# The Fellowship Service Manual of Co-Dependents Anonymous

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# Section 01 Introduction

## Purpose of this Manual

The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive description of our service structure and to furnish spiritual guidelines for applying the *Twelve Traditions* to our service work. It also provides an overview and examples of the group conscience process.

### Vision of the Fellowship

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

CoDA is a Twelve Step program. The basis of our program is the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*, Inc. What all CoDA members share in common are these *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*. As a whole, CoDA has no opinion on outside books, treatment programs, or therapies related to codependency. Some individuals have found other things that assist in recovery, and each person is free to explore as they chose. However, as a Fellowship, working the *Twelve Steps* has worked for us, and this is what we do in CoDA. Our common experience is that the Steps and Traditions have restored us to sanity and healthy relationships. The vision of our Fellowship is to develop and make available the recovery resources known as Co-Dependents Anonymous. Through this effort, we provide support to the individual seeking help, and continue to improve the quality of the recovery resources we offer.

CoDA's Twelfth Step reads: *"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".*

As we begin to see the positive results of our participation in CoDA, we feel a sense of serenity and gratitude for the gifts we have received through our program. Our own recovery and growth become examples of what our program has to offer. Through our outreach to the codependent who still suffers, we give back to our program. CoDA was there when we needed it, and, through our service, it will continue. Our willingness to "carry the message" of experience, strength, and hope helps the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous to continue on and to grow in its ability to improve our lives and the lives of those around us. Let us gratefully demonstrate what CoDA has to offer…through our service.

## 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 our 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.

*"The Twelve Steps 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 content 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 12 Steps of AA:**

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. 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 Him, praying only for knowledge of His 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 alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

# 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. Every CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, 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 content 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 Traditions in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.*

**The 12 Traditions of AA**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. 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 A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups of A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. 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. AA, 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 A.A. 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 Service Concepts of Co-Dependents Anonymous©

1. The members of the Fellowship of Co-Dependents Anonymous, in carrying out the will of a loving Higher Power, advance their individual recoveries, work to insure the continuance of their groups and their program, and carry the message to codependents who still suffer. They may also collectively authorize and establish service boards or committees and empower trusted servants to perform service work.
2. The Fellowship of CoDA has the responsibility of determining, through its group conscience, the service work to be performed, and the best manner to perform such work. This authority is expressed through our group conscience. Authority carries responsibility; thus, CoDA groups conscientiously provide adequate funding and support for the service work they authorize.
3. Decisions about service work in the Fellowship and all CoDA affairs are made through the group conscience decision making process. For this spiritual democratic process to work, every member of the group is encouraged to participate, consider all the facts and options concerning the issue, listen respectfully to all opinions expressed, then reflect and meditate to find a loving Higher Power's will. Finally, we deliberate honestly and respectfully to determine the proper course of action. Unanimity in the group is the desired outcome; a majority vote is a group conscience.
4. All those who volunteer to do service work for CoDA by serving on committees, boards, or corporations are trusted servants, not authority figures. Ideally, trusted servants volunteer out of a desire to follow their Higher Power's will, out of gratitude for the gifts they have received from CoDA, out of a desire to grow in their ability to create and keep healthy relationships, and to contribute what they can of themselves to CoDA. The Fellowship recognizes the need to select the most qualified people willing to serve as trusted servants. At times, trusted servants may hire individuals outside of the Fellowship for commercial services.
5. Trusted servants are directly responsible to those they serve and are bound to honor the group conscience decision making process and uphold those decisions concerning their service work. The Fellowship also recognizes the need and right for members to honor their own experience, strength, and hope and their Higher Power's will as expressed to them. When the group conscience violates an individual's own truth and makes participation impossible, the individual may relinquish the service position.
6. The Fellowship guarantees trusted servants the right and authority to freely make decisions commensurate with their responsibilities and the right to participate in group conscience decisions affecting their responsibilities. Each CoDA member is also guaranteed the right to respectfully dissent during the group conscience decision making process. A member may freely and safely express any personal grievances as long as no particular person or group is unexpectedly singled out as the subject of the grievance. Members are encouraged to honor their own integrity as well as the integrity of others.
7. Trusted servants do practice the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* in their service work and in all of their affairs. Trusted servants do not seek power, prestige, wealth, status, or acclaim; do not govern, coerce, or attempt to control others; and do not push a personal agenda, promote controversy, or advance outside issues at CoDA's expense. Since issues over authority, will, money, property, and prestige can and do arise in service work, trusted servants need to practice emotional sobriety, including anonymity, humility, tolerance, gratitude, making amends, and forgiveness.

8. The CoDA Service Conference (Conference), through its group conscience decision making process, guides the Fellowship in making policy decisions and in following the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*. The Conference, though providing guidelines, holds no authority over the decision making process of individual groups. The group conscience process is our decision making process. Failure to honor this process may violate Traditions One and Four and a sanction may be imposed. The harshest sanction Conference can impose on an individual or group is to no longer recognize it as belonging to CoDA; this sanction may only be imposed on those who consistently violate the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*, as determined by guidelines accepted by Conference.
9. By tradition, the CoDA Service Conference gives responsibilities to working committees composed of Conference Delegates and other CoDA volunteers or to separate service boards or corporations. All are directly responsible to the Conference. The scope of the work a committee does is determined by the Conference group conscience. The chairperson of each committee assumes the responsibility to ensure the work assigned to the committee is completed in a timely manner.
10. When the CoDA Service Conference is in session, the CoDA Board of Trustees is directly responsible to the Conference. When not in session, the Conference assigns its decision-making authority on material matters to the Trustees. The Board of Trustees is authorized to monitor the work of Conference-appointed service committees and may provide assistance or guidelines when necessary. The Trustees serve as the board of directors of CoDA, the non-profit corporation, are assigned custodial control of all money and property held in trust for the Fellowship, and are responsible for prudent management of its finances.
11. The powers of the CoDA Service Conference derive from the pre-eminent authority of the group conscience decision-making process. Arizona State law gives the Board of Trustees legal rights and responsibilities to act for the Fellowship in certain situations. CoDA's Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are legal documents enumerating these Board rights and responsibilities.
12. The Fellowship strives to practice and encourage spiritual principles in all its material, financial, and business affairs, including fairness, equality, and respect for individual rights. Every member within CoDA has a voice and is encouraged to use it. Every member has the right to know what is happening within our organization. To honor this right, and in the spirit of CoDA unity, our CoDA organization publishes and distributes group conscience decisions, such as minutes of our service boards and motions from our CoDA Service Conferences, in the most inclusive and timely manner possible.

# Section 02 The Group Conscience Process

## Representation

The spiritual structure of CoDA is based on 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." By polling our group conscience, we seek guidance from our Higher Power and make decisions affecting our groups, our service boards, and our committees.

We call this "group conscience decision making." This is sometimes new to people entering the program, and some have difficulty understanding and adapting to this process because of its "non-governing" style. It can be a lengthy process requiring patience.

Many of us are more familiar with "hierarchies." Imagine a hierarchy as a pyramid. The people at the top of the pyramid have power, and it flows down from them through various levels. By the time power reaches those at the bottom of the pyramid, it is so diluted that the people at the bottom have little power at all. CoDA is about self-empowerment, so a hierarchical system cannot adhere to our Steps, Traditions, and spiritual principles.

