmth of love, and the joy of acceptance. | God, grant me the Serenity<br>to accept the things I cannot change;<br>Courage to change the things I can;<br>and Wisdom to know the difference |

2. **The group meeting leader reads the CoDA "*Preamble*" as written.**

3. **"We welcome any newcomers who are attending their first, second or third meeting of Co-Dependents Anonymous, and ask that you raise your hand and introduce yourself by your first name only... "**
***Optional-*** *Newcomers can be welcomed by clapping after each or all have introduced themselves. If your meeting gives out welcome chips and/or newcomer packets, you may distribute those.*

4. **"So that we can get to know each other better, let's take this time to introduce ourselves by first name only."** *(Meeting leader introduces self and then introductions continue around the room.)*

5. **The group meeting leader reads the CoDA "*Welcome*" as written.**

6. **"*CoDA's Twelve Steps* are the spiritual guidelines for our individual recovery. Will the person with the *Twelve Steps* please read them?" *Optional-*** *some groups prefer to pass the Twelve Steps around and share the reading of them.*

7. **"*CoDA's Twelve Traditions* of are the guiding spiritual principles of our meetings. Will the person with the *Twelve Traditions* please read them?" *Optional-*** *some groups prefer to pass the Twelve Traditions around and share the reading of them.*

8. ***Optional -***"Will the person with the *Patterns of Codependence* or the *Recovery Patterns of Codependence* please read them?" *

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# Announcements Section

9. **"There are meeting schedules and phone lists on the literature table."**

10. **a) "Our literature person is . Do you have any announcements?"**
**b) "Our treasurer is . Do you have any announcements?"**
**c) "Our Group Representative is . Do you have any announcements?"**

*Note: If you do not have trusted servants for the above positions, or elect as a group not to speak items 10. Continuing from 11 may be sufficient.*

11. **"Restrooms are located ."**
Announce any meeting facility issues (smoking policy, etc.)

12. **"Are there any CoDA announcements?"**
Group announcements (any member) GSR or secretary shares community, Voting Entity(VE) , or CoDA World Fellowship announcements.

13. ***Optional-*** "We give chips at this meeting. Are there any CoDA birthdays today-30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, 2 years, etc.?"
***Note****: If your meeting gives chips or medallions, give them here. Ask the person celebrating if they would like to share a few words of recovery. Generally, for birthdays of 30 days to 9 months the group claps after each birthday is recognized; for 1 year or more the group sings "Happy Birthday", ending with "keep coming back".*

14. "If you would like to celebrate your birthday, please let the secretary know at least one week ahead of time."

# Program Section

Begin your meeting program here. If your meeting has a speaker or reads from CoDA literature, this usually lasts 10 to 15 minutes. To enhance the power of our recovery program, CoDA recommends at least one meeting per month be devoted to Step study.
16. ***Optional, strongly recommended-*** Read the *CoDA Guide to Sharing, What is Crosstalk?* or both. These may also be read by passing them person-to-person, reading one or more item as it goes around the room.

## CoDA Guide to Sharing

As we pursue our recovery, it is important for each of us to speak, as we are able. Many of us find speaking among others, especially strangers, a very difficult task. We encourage people to begin slowly and carefully. It is the intention of every CoDA member and group not to ridicule or embarrass anyone. Nothing that is shared is unimportant or stupid. The sharing of our experiences is best done with "I" statements. "Crosstalk" and "feedback" are discouraged.

## What is "Crosstalk"?

Crosstalk can be: giving unsolicited feedback, advice-giving, answering, making you and we statements, interrogating, debating, criticizing, controlling or dominating. It may also include: minimizing another person's feeling or experiences, physical contact or touch, body movements, such as nodding one's head, calling another person present by name, or verbal sounds and noises."
"In our meetings we speak about our own experience, and we listen without comment to what others share. We work toward taking responsibility in our own lives, rather than giving advice to others. Crosstalk guidelines help keep our meeting a safe place."