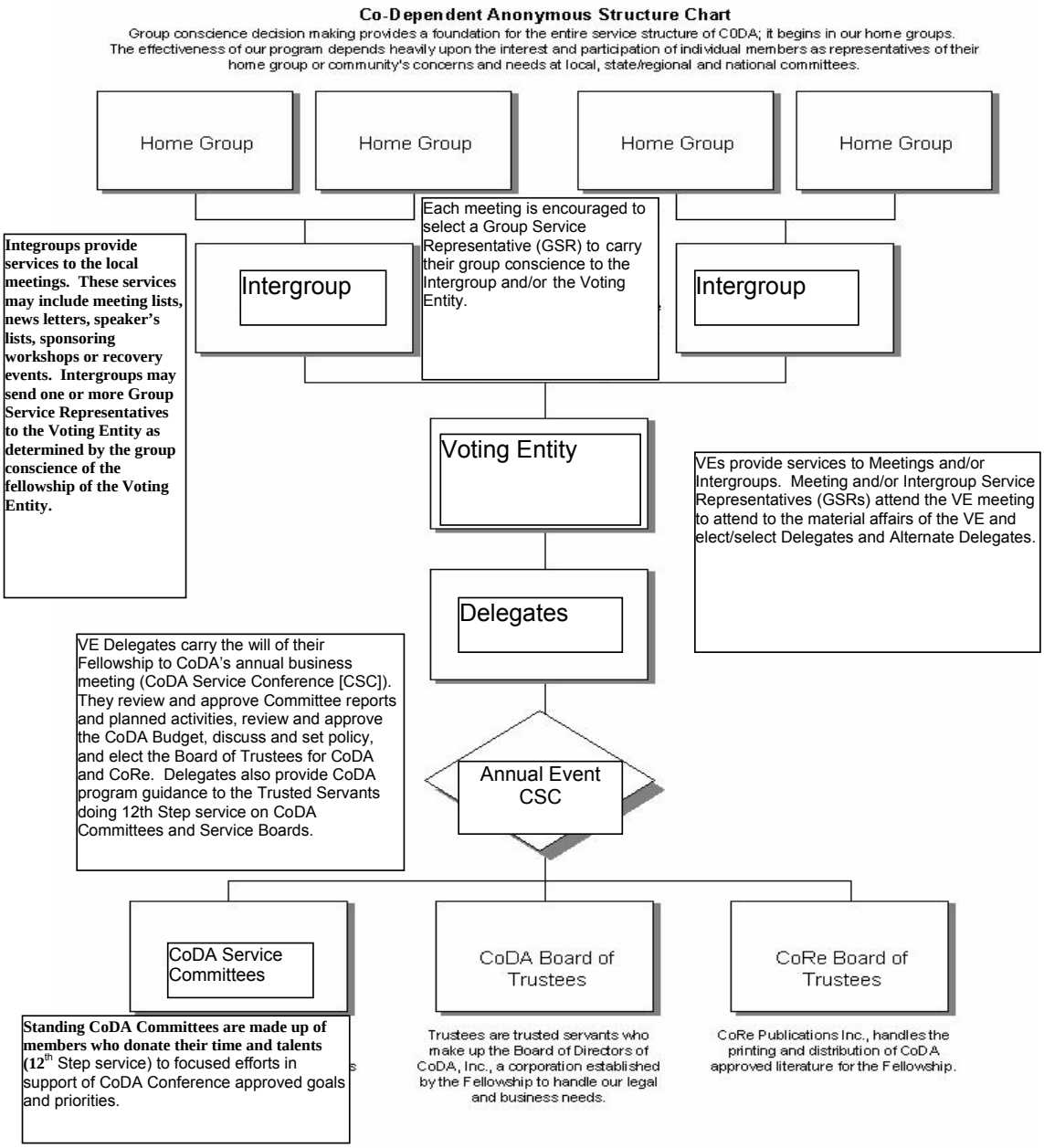
CoDA structure is an inverted pyramid. The broad pyramid top represents the members of CoDA, and authority, power, and direction resides with them. Members of groups may exercise power through the group conscience. Authority and power flow down to and thru a groups trusted servants and area Intergroup (or community service groups), then on to the Voting Entity's (VE) Intergroup and the VE's delegates and eventually to the bottom of the pyramid. At the bottom, we find our CoDA boards, committees and service corporations.

The group conscience process is used to make decisions at all levels of CoDA. The home group typically has a monthly business meeting to discuss issues affecting the group such as how to address crosstalk, what literature to buy, how to welcome newcomers, etc. A group conscience may also be asked for during a regular meeting, if a decision is needed right away and can't wait for the regular business meeting. Anyone may ask for a group conscience at anytime during a CoDA meeting, if and when immediate attention is needed to ensure the safety of an individual or the group, or to uphold the CoDA Traditions.

The group conscience process is also used to make decisions that affect CoDA as a whole and to elect trusted servants to carry out those decisions. The process of electing trusted servants begins with the group meeting. Each home group meeting may select a group service representative (GSR) to represent that group at Intergroup. The Intergroup (community, area, country, state, regional) elects delegates to represent them at CoDA meetings. The GSR carries the group conscience of the home group meeting to Intergroup. Intergroup holds a group conscience and decides whether the item will proceed to CoDA, or the next level.

At the Country, State and Regional or other Voting Entity levels, group and community representatives select trusted servants to serve the members of that Voting Entity. Group representatives also select Delegates to represent them and carry their group conscience to the CoDA Service Conference, which is held annually. Each Voting Entity may send two Delegates to this Conference, which is the annual business meeting of CoDA. At the CoDA Service Conference, Delegates carry the group conscience of those they represent. Delegates also work together to make decisions dealing with CoDA, and select trusted servants who will serve our Fellowship.

# Chart: Structure of CoDA



# The Process of Determining a Group Conscience

Decisions at all levels of CoDA are made with the guidance of our Higher Power as expressed through the *Twelve Traditions*. Particularly useful are Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first. Personal recovery depends upon CoDA Unity." and Tradition Two: "For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving Higher Power as expressed to our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." Thus as with all our recovery, group conscience is about putting aside the "self" and looking to Higher Power for guidance

To begin the group conscience process, members present raise issues or items of business. Our goal is to reach agreement on the items presented. The meeting is opened to discussion by the chair/facilitator. When discussion ends, we determine the group conscience by taking a vote. A majority determines the group conscience.

Using a group conscience process is similar to "consensus-based decision making." The primary difference is that in CoDA, people who participate share their strength, hope, and experience with one another in an effort to determine what is best for everyone in the Fellowship as a whole. We consciously invite our Higher Power to guide and direct us, individually and collectively. We grow in our recovery by putting aside the need to be right while making a decision for the good of CoDA in a spiritual process.

We seek to avoid campaigning in order to gain a win for "our" solution. A group conscience decision grows out of the combined wisdom invested in the whole group. With the help of our Higher Power, we open our minds to all view points presented and then vote for the one we see as best for CoDA. We work to keep "personalities and prestige" from becoming involved. For instance, the voice and wisdom of someone with six months of experience is of as much weight and value as that of someone with ten years of recovery. Finally, be warned that an individual's need for acceptance and approval may circumvent the spiritual process. It isn't Higher Power's will that we go along to get along.

In CoDA, everyone is encouraged to share experience, strength, and hope with each other. We may engage in assertive presentation of our point of view, but we draw a boundary against aggressive persuasion, name-calling, or arm-twisting of people to vote a certain way. If a position is that of our Higher Power, it will naturally attract others.

Sometimes a person may invoke the "Right of Dissenting Opinion." This means that even a minority of one, favoring or opposing an issue, has a right to be heard. Only individual(s) who actively participated in the decision making without circumventing the process can offer a dissenting opinion. At a meeting, it means a person has the right to express a dissenting opinion before the members vote. In the CoDA Fellowship, it means that a member, group of members, or a committee may request the distribution of a dissenting opinion in writing in order to be "heard" by the Fellowship.

In conclusion, while every person has the right to express opinions, the group conscience determines a particular course of action. We demonstrate our openness to the will of Higher Power by accepting that decision even when we may disagree with it.

## Safety, Boundaries, and Respect in the Group Conscience Process

During the group conscience process, it is important that we all practice our program by balancing patience with assertion. We respect the boundaries of others and expect the same consideration. We assume responsibility for our behavior and accept accountability for our actions.

A time limit on speaking is an example of an appropriate boundary when made by group decision. The group may place a time limit on how long a person may speak to an issue, limit the number of times a one may speak on the issue, and determine how to seek clarification from members. If a member would like additional speaking time, that member may request it, and all members take a group conscience poll for resolution.

Before a group conscience is started in a home group meeting or service committee, it may be helpful to allow each member time to speak. Each member shares his or her name, an explanation of what the member hopes the group will accomplish, and the member's willingness to accept group conscience decision. Members may also choose to tell of a personal experience that pertains to the subject under discussion. This builds safety and trust within the group and reinforces CoDA's spiritual principles.

Sometimes there may be a real or perceived conflict of interest regarding a member's participation on a particular subject. To be respectful of a member's integrity and boundaries, the member should have an opportunity to abstain from voting.

We are all at different places in our program, and many in CoDA service work are still working the CoDA Steps and Traditions to understand themselves. Some members may unconsciously act out, responding with anger and hostility. By practicing loving tolerance of each other's opinions, we may receive the ultimate reward of our program: spiritual growth.

## Disagreement, Mediation, and Resolution in Our Group Conscience Process

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

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

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

If a time out does not eliminate the contentious behavior, it may be appropriate to ask for a group conscience decision on whether a person's behavior is threatening and offensive. If the group decides that the person is engaging in detrimental or disruptive behavior, it can hold that person accountable by requesting that such behavior stop. Persons so cited are encouraged to work Steps

Four and Ten, and act according to personal truth. Then, another group conscience may be requested to re-establish safety and CoDA unity.

If the contentious behavior does not stop, then mediation may be in order. Two or more people (to avoid allegations of impropriety, one person can be of the same gender as the member) may meet privately with the offending member. They will explain why the attitude and/or behavior is unacceptable in CoDA.

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

Occasionally, a situation arises where a trusted servant in a position of responsibility acts irresponsibly in performance of their duties or acts in a manner contrary to our program's principles. If so, the appropriate group, state, community, or regional Assembly may call for a group conscience decision to replace that individual. In such cases, the individual(s) affected should be notified of the meeting and allowed to participate in the process. A record of all actions should be maintained by the appropriate secretary and should be made available to any CoDA member upon written request.

Groups, community committees, and state or regional Assemblies do not establish CoDA policy. This is the responsibility of the CoDA Service Conference. When a conflict is referred to the group, community, state, or regional committee, they may help the conflicting members to explore the guidance offered by our *Twelve Traditions*.

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

By seeking resolution in this sequence, we respect our Traditions and allow our program to work.

## The Limits of Autonomy: When a Group Conscience Decision Affects Other Groups or CoDA as a Whole

Our Fourth Tradition reminds us that "Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole." The decision making process of each group, including meeting groups and service groups, is independent and self-directed. However, if their group conscience decision affects other groups or CoDA as a whole, then that effect needs to be considered. The Steps, Traditions or will of the Fellowship as expressed by decisions made at CoDA Service Conference cannot simply be suspended by group conscience decision in the meeting or service group.

If a group does not agree with the interpretation of a Step or Tradition or the application of a CSC decision, they may want to present their concerns to their Intergroup assembly in order to formulate an Intergroup's issue, or they may want to discuss their concerns with the Board of Trustees. In some cases, if direct resolution proves difficult, it may be useful to consult the Issues Mediation Committee.

Sometimes a CoDA member or group may perceive that their group or CoDA as a whole is being adversely affected by the group conscience decision of another group (meeting or service). The methods described in the section "Disagreement, Mediation, and Resolution in Our Group Conscience Process" (see above) can be applied to groups as well as individuals. First talk to the group and try to resolve the problem directly. If unsuccessful, seek guidance as described above.

## Empowerment to Serve

Trusted servants at any level of service are empowered to serve their group or committee through the process of group conscience. Those who volunteer to serve are invested with the responsibility to act for the group or committee through this process, remembering that the ultimate authority is "a loving Higher Power as expressed to our group conscience."

FLO SAYS--Just wondering if we should leave this chapter in with only the first part of this section that I highlighted, this would make sense to follow into the next section "Intergroup" (after deleting section 4,5,and 6, "Intergroup" would now become section 4.

# Section 03 The CoDA Group

~~**Section I-A - *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.

### "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***~~ ... [2]

# Section 04 Intergroup or Community Service

## The Intergroup (Community Service Group)

A strong CoDA Intergroup (community service group) (CSG) is the key to the success of CoDA in general. This CoDA community group may also be called an Intergroup (community service committee) a sense of community at the local level leads to success in attracting and sustaining the involvement of members of the fellowship in service work and in community building activities. The Intergroup (CSG) is made up of Group Service Representatives (GSRs) from area meetings and CoDA members from the local Fellowship. The *Twelve Service Concepts of CoDA* offer guidance in establishing service boards.

## Service Participation at the Intergroup (Community Service Group)

All members of the Fellowship are welcome to attend and participate in their Intergroup (CSG). All CoDA groups are encouraged to send a Group Service Representative to Intergroup (CSG) meetings. Commonly, input is welcome from all in attendance, but Group Service Representatives are usually the only participants who vote.

## Intergroup Members (GSRs)

An Intergroup (CSG) service member belongs to a CoDA group and has an interest in doing local service work. There are no "job requirements" for service to CoDA, although 6 months of meeting attendance is helpful before beginning service work. Some consider it a way of practicing and demonstrating responsibility and accountability to self and to others, while working a program of recovery and remaining open to Higher Power's will.

## Group Service Representative (GSR)

A GSR is a person the Intergroup (community Service Group) selects/ elects to act as a trusted servant and attend Voting Entity meetings. An alternate GSR can be selected/ elected as well.

The GSR is a link between group representatives and the Delegates. The GSR is very valuable to the meeting because they carry the "grassroots" group conscience to the Voting Entity. GSRs may help select/ elect Delegates who represent the Group Conscience of that Voting Entity at the CoDA Service Conference.

## Alternate Group Service Representative

The Alternate Group Service Representative acts on behalf of the community if the GSR cannot serve. The selection/election process is the same as that for the GSR. The alternate GSR normally accompanies the Group Service Representative to meetings as a member in training, asks questions, and learns procedures.

# Section 05 Voting Entity Service

## Voting Entity Service Structure

Voting Entity definition: Each State and Territory of the United States of America and each Country is automatically entitled to send two (2) Delegates.

Sometimes two or more Voting Entities may choose to join together in order to combine resources and better serve the needs of their meetings and Intergroups. A Voting Entity may also choose to divide into two or more Voting entities. Each separate Voting Entity may then effectively serve the meetings and Intergroups in its area. Acceptance of the new structure will be granted through IMC.

In any organization, levels of management are necessary to connect and coordinate localized activities with broader levels of planning, information distribution, and organization. The Voting Entity organization provides a bridge between Intergroups (community service groups), and CoDA. Every CoDA member is welcomed and encouraged to attend all CoDA service meetings.

## Voting Entity Structure Guidelines

- Hold regular, well-announced business meetings. Quarterly meetings are recommended.
- Adopt and maintain a working set of bylaws; conduct business accordingly.
- Vote one's conscience when no group conscience is available, keeping in mind the group and the health and welfare of the Fellowship. Allow presentation of minority opinions.
- Make your best effort that Voting Entity reflects the will of the Fellowship. Assure that the Voting Entity's agenda is not in conflict with the will of a majority of the represented Fellowship (i.e., publish and distribute meeting and decision summaries).
- Place a high priority on continued communication with CoDA and local Intergroups

## Voting Entity Committees

Voting Entity committees are organized along the same structural lines as meetings and Intergroups (groups and community service groups). Voting Entity Committees function through the group conscience decision making process as they carry out service work. Priorities for this work usually come from meetings and Intergroups.

## Voting Entity Delegates

The Voting Entity Delegate is a service volunteer who is selected/ elected at the Voting Entity or by other means determined by the group conscience of the Voting Entity members. The Voting Entity Delegate is that Voting Entity's representative to the CoDA Service Conference.

The primary function of the Voting Entity Delegate is to facilitate communication between the Voting Entity and CoDA. This includes attending CoDA's Service Conference to vote, on behalf of the Voting Entity, on Conference motions affecting CoDA as a whole. Ideally, a Voting Entity Delegate has worked the *Twelve Steps* with a CoDA sponsor or "Step study" group and has a practical and spiritual knowledge of the *Twelve Traditions*. The job is rewarding, gratifying, and spiritually uplifting, providing exposure to the enormous experience of the group conscience at the CoDA level.