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**"The meeting is now open for individual sharing…"**

***Optional-*** "Would each of you please limit your sharing to 3-5 minutes to allow for everyone to share?" Group conscience can determine how to indicate when time is up, i.e. a timer, tapping on something, or a gentle reminder by chairperson.

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## Closing Section

17. **"Our Seventh Tradition reminds us that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We ask that you donate as you can. Seventh Traditions donations are used to support meeting expenses and literature, and to support CoDA at the community and national levels."** ***Optional-*** *some meetings choose to ask for Seventh Tradition donations at the beginning of the meeting, during the announcements section.*
18. **"As we bring this meeting to a close, I would like to remind you that CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the anonymity and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that what you see here, what is said here, when you leave here, let it stay here."**
19. ***Optional-*** "Will the person with the ***Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous*** please read them?"
20. **"Thanks to our speaker."** (If this is a speaker meeting)
21. **"Thanks to those who read and who do service at this meeting."**

***Optional-***Affirmations: Starting with the leader or a volunteer each person in turn gives a positive affirmation such as: "I know a new freedom" or they may pass.

The group leader **requests everyone to join in a circle for the closing prayer of choice**. The following are the CoDA CSC endorsed prayers.

**The Serenity Prayer**

God, grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
and Wisdom to know the difference

**The CoDA Closing Prayer** ©

We thank our Higher Power
For all that we have received from the meeting.
As we close, may we take with us
the wisdom, love, acceptance, and hope of recovery.

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# CoDA Service Forms

**Section IV-** A- F **-** *Meeting Starter Packet*

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Enclosed are some of the forms that you may find helpful to get your new CoDA meeting started. Make as many copies as you want or you can print additional copies from the CoDA website.

A. **Group Registration Form:** Use to mail into CoDA so that your meeting will be listed on the CoDA website for people searching for a meeting in your area. You will receive a Group Number. You may also register your meeting online at www.coda.org.

B. **Contribution Form**: Please use when you send in 7th Tradition donations to Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. It helps us keep track of the money and lets us know where to send an acknowledgement.

C. **Combination Form:** Changes In Group Information/Seventh Tradition Contribution Use if you don't want to make copies of two forms. All the information is combined onto one sheet of paper. You may also find it handy if you have changes in your meeting information such as a new location, a new contact person, etc., and you have a contribution to make at the same time.

D. **About the Meeting's Phone List**: Provides information concerning the purpose of the phone list and a reminder about healthy boundaries, as well as a format for communicating helpful information such as best time to call and sponsorship availability.

E. **CoDA Meeting Funds Record:** Use to help the meeting's Treasurer keep track of money coming in and going out. A written record also provides a means of financial accountability to the group.

F. **CoDA Endorsed Literature:** You may obtain a literature order form from the CoDA website to order literature, tapes, medallions, and other items for your meeting. CoDA also has an online store at www.coda.org/estore. You may request an order form by snail mail or e-mail from:

**CoRe Publications**
**P.O. Box 670861**
**Dallas, TX 75367-0867**
**Fax number: (214) 340-6066.**
**E-mail address : coreorders@coda.org**

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# CoDA Group Registration Form

The completion and return of this form to CoDA will register your meeting. Your meeting will be assigned a number and be registered in our CoDA meeting directory.

Group Name: _____ Group Meeting Place: _____

Street Address:_____

City: _____ County: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Meeting Type: _____ Day: _____ Time: _____

The Steps and Traditions support a diverse and inclusive membership within our Fellowship as well as freedom to every group to define itself: who attends descriptions, focus, logistics, timing, etc.. i.e. open, closed, smoking, type of meetings, etc.

Group Conscience Comments:_____

| **Phone Contact Person** | **Mail Contact Person** |
|---|---|
| Name : _____ | Name : _____ |
| Address: _____ | Address: _____ |
| City: _____ | City: _____ |
| State: _____ Zip: _____ | State: _____ Zip: _____ |
| Phone: (_____) _____ | Phone: (_____) _____ |
| E-Mail: _____ | E-Mail: _____ |

I give my permission to list my name, phone number and e-mail address in the CoDA Contact Directory.