### Delegate Characteristics:

While many characteristics define a Delegate, familiarity and practice of CoDA's *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* are the most important part of acting on behalf of the Voting Entity Fellowship. These spiritual principles lay the foundation of the CoDA service role. In addition, an effective Delegate is able to build personal relationships and communicate effectively, understands organizational structure, and is familiar with service functions and the activities of CoDA. For background, see CoDA's organization chart in the group conscience section of this manual (Section 2). To learn more about Delegate service, participate as either an alternate Delegate or Observer at the CoDA Service Conference or speak with former Delegates.

A Delegate is not, politically speaking, a "senator" of a Voting Entity, but is a servant of CoDA as a whole. The Delegate's responsibility is to follow our Steps and Traditions and use these principles to carry our spiritual message to those who still suffer, in and out of CoDA.

### Voting Entity Delegate Activities:

- Participate in the annual CoDA Service Conference.
- Send Voting Entity issues to the Board of Trustees sixty (60) days before Conference.
- Read the Delegate Conference packet before Conference and consult with the other Voting Entity Delegate, or regional officers, and community members for input on issues.
- Communicate and publish, for the Voting Entity or regional CoDA groups, the motions passed at the CoDA Service Conference, and any changes made.
- Convey the CoDA Service Conference experience to the Voting Entity or Intergroup Fellowship, providing a greater picture of CoDA as a whole.
- Attend the Voting Entity meetings to inform members about Conference events.
- Report on the spiritual, financial, and material aspects of CoDA and its boards.
- Stress the importance of Seventh Tradition funds for CoDA's, continued existence.
- Pass reports, records, policies, and procedures to incoming Delegates to ease transition.
- Inform Voting Entity officers and Intergroup representatives of Conference approved literature, and encourage contributions of material for new literature.
- Emphasize to the Voting Entity secretary, Intergroup officers, and group representatives the importance of sending current directory information to CoDA as changes occur.
- Act as a liaison for the Voting Entity and CoDA Board of Trustees
- Keep the alternate Delegate informed and engaged with all activities, correspondence, and events to build the alternate's expertise in Intergroup, Voting Entity, and CoDA matters.

## Alternate Delegates

The Alternate Delegate has the same responsibilities and accountability as a Delegate, without the Conference "voting" privilege, unless the Delegate leaves the Conference floor, which is called "passing-the-badge" for voting eligibility. In the event a Delegate cannot serve, resigns, or falls ill, an alternate Delegate fills the position of Delegate in accordance with the Voting Entity or region's procedures. When funds are available, Voting Entities may send more than one alternate Delegate to initiate and educate them in CoDA procedures and protocols. Alternate Delegates registered with the CoDA Board secretary will receive the same informational mailings as the primary Delegate.

## Delegate Expenses

The Voting Entity's treasury pays expenses ahead of time, or reimburses the Delegate after Conference, as funds allow. Delegate expenses may include travel, hotel, and meals, as well as telephone, facsimiles, mailings, postage, and other sundry expenses. It is the Delegate's responsibility to account for expenses and to present a report to the Voting Entity. The primary Delegate may choose to write a report for Voting Entity distribution explaining the expenditure of Seventh Tradition funds. Delegates' expenses are paid as Voting Entity or regional budgets permit. To encourage participation, a Voting Entity may pay some part of an alternate Delegate's expenses.

Voting Entity, Intergroups may contribute to Conference and other related expenses, or may contribute towards a "Conference Fund" to allow any individual the financial ability to serve CoDA at large, without regard for personal financial resources. CoDA guidelines suggest limiting individual contributions to no more than $1000/year.

## Voting Entity Delegate Term of Service

The Voting Entity Delegate's term of office is often two years, the Alternate Delegate's, one. CoDA encourages rotation of leadership positions among members. This practice broadens the base of service experience and prevents the domination of personality and pursuit of prestige in service roles. Every CoDA member has the opportunity to serve at any level of CoDA: Intergroup, Voting Entity or CoDA committee, or Board of Trustees.

Every member is recognized as having an equal voice in a CoDA service role, so any Voting Entity member may serve in any service position,. A Delegate does not serve a meeting or Intergroup. The Delegate service role is on behalf of the Voting Entity, and the CoDA Fellowship as a whole. Voting Entity Delegates may come from any part of that Voting Entity. CoDA emphasizes inclusiveness, not exclusiveness, no matter who or where one is in recovery.

# Section 06 CoDA Service Structure

The CoDA service structure is comprised of members from the Fellowship who have stepped forth from their local organizations to serve and participate in the process of translating the will of the greater CoDA Fellowship into action at the CoDA Fellowship level.

## CoDA Service Conference (CSC)

A CoDA Service Conference (CSC) is held each year in order to transact the business of CoDA by group conscience. This is CoDA's annual business meeting. The location varies from year to year. Delegates to CSC elect trusted servants, review budgets and expenditures, authorize literature, and develop goals for our organization and plans to reach those goals. While voting privileges are restricted, all CoDA members are welcome to attend the Conference and work on a CoDA committee.

### Service Responsibility:

- Each member honors each entity, individual, and group in the process of service work. To insure effective implementation, we entrust each servant with the right of decision.
- Service responsibilities are guided by the Steps and Traditions and determined by CoDA bylaws and CoDA Service Conference decisions.
- Each committee decides by its own Group Conscience how to best complete its service work, based on its goals presented to and approved by CSC.
- Our trusted servants use the group conscience process to implement their duties.
- Because the CSC entrusts our servants with responsibilities, they are supported financially and morally…this is the essence of right of decision.
- Committees may spend their allocated budget on goals that were approved as part of that committee's budget at CSC.
- Ideally, CoDA recovery is built on the principle of mutual trust. We trust Higher Power, we trust CoDA, we trust ourselves, and we trust one another.

## CoDA Service Board and Trustees

To provide continuity of CoDA's work between Conferences, Delegates at the CoDA Service Conference (CSC) elect members to serve on two service boards -Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. (CoDA), and CoDA Resource Publishing, Inc. (CoRe). Within each board, members elect their own officers.

Participation on either board excludes participation on the other. Trustees serve as volunteers and are not paid. The term of office is three years. Trustees are responsible for the legal and business needs of CoDA or CoRe. Each board has but one purpose: to serve the Fellowship. Trustees are elected by the will and through the consent of the Fellowship as expressed through the group conscience of the conference. Each CoDA trustee has a vote at the CSC; the CoRe Publications Board has two voting members at CSC.

## Board Overseen Service Functions

- Fellowship Services (formerly CoDA Service Office)
- CoDA Website
- Standing CoDA Committees (as listed below)

## Incorporated CoDA Service Entities

- CoDA Resource Publications, Inc. (CoRe)
- Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. (CoDA)

## List of CoDA Standing Committees

Delegates, alternates, and members at large who participate in CoDA service have the opportunity to volunteer for committee work, which focuses on specific areas of concern to the Fellowship. The focus and priority of these efforts is determined by group conscience at the CoDA Service Conference. These standing committees, at and between CoDA Conferences, plan and implement specific efforts. Any CoDA member may join and serve on a Conference committee.

- CoDA Events Committee (CEC)
- CoDA Literature Committee (CLC)
- Communications Committee
- Co-NNections© Committee (Online CoDA Newsletter)
- Finance Committee
- Hospitals and Institutions (H and I)
- Issues Mediation Committee (Elected by the CoDA Service Conference)
- Outreach Committee
- Service Structure Committee (SSC)
- Translation Management Committee (TMC)

# Board Liaison to Standing CoDA Committees

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

**Responsibilities:**

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

**Conflicts:**

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

# CoDA Board of Trustees Position Description

Trustees adhere to the principles of our program while conducting service work. Specifically, they use Step Ten for guidance and insight, and adhere to Tradition Two as they honor the validity of the group conscience process. This service position is demanding, and therefore the potential for reward through recovery is also great. CoDA Board service is great and rewarding Twelfth Step work.