***Signatures*** _____ ***Signatures*** _____

**Note:** As the PHONE contact for your meeting, your first name, last initial, telephone number, and e-mail address will be appearing in the CoDA Contact Directory available on the CoDA web site. By your signature above, you are giving permission to have your first name, last initial, telephone number, and e-mail address given out to those needing a CoDA contact for your meeting. As the MAIL contact, you are agreeing to receive written communication for your meeting from within the CoDA organization. Please do not give your signature if you do not wish to have your name, phone number, and e-mail address available for those requesting meeting information.

**Please complete one form per meeting Day and Time and return to:**

**Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.**
**P.O. Pox 33577**
**Phoenix. AZ 85067-3577**
http://www.coda.org/

Or e-mail to: meeting@coda.org

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CoDA

**Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.**

P O Box 33577, Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577
(602) 277-7991 www.coda.org

# Seventh Tradition Contribution Form

Date: _____ Group No: _____
Group Name: _____
Group Meeting Place: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Country _____
County: _____ Community: _____
Meeting Day and Time: _____
Check/Money Order #: _____
Dated: _____ Amount: _____
Check/MO Signed By: _____

**Contribution Acknowledgement To Be Sent To:**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Country: _____
Telephone Contact No: _____

**Follow-up information:**

Date sent: _____
Acknowledgement Rec'd: _____
Cancelled Ck Rec'd: _____

*It is suggested that a copy of this form be kept for your records.*

***Return completed form to:***
Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.
P O Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577

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# Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.

CoDA P O Box 33577, Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577

(602) 277-7991 www.coda.org

**Changes in Group Information** **Seventh Tradition Contribution Form**

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Date: _____ Group No: _____
Group Name: _____
Group Meeting Place: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
County: _____ Community: _____
Country: _____
Day: _____ Time: _____
_____ New Meeting
_____ Change in Location, Day, Time, or Type
_____ Contact Changes

_____
Last known contact person

The Steps and Traditions support a diverse and inclusive membership within our Fellowship as well as freedom to every group to define itself: who attends descriptions, focus, logistics, timing, and etcetera.

**Group Conscience Comments:** _____
_____
i.e.: open, closed, smoking, type of meetings, etc.

## Phone Contact Person

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: (_____)_____
E-mail Address: _____

I give my permission to list my name, phone number, and e-mail address in the national contact directory. Signature:
_____

## Mail Contact Person

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: (_____)_____
E-mail Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____ Group No: _____
Group Name: _____
Group Meeting Place: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
County: _____ Community: _____
Country: _____
Meeting Day and Time: _____
Check/Money Order #: _____
Dated: _____ Amount: _____
Check/MO Signed By: _____

**Contribution Acknowledgement To Be Sent To:**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Country: _____
Telephone Contact No: _____

## Follow-up information:

Date sent: _____
Acknowledgement Rec'd: _____
Cancelled Ck Rec'd:_____

*It is suggested that a copy of this form be kept for your records.*

_____
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***Return completed form to:***

Co-Dependents Anonymous,
Inc. P O Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577

meeting@coda.org

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**NOTE:** As the PHONE contact for your meeting, your first name, last initial, phone number, and e-mail address will be appearing in the CoDA Contact Directory available on the CoDA web site. By your signature above, you are giving permission to have your first name, last initial, phone number, and e-mail address given out to those needing a CoDA contact for your meeting. As the MAIL contact, you are agreeing to receive written communication for your meeting from within the CoDA organization.

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# About the Meeting's Phone List

**Date of List: Meeting Day: Time:**

This meeting makes use of a phone list, which can be used as a valuable tool in recovery. **Please keep in mind the following:**

People whose name appears on this list have agreed to listen to other members in need. By being on this list, we make a statement about our own recovery, our willingness to share, and to offer support and information to those in need.

Sometimes, it is important for the caller and the person receiving the call to recognize that the timing is not good. It may be necessary to postpone or limit the conversation. Members may take a message and call back later, or to say " I am not able to talk right now. Please try another person." The caller and the receiver can practice healthy boundaries.

| **Name**<br><br>**(First name & Last initial)** | **Phone #** | **OK to leave message?** | **Best time to call?** | **Avail as temp Sponsor?** |
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Date of List: _____ Meeting Day: _____ Time: _____¶
¶
This meeting makes use of a voluntary phone list which can be used as a valuable tool in recovery. We urge you to make use of it, and to keep in mind the following:¶
<#>Each person whose name appears on this list has agreed to be available by phone to listen to others in need. By placing our names on this list, we make a statement about our own recovery, our willingness to share with others, and our willingness to offer support and information to those in need. ¶
¶
<#>Sometimes when we get a phone call, we are unable to focus our full attention on it, or do not feel like talking with others that day. At these times, it is important for the caller and the person receiving the call to recognize that it may be necessary to postpone or limit the conversation. Members reserve the right to take a message and call back later, or even to say "I am not able to talk right now. Please try another person." By respecting the private life of the members, both ¶
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the caller and the receiver learn to practice healthy boundaries. ¶
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**Name** ... [73]

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# CoDA Meeting Funds Record

| Date | Transaction Description | Amount Received | Amount Paid Out | Balance |
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The Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. EIN is specific to the corporation of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. Having an "umbrella" tax status would require that each group submit all their information, including the identifying information of their officers, to for the official record. In addition, Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. would then be responsible for the groups' financial reporting and financial activity. We would have to establish a system of controls over the finances of each CoDA group, intergroup/community, and Voting Entity or regional service board. We would somehow have to ensure the use of all income solely for CoDA purposes and require regular reports to some central CoDA organization which would account to tax authorities for the activities of Co-Dependents Anonymous. All of this conflicts with our Traditions of anonymity, group autonomy and our concept of service, not government, within our service structure. For this reason we recommend that each meeting group, intergroup/community, or Voting Entity organization that has need for a Tax ID Number/EIN should apply for their own.

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## Getting your group's own Tax ID Number/EIN is not difficult.

To apply for a Tax ID Number/EIN, you will need to contact the IRS to request Form SS-4: "Application for Employer Identification Number." You can order tax forms by phone at 1-800-TAX-FORM (1-800-829-3676.) Or you can get forms and information at the IRS website at www.irs.ustreas.gov .

The IRS does not require you to be incorporated to get a Tax ID Number/EIN. You fill in the application as a "nonprofit organization," similar to a service organization or a hobby club. See WHAT IS A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION below for more information. However, your state may have it's own regulations concerning when a nonprofit organization must incorporate. It's a good idea to check with a legal and/or tax professional in your state for more information.



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Also, just because an organization is nonprofit, that does not make it tax- exempt. For more on tax exemption see TAX-EXEMPT STATUS below. Once your group gets its EIN, the group becomes responsible for all legal and illegal use of the number.

Following certain guidelines will help avoid problems. The number should not be "loaned" or otherwise used by any other group, or person. For example, a CoDA intergroup/community should not allow individual meeting groups within that intergroup/community to use its EIN. The reason is this. You will need to give the number to your bank when you open any accounts. The bank in turn, is responsible to report information to the Internal Revenue Service about certain types of activity in bank accounts, such as interest income and large currency transactions. If an account using your number has activity that is required for reporting, then the bank will automatically report it. If you let others use your number, their banking activity will also be reported if it meets the requirements set by the IRS. Even if you have no knowledge of what banking activity they do, you become responsible.

Accurate records must be maintained for all income and expenses. Whether a tax return is required or not, the group absolutely must keep accurate records that are available for inspection if requested by state or federal agencies. Examples of such records may include minutes of business meetings, any changes in officers, and financial records including receipts for rent and literature. For more regarding tax returns, see TAX INFORMATION below.