**Qualifications:** Trustees are elected by the CSC, with consideration of the candidates' capabilities and experience in the following:

1) Working knowledge of the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*.
2) Willingness and availability to serve the Fellowship through major service projects.
3) Demonstration of skills and abilities while doing CoDA Service for two or more years.
4) Understanding and experience of the group conscience process.
5) Courage to express oneself and the ability to listen and communicate effectively with others.
6) Dedication and commitment to the health of CoDA.
7) Desire to carry the message to the still suffering codependent.

### A Trustee is expected to:

1) Commit to his/her own personal growth and to the integrity of the self and of our Program.
2) Have worked, and continue to work, each of the *Twelve Steps* of CoDA.
3) Have a practical working knowledge of the sponsor/sponsee relationship.
4) Commit to the spiritual health of CoDA as a whole.
5) Have a working knowledge of the CoDA organization structure and documents used to guide the business and spiritual elements of CoDA.
6) Agree to function in a responsible manner, which includes:
   a) Consistently attend and participate in the group conscience process during Board meetings and at Service Conferences.
   b) Prepare reports agreed upon and present them in a timely manner.
   c) Meet deadlines as set forth by the Board.
   d) Recognize his/her time limitations and notify the Board promptly of any time conflicts.
7) Undertake liaison responsibilities for one or more CoDA Committees.
8) Resign other currently held offices at Intergroup and Voting Entity level to allow others the opportunity to give service and to create time to devote to Board work.
9) Resign the position of Trustee if he/she is unable to meet his/her commitment.

### Travel Requirements:

Trustees may be required to travel to Board meetings, CoDA finances permitting. Expenses for transportation, hotel, meals and incidentals are reimbursed according to current guidelines. Trustees may also travel as liaison to a CoDA Committee meeting. Each new Board will set places and times for meetings during the year. Most often, meetings begin on a Friday or Saturday and end on Sunday. The CoDA Service Conference is usually held in late summer or early fall of every year, with Board responsibilities from Tuesday through Sunday of the week.

### Length of Term:

A Trustee is elected to a three-year term. A maximum of two terms may be served with a lapse of at least two years between terms.

### Legal Commitment:

As a Trustee of the CoDA Board, each person shall comply with and be bound by all terms and provisions of the By-laws of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc., and all public laws, such as those of the State of Arizona, which affect CoDA's nonprofit status and corporation. Trustees are expected to exercise the powers vested in them in a manner consistent with the faith that guide the Fellowship of CoDA, guided and inspired by the *Twelve Steps* and in keeping with the *Twelve Traditions*. *Note: Applicants will be asked about any previous felony convictions. A conviction will not automatically disqualify an applicant, but must be disclosed.*

### Time Commitment:

Trustees may work 20 or more hours per week during critical times, such as preparation for Conference, and depending upon particular projects and responsibilities. Release time from personal employment must be arranged for travel needed by CoDA.

# Co-Dependents Anonymous

PO BOX 33577, Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577

## APPLICATION FOR
## BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS, INC.

**DATE:**_____

**NAME:**_____ **VOTING ENTITY:** _____

**ADDRESS:**_____

_____

**CITY:** _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP CODE:** _____

**PROVINCE:** _____ **COUNTRY:** _____

**TELEPHONE NUMBERS: (H)**_____ **(W)**_____

**FAX**_____**EMAIL ADDRESS**_____

**DIRECTIONS: Answer each item below as fully as possible on separate paper. Please type or word-process for legibility. Do not attach a resume.**

1) Describe your current working knowledge of the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*, and the CoDA foundational documents, such as the Fellowship Services Manual, By-laws, etc.

2) Why do you want to serve the Fellowship as a member of the Board of Trustees?

3) Describe your service work on Meeting, Intergroup, Voting Entity level, including number of years of service.

4) Describe any personal or professional background that you think would benefit the health of CoDA, such as experience negotiating contracts, general business management, or any other relevant skills.

5) Share your:
   A) Experience with the group conscience process.
   B) Courage to express yourself, ability to listen, and ability to communicate effectively.
   C) Ability to manage interpersonal differences and accomplish goals as a group member.

6) The job of Trustee has varying time demands. What is your availability?

7) Please share your vision for CoDA.

8) Please add any additional information you feel may be helpful in the selection process.

**NOTES:**

Please send your application to the above address. Refer to "Conference Election Procedures" for details regarding the Election of Trustee at the CoDA Service Conference.

# Section 07 Board Overseen Service Functions and CoDA Standing Committees

# Board Overseen Service Functions

## Fellowship Services

Fellowship Services workers provide baseline support services. This includes a mail and telephone point of contact for the members, maintenance of the organization's meeting and contact lists, and the delivery of other services required by the organization. The CoDA Board of Trustees is responsible for the execution and oversight of these services.

### Included Services:

#### CoDA Telephone Point of Contact:

- A voice contact for all calls made to CoDA
- A Commercial answering service receives all calls and refers any calls that cannot be answered by the service to the appropriate board member, CoDA committee chairperson.
- When possible, the answering service provides meeting information as available in the CoDA meeting database.

#### CoDA Mail:

- Response to all written requests for information regarding CoDA or Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. sent to the Phoenix mailing address.
- A contractor who is supervised directly by a current CoDA Board Trustee, handles most requests for information.
- Program information is sent to those requesting such information.
- Orders received and requests for information for CoDA Books and CoDA literature are forwarded to the appropriate CoDA entity for fulfillment.
- Requests for CoDA organization and program information the Contractor is unable to answer are forwarded to the Outreach Committee.

#### Co-Dependents Anonymous Meeting and Contact Database:

- The Board of Trustees, via Fellowship Services, is charged with the collection and maintenance of all meeting, Intergroup, Voting Entity and CoDA contact data and will oversee the distribution of any part of the database for internal use within the Fellowship.
- The Board of Trustees, by its appointed board liaison(s), supervises the selection of contractors who maintain the master meeting database and its timely updates on the CoDA website.

# Board Liaison to Fellowship Services

Fellowship Services is a Board-administered function of the Fellowship. The services required by the Fellowship are complex; so two Board members handle various contact functions of Fellowship Services. Because of the variety and importance of the functions included in Fellowship Services, a third Board member may serve as a secondary or back up Board liaison.

**Review of Services:**
Liaisons are responsible for reviewing all services provided by Fellowship Services contractor. The Board liaisons may make recommendations to the Board to implement changes to streamline and increase efficiency in the processing of members' needs.

# CoDA Web Site

The CoDA Web Site workers manage the public presence of CoDA on the Internet. A large part of this work involves structuring CoDA's web-presence so that it is easy to understand, intuitively formatted, attractive, and ultimately useful both to current CoDA members and to those just discovering our Fellowship. The CoDA Board of Trustees is responsible for the execution and oversight of these services.

**This effort involves, but is not limited to:**

- Keeping information and mail links current.
- Receiving and updating information submissions in a timely fashion.
- Generally adding and improving the features and ease of use of our web site.

# CoDA Standing Committees

**Committee Accountability:**

Each committee reports to the CSC their progress on the previous year's CoDA Service Conference motions and assigned Fellowship issues. All standing CoDA Committees submit their Committee reports, motions, goals and budgets to the Events Committee no later than 60 days before the start of the CoDA Service Conference. All CoDA Committees and the Board provide their budgets for the upcoming year to the Finance Committee two weeks before the start of CSC.

In addition, before leaving Conference, each committee provides the CoDA Board with a one-page list of committee goals for the coming year. This list is distributed along with the printed Conference motions and is made available before the next Conference.

# CoDA Events Committee (CEC)

**Overview:** The CoDA Events Committee serves the Fellowship by facilitating the planning and the execution of the **International CoDA Convention (ICC)** and the **CoDA Service Conference (CSC)**. Codependents Anonymous, Inc.'s annual business meeting (CSC) will be held during our annual International CoDA Convention (ICC)

### CoDA Events Committee - Duties and Responsibilities:

- Adhere to the *Twelve Steps*, *Twelve Traditions*, and *Twelve Service Concepts* in the course of all activities. Participate in the group conscience decision making progress.
- Create and provide informational announcements to fellowship communities interested in having the ICC held in their community.
- Accept and review all bids for the upcoming ICC. Bids may be submitted 2 years prior to scheduled ICC and no later then 9 months prior to ICC.
- Present to Delegates and Committee Members at the International CoDA Convention dates, location and proposed budget for the next years ICC.
- Create agenda for the business meeting with committee work and committee reports to the Voting Entity (VE) Delegates.
- Insure that the International CoDA Convention survey information is used to improve future events.
- Determine and award CSC Grants to eligible Voting Entities.
- Collaborate with the local CoDA Fellowship in planning ICC event.
- Maintain Events Planning Guidelines, with examples of key documents, (i.e., budgets, registration flyers, etc.) from previous conventions.

### CEC Chair – Roles and Responsibility:

- Primary point of contact for Board Liaison.
- Schedule monthly conference calls and create agenda for meeting.
- Monitor the progress of CEC goals set at last ICC. Create and implement agendas to facilitate stated goals.
- Monthly communication with CoDA Board Liaison prior to their monthly Board meeting.

### CEC Co-Chair – Roles and Responsibilities:

- Acts as Chair in the absence of the elected chair.

### CEC Treasurer – Roles and Responsibilities:

- Responsible for managing registration; contact information and accounting.
- Report monthly to CEC total registration numbers, any fees outstanding and total fees collected.
- Maintain accounting records for all income and expenditures.

### CEC Secretary – Roles and Responsibilities:

- Keep minutes of all conference calls and face to face (f2f) meetings.
- Assist in the creation and maintenance of *ICC Operations Manual*.
- Maintain historical records of all annual ICC Events.
- Facilitates the organization and distribution of the Delegate packets.

# CoDA Literature Committee (CLC)

The CoDA Literature Committee's function is to encourage and facilitate the creation of new literature written by and for the Fellowship of Co-Dependents Anonymous.

Writing for CoDA is a wonderful way to "carry the message," as expressed in Step Twelve. The CLC welcomes participation from CoDA members. We invite submissions from individuals and from groups.

For information on current projects, to find out how to participate, and to offer suggestions for new or existing literature, please contact: CLC at lit@coda.org, or:

**CoDA Literature Committee**
**P.O. Box 33577, Phoenix, AZ 85067**

The CLC requires writers to sign an Assignment of Copyright form (available on the CoDA website, www.coda.org) which gives CoDA the legal right to edit, adapt, publish, and sell contributions as CoDA literature. This is part of the group conscience process as expressed through the CoDA Literature Committee. The final product becomes the property of the Fellowship, not of any individual author. Submitting authors remain anonymous. After the piece goes through the CLC's group conscience process, a final literature draft is made available to CoDA Delegates, Trustees, etc. for review and endorsement at the annual CoDA Service Conference.

We pledge to review and respectfully consider material submitted by the Fellowship to the CLC for release as CoDA Conference Endorsed literature. We pledge to maintain communication and cooperation between the CLC and all CoDA committees, boards, organizations, and the Fellowship. We pledge that this process will be carried out in a timely and prudent manner.

# Communications Committee

## Background:

A Communications Task Force was created at the 2007 CSC to address the goal of improving communication within CoDA, both up and down the inverted pyramid. The following year was spent in recruiting people to participate in the effort and in gathering specific issues to be addressed. Starting in early 2009, the task force members began to have regular conference calls and work began in earnest on several of the identified issues. As a result of this work, the 2009 CSC voted to make the Communication Task Force a standing committee to continue to address identified communication issues as they surface.

## Description of committee responsibilities:

- Focus on improving communications up and down the inverted pyramid within the World CoDA Fellowship
- Work towards ensuring that every codependent throughout the world will have access to all the CoDA information that is important to them
- Work towards ensuring that all people within the World CoDA Fellowship have a better understanding of what is involved in making the fellowship work
- Provide a mechanism for two way communication with codependents in distant or isolated locations, particularly those without active communities or voting entities to support them
- Address those areas of communication not currently handled by the Outreach Committee

# Co-NNections® Committee

The Co-NNections Committee's goal is to provide on-line venues for CoDA members to share their thoughts about their recovery journey. Committee members do this by overseeing and publishing *Co-NNections*®, an online collection of original writing, graphic art, audio and video based submissions sent in by CoDA members. The collections are located at the CoDA website (www.coda.org). "Weekly Readings," a sampling of these submissions, is also posted weekly on CoDA.org.

In publishing the *Co-NNections* on-line collection, and the "Weekly Readings," the committee accepts submissions from CoDA members, evaluates submissions in terms of their adherence to CoDA's philosophy and written documentation (i.e. CoDA 12 Steps, Traditions, Web Guidelines, etc.) and communicates with authors when adjustments or additional information is needed. Further, authors submitting works for publication to *Co-NNections* agree to a limited release of copyright, allowing *Co-NNections* to publish their works for no compensation and grants *Co-NNections* the right to reuse any work published in future *Co-NNections* publications. However, all copyrights will remain with the author.

It is the committee's hope that publishing the submissions shared by CoDA members will enhance the recovery of contributors and viewers alike. We continue to search for, and implement, new ways to use the internet to promote sharing between fellow CoDA members from around the world.

**Disclaimer: Articles published in *Co-NNections*® reflect the opinions and beliefs of the writers only, and not necessarily those of *Co-NNections*®, its staff, or *Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.***

# Finance Committee

The CoDA Finance Committee works with the CoDA Treasurer and Board to provide financial oversight, analysis, tracking, and advice to the Fellowship of CoDA with respect to cash flow, prudent budgeting, financial stability, and monetary resources of the CoDA Fellowship.

### Finance Committee Responsibilities:

- Report the Profit & Loss statement in Quarterly Service Reports. (P & L is for management purposes only)
- Calculate and report our prudent reserve to the Fellowship at the Service Conference. We may report it at other times of year if needed.
- Review proposed budgets submitted by standing committees, boards & Fellowship Services. We compile these into one budget before or at the CoDA Service Conference, for the purpose of integrating them into CoDA's overall budget. The committee may consider whether or not CoDA's income supports the budget requests.
- The Finance Committee presents the budget for approval at the annual CSC.
- Provide input to the CSC related to the financial implications of proposals under discussion. We may suggest options, as prudence requires.
- Apprise the CoDA Board and Fellowship of changing financial circumstances, which might require budgetary adjustments between CoDA Service Conferences.
- Review expense reports submitted for committees & board member.
- Review CoDA's investments for adherence to Conference approved policy.
- Interacts with bookkeeper and reviews books for accuracy.

# Hospitals and Institutions Committee (H and I)

Hospitals and Institutions (H and I) serves to carry the message of recovery to codependents confined in hospitals, jails, and other institutional facilities.

# Issues Mediation Committee (IMC)

The Service Conference elects members of the Issues Mediation Committee (IMC) according to guidelines established by the Conference. Voting Entity Delegates and alternates are eligible to serve on the IMC. The committee handles requests from Voting Entities to divide into two or more entities. The committee also tracks and maintains the status of Voting Entity Issues.

**IMC Mission:** The IMC facilitates dispute mediation for Voting Entities, Intergroups, and other CoDA entities as needed. Decisions at all levels of CoDA are made with the guidance of our Higher Power as expressed through the group conscience. As stated in Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first. Personal recovery depends upon CoDA Unity." and Tradition Two: "For our group purpose there is but one authority—a loving Higher Power as expressed to our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." Thus as with all our recovery, group conscience is about putting aside the "self" and looking to Higher Power for guidance. We also have the *Twelve Service Concepts* to guide us in the mediation process. (Please see sections 1 and 2 of the *Fellowship Service Manual*.)

**Procedures:** Since CoDA operates as an inverted pyramid in its structure, the IMC should be consulted after an attempt has been made to resolve the issue through a group conscience at the local level.

### Conflict within a committee:

- If a conflict arises within a Committee, the Board liaison to that Committee may assist in finding a resolution.
- If the Board liaison is unable to assist in resolving the conflict, a Committee member or the Board liaison may request assistance from the IMC to mediate the conflict.
- If IMC mediation does not resolve the conflict, the IMC will refer the issue to the full Board of Trustees for assistance.

### Conflict with a Liaison:

- If a conflict arises between a Committee and its assigned liaison, the committee chair and the liaison may request the IMC to assist in mediation.
- If the conflict cannot be resolved through mediation, the IMC will advise the chair of the CoDA Board of Trustees regarding the issues involved in the conflict.
- The Board of Trustees may choose one of the following actions:
    - Assign a new board liaison to the committee.
    - Refer the issue back to IMC for further suggestions.
    - Take appropriate action, as the Board of Trustees deems necessary.
- If the second attempt at resolution is not successful, the conflict will be referred back to the Board of Trustees with a non-binding group conscience opinion.

# Outreach Committee

The CoDA Outreach Committee (Outreach) is a group of actively recovering codependents that serve as the 'customer service' branch of CoDA. Through Outreach service work, we are fulfilling Step 12.

Our service work involves educating people about the CoDA Fellowship and connecting codependents with meetings worldwide. We provide information about face-to-face (f2f) and online CoDA meetings. We answer both general and specific questions about CoDA, and share our experience, strength, and hope (ESH). When appropriate, we refer others to specific CoDA Committees.

Outreach assists in updating domestic, regional, and international contact information and meeting lists by forwarding information to the Fellowship Service Office. Where we can, we connect different people in the same region who want to start meetings. One of our goals is to be proactive in reaching out to and connecting other codependents. In 2004, we developed a Spanish Outreach subcommittee to assist Spanish-speaking codependents worldwide.

Most of Outreach's service work takes place online through email; therefore, Outreach members ought to have an affinity and ability to communicate effectively over email. People interested in serving on the CoDA Outreach committee should have at least one year of active CoDA recovery.

# Service Structure Committee (SSC)

**Description:** The Service Structure Committee's function is to serve the will of the Fellowship, as expressed through the CoDA Service Conference, in keeping with the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*.

**Purpose:**

- Serve in an advisory capacity to the CoDA Service Conference, Board of Trustees, and the Fellowship through the group conscience decision making process.
- Determine the implications of motions to modify, alter, or amend the CoDA Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Conference Protocols, CoDA Fellowship Service Manual (FSM), *Twelve Steps*, and *Twelve Traditions*, *Twelve Service Concepts*, or other foundational documents.
- To support, maintain, and create CoDA fundamental structural documents, including the Articles of Incorporation, Bylaws, Fellowship Service Manual, Twelve Concepts, and other documents, as directed by the CoDA Service Conference.
- Present the Fellowship Service Manual content to the CoDA Service Conference for acceptance and approval. Produce annual updates and revised editions in a timely fashion.
- Communicate regularly with Board members, Committee chairs, Voting Entity Delegates, and other CoDA members or groups, offering relevant information and insight as needed.

### Service Structure Committee Members: Role and Duties

- Attend committee meetings or act as an advisory member. Write, edit, and recommend resolutions, ideas, and directions. Participate in the group conscience process.
- Consider any proposed changes to CoDA's service structure and procedures, diligently considering compliance with the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions*.
- Refer to the Steps and Traditions when formulating opinions; cite as needed for clarity.
- Keep confidential all matters as required; provide full disclosure for all other matters.

### Service Duties Structure Chair: Role and Duties

- Define focus and goals of committee work, disseminate work, and develop time schedules to accomplish it. Set agenda and schedule work-in-progress priorities.
- Maintain consistent, timely communications with committee members, the CoDA Board, CoDA Board liaison, Committee chairs, and others as necessary.
- Provide reports to the Fellowship in a combined report called, “The CoDA Quarterly Service Report,” in keeping with the group conscience decision making process.
- Manage budgets, sign and keep recorded reports and minutes of committee, keep spending forms, receipts, and expenses for the committee and the Fellowship, and remind members to maintain expense records: telephone, travel, faxes, and mailings.
- Maintain the official copy of the CoDA Fellowship Service Manual and related correspondence and documents--current and historical--and turn over records to CoDA for archives.
- Disclose legal and spiritual problems, conflicts, and all committee goals to committee members. Request group conscience poll for solutions with all committee members.
- Communicate with members amiably and discuss problems directly if personal problems arise, before bringing matters to all members' attention for resolution. Relate dissenting opinions to committee members, CoDA Service Conference and Fellowship when required for the greater good of CoDA. If necessary, advise IMC, too.
- Follow the Steps and Traditions in all dealings, and aid the committee in following these principles in their communications and work.

# Translation Management Committee (TMC)

- The Translation Management Committee (TMC) designs and manages the process by which Conference Endorsed literature is translated.
- The TMC communicates with CoDA entities who want to carry the message by translating our literature.
- The TMC also manages the contracts between CoDA and other entities that translate and distribute literature in languages other than English.
- The TMC welcomes new members, and especially needs experience with email, contracts and copyright issues.

# Section 08 CoDA Corporate Entities

## Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. (CoDA®)

Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. (CoDA®) is a non-profit corporation created by the Fellowship of CoDA to serve its business and legal needs. As such, CoDA, provides a center of on-going support, outreach, and information for the spiritual program of Co-Dependents Anonymous.

**Contact Information:**

Written correspondence to CoDA may be directed to:

**Co-Dependents Anonymous - Fellowship Services Office**

**PO Box 33577, Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577**

Telephone number: (answering service only) (602) 277-7991

E-mail meeting updates to: meeting@coda.org

Our web site is: www.coda.org Address e-mail to: outreach@coda.org

## CoDA Resources Publishing, Inc. (CoRe®)

CoDA Resources Publishing, Inc. (CoRe) is a non-profit corporation, established by the CoDA Service Conference, to perform specific duties related to the publication and distribution of literature for our program. This avoids problems of money, property, and prestige, allowing the CoDA membership to avoid disruptions to our program's primary spiritual purpose. The voting members at the CoDA Service Conference elect CoRe's Board of Directors. CoRe is a completely separate corporation from CoDA, but the CoDA trustees and the CoRe Board of directors are elected by the same voting members at Conference and are responsible to the same people, the Fellowship of CoDA.

CoRe's primary mission is to ensure that CoDA literature be produced in a timely and cost efficient manner.

**Contact Information:**

Written correspondence to CoRe may be directed to:

**CoRe Publications,** PO Box 1004 Denver, NC 28037**.** Voice Mail: 704-483-3038

Fax number: (704) 483-3088. The e-mail address for CoRe is: coreorders@coda.org

# Section 09 Guidelines for CoDA Communications

## Communications within all of CoDA

Informative and timely communications are necessary for the growth and maintenance of any service organization. Lack of communication among our members can cause unnecessary conflict. CoDA members have requested guidance in applying our Steps and Traditions to new forms of communication, specifically electronic mail (e-mail). The principles of effective communication may be applied to all forms of communication among members, committees, and service boards of CoDA.

E-mail is best used as a supplement to, not replacement of, hard copy. Because e-mail is less expensive and more efficient than Postal Service deliveries, its use is encouraged, provided boundaries are maintained. These boundaries include maintaining anonymity.

Use caution when forwarding or copying e-mail to protect others' anonymity. For example: Personal e-mail address books may contain the full name of addressees. These may be disclosed when a message is forwarded. When sending email to a list of addresses, I send the message to myself and use BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) for the list of intended recipients in order to protect the anonymity of the members.

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

To protect our copyrights, CoDA does not distribute any literature sold by CoDA or CoRe via e-mail. Any other communication may be sent via e-mail. (The Starter Packet and other Service items are available in electronic format via the CoDA website. These Service items are copyrighted and sold by CoDA, or CoRe.)

The following documents are usually mailed to Delegates first, then distributed via e-mail: CoDA committee memos and reports. Board minutes and reports, financial statements, By Laws, and similar documents are not distributed via e-mail until hard copy is mailed. There is no reason to restrict e-mail distribution lists, as cost is not an issue with e-mail.

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

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

**Step Ten:** *Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.*

If I fail to follow our guidelines, I admit my shortcomings and make amends wherever and as soon as possible. If I wronged a person in private, I make amends in private; if I wronged a person in front of others, I make amends in front of others.

**Tradition One:** *Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.* I ask myself, "Does this message promote CoDA unity, foster fellowship or promote recovery? Could it be interpreted as disruptive or divisive?" If I receive a message that I consider disruptive or divisive, I share that feeling with the author before seeking other remedies. I ask permission before copying an e-mail message or other communication to others. I review my responses for adherence to our Steps, Traditions, and principles.

**Tradition Two:** *For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority: a loving Higher Power as expressed to our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*
CoDA has procedures in place to determine the group conscience of a meeting, Intergroup, Voting Entity and even our CoDA structure. We determine our collective group conscience by selecting/electing representatives to serve the Fellowship. Our Higher Power gives us guidance in this way. Sometimes people may circumvent our process by claiming to be interpreters of our group conscience. To avoid future confusion, when I participate in a group conscience decision, I make written notes of the people who were notified and/or participated, identify the subject we discussed, and include the results of the decision.

**Tradition Three:** *The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.*
We need to be aware that not everyone in CoDA has access to telephones, computers, e-mail, or the Internet. CoDA is based on inclusion, not exclusion. Access to technology of any kind is not a requirement for participation in our program, so we rely on the Postal Service as our primary method of distribution of information to the Fellowship. I make a sincere attempt to include all interested members in our discussions, whether by telephone, fax, e-mail, the Internet, Postal Service, or other means.

**Tradition Nine:** *CoDA, as such, ought never to be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*
As a member of CoDA, and when working as a trusted servant in any way, I am respectful to the members I serve and the members I associate with during my service. I communicate with others on matters that affect other groups or CoDA as a whole. I communicate with my Voting Entity Delegates when seeking information.

**Tradition Ten:** *CoDA has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the CoDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*
As a member of CoDA and when working as a trusted servant, I respect the careful use of Postal Service, telephone, fax, and e-mail. I do not use personal correspondence of any kind to draw Co-Dependents Anonymous, any of its service boards, or any CoDA member into public controversy on any matter.

**Tradition Eleven:** *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.*
The Internet is not a private form of communication. It is a public medium. Publishing items to news groups is comparable to publishing in a newspaper. For this reason, we encourage members to seek anonymity in screen names, e-mail addresses, and postal mail addresses.

**Tradition Twelve:** *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*
I respect the anonymity of others and myself. I consider the point of view of any writer or speaker. Is anyone cloaking personal opinions or concerns in our Steps and Traditions? Are we all respecting group conscience procedures? Is there a possibility of miscommunication? Could I be making erroneous assumptions? Does it feel right? If not, it probably isn't. When in doubt, check it out.

# List of Affirmative Communication Actions

- I respect the anonymity of others by not using a member's last name in the text of a message.
- If a member's last name appears in an e-mail address, or if the member is identifiable in any way, I will remove that address in any carbon copies unless I have the member's permission to send it as is.
- I obtain permission before faxing CoDA identified materials to a member.
- I respect the personal integrity, anonymity, and privacy of each member, and I expect and deserve the same.
- I maintain civility and decorum in my communications to members of CoDA, as I practice developing and maintaining healthy relationships. I continue to practice healthy interpersonal behavior in communications via telephone, fax, e-mail, and the Internet.
- When in doubt about the content or intent of a letter, telephone call, e-mail, or other communication, I first request clarification from the author before discussing its content.
- When I participate in a group discussion (in person or by Postal Service, telephone, fax or e-mail), I maintain focus on the subject at hand. My attention and focus is a gift I offer other members.
- Recovery is a process; I respect each member for where that member is in recovery. I practice my program by sharing my experience, strength, and hope with others, not by pointing out faults and flaws in others.
- The text of any forwarded message is transmitted verbatim. I do not edit it. (For the purposes of committee work where editing work is in process, I clearly mark a previous, unedited version and include it with my suggested revisions.) Generally, emails are not forwarded to people not addressed by the original sender.
- I encourage others in their recovery, and do not "flame" them. Flaming is a written attack on a person, a person's opinions, or a person's point of view, distributed to multiple addresses, usually via e-mail. When my opinions differ from another, I share my experiences with that person, explaining how they are different or similar.
- When sending email to a list of addresses, I send the message to myself and use BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) for the list of intended recipients in order to protect the anonymity of the members.

# Communications from the Board:

## CoDA Quarterly Service Report (QSR) Guidelines

- All QSR submissions are made through the appropriate board liaison, i.e.: The Finance committee report is submitted through the Finance Committee Board liaison.
- All submissions to the QSR editor are made through the QSR Board liaison.
- There are no additions by the editor.
- The final draft of the QSR is made available for review by all Board members, and must be reviewed by at least two members.
- The editor makes no changes to the QSR after final approval by the Board.

# Guidelines for Developing a CoDA Meeting, Intergroup or Voting Entity (VE) Website

Guidelines for CoDA service committees, Meetings, Intergroups, or Voting Entities desiring to establish a web presence with a web site to carry the message of Co-Dependents Anonymous.

A CoDA group may decide what information they want to provide and the level of complexity they wish to maintain on a web site.

**A typical web site might include the following:**

- Home page – general information about the group and CoDA.
- *Preamble*, *Welcome*, *Twelve Steps*, *Twelve Traditions*, *Twelve Promises*.
- List of local CoDA events
- Local newsletter
- Contact phone numbers
- Meeting information / list
- Literature information, and how to order
- Links to other CoDA web sites

The possibilities to "carry the message" are endless. There are potential problems to be avoided. These can fall into two general categories: those concerning the *Twelve Traditions* and those concerning technology.

## How Do the Traditions Affect What We Put on a Web Site?

The *Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous* are the guiding spiritual principles our Fellowship. (For additional information about the appropriateness of applying our Traditions, please refer to the CoDA pamphlet, *Using the Twelve Traditions*)
No matter how modest the web site, it is available to a large, diverse and growing audience. If a web site is linked to the CoDA site (www.coda.org), that link represents an endorsement by CoDA. Possible Tradition issues are:

- Unity - deciding what goes into a web site
- Our primary purpose - carrying the CoDA message of recovery from codependency
- Endorsement - avoiding endorsement of related facilities or outside enterprises.
- Outside issues - avoiding opinions on outside issues
- Self-support - costs of development and maintenance
- Autonomy - responsibility for web site content and copyright acknowledgements
- Anonymity - the Internet as an extension of press, radio and films.

## Unity - Deciding What Goes in a Web Site:

It is important to remember that "our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity" (Tradition One). Keeping the information presented general allows us to reach as many codependents as possible, many of whom will be newcomers who know little about Co-Dependents Anonymous. Please be clear that information regarding any special focus meetings on your pages are a small part of CoDA.

A group conscience of the sponsoring group is the basis for deciding what goes into the website. Before putting up a website, the content should be thoroughly reviewed by the membership of the group sponsoring the site.

Placing information about the site's sponsoring group, on each page of the site, makes the message clear to the reader. As a design consideration, having a consistent "look and feel" on each page makes reading the material easier for the user.

### Our primary purpose - carrying the CoDA message of recovery from codependency:

The purpose for the web site should be to carry the CoDA message. Our Step 12 reads, *"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."* A website can be a great tool in carrying the message of recovery to codependents who still suffer, by employing modern technology to implement our primary spiritual aim. Our websites rely on attraction, not promotion.

### Avoiding endorsement of related facilities or outside enterprises as stated in Tradition 6:

A link to another web site, is saying, "This is a site that we think well of. It is an unspoken but very real endorsement of the linked-to site. Some web sites are hosted