If you change your address after you receive your EIN you must notify the IRS of the new address. You should use Form 8822, “Change of Address.”

If the group should ever close, the group officers need to cancel their Tax ID Number/EIN with IRS by written notice when the bank account closes.

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## What is a non-profit organization?

For the purposes of getting a Tax ID/ EIN, a "non-profit" organization is one whose major purpose or activity is to do things other than making money. This is not the same thing as being a federally recognized non-profit organization. That is a designation that requires application to the government. This paragraph is just concerned with understanding form SS-4 to apply for a Tax ID/ EIN.



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A non-profit organization is not expected to conduct its activities so that it does not have a "profit," i.e. income that exceeds expenses. A "non -profit" organization is one that does not use the income in excess of expenses in ways that benefit its members or directors personally in a financial sense. A principal distinction between non-profit organizations and profit organizations is that in non-profit organizations the officers and directors are not paid money simply for being an officer or director and are usually not an employee of the organization while they are an officer or director. Additionally non-profit organizations do not divide up the "profit" at the end of the year and give it to the officers, directors or members. Profit organizations usually do.

This does not mean, however, that the money cannot be used in ways that benefit an individual or group of individuals while they are in pursuit of activities related to the purpose or activities of the organization. A CoDA group may reimburse its members for expenses incurred while conducting CoDA business. For example, reimbursement of telephone expense is acceptable, as is reimbursement for postage or making copies, or reimbursing the costs of transportation to a service meeting or activity, as long as the purpose of the trip or expenditure is related to the primary purpose of Co-Dependents Anonymous.

However, just because an organization is nonprofit, that does not make it tax-exempt. A "tax exemption or being "tax-exempt" is entirely different than being "non-profit." Becoming exempt from taxes requires considerable work and approval of that status by state tax agencies and the federal IRS.

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**Patterns of Codependence©**

**Denial Patterns:**

I have difficulty identifying what I am feeling.
I minimize, alter or deny how I truly feel.
I perceive myself as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well being of others.

**Low Self Esteem Patterns:**

I have difficulty making decisions.
I judge everything I think, say or do harshly, as never "good enough."
I am embarrassed to receive recognition and praise or gifts.
I do not ask others to meet my needs or desires.
I value others' approval of my thinking, feelings and behavior over my own.
I do not perceive myself as a lovable or worthwhile person.

**Compliance Patterns:**

I compromise my own values and integrity to avoid rejection or others' anger.
I am very sensitive to how others are feeling and feel the same.
I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
I value others' opinions and feelings more than my own and am afraid to express differing opinions and feelings of my own.
I put aside my own interests and hobbies in order to do what others want.
I accept sex when I want love.

**Control Patterns:**

I believe most other people are incapable of taking care of themselves.
I attempt to convince others of what they "should" think and how they "truly" feel.
I become resentful when others will not let me help them.
I freely offer others advice and directions without being asked.
I lavish gifts and favors on those I care about.
I use sex to gain approval and acceptance.
I have to be "needed" in order to have a relationship with others.

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# About the Meeting's Phone List

Date of List: _____ Meeting Day: _____ Time: _____

This meeting makes use of a voluntary phone list which can be used as a valuable tool in recovery. We urge you to make use of it, and to keep in mind the following:

Each person whose name appears on this list has agreed to be available by phone to listen to others in need. By placing our names on this list, we make a statement about our own recovery, our willingness to share with others, and our willingness to offer support and information to those in need.

Sometimes when we get a phone call, we are unable to focus our full attention on it, or do not feel like talking with others that day. At these times, it is important for the caller and the person receiving the call to recognize that it may be necessary to postpone or limit the conversation. Members reserve the right to take a message and call back later, or even to say "I am not able to talk right now. Please try another person." By respecting the private life of the members, both
the caller and the receiver learn to practice healthy boundaries.

| Name (First name & Last initial) | Phone # | OK to leave message? | Best time to call? | Avail as temp Sponsor? |
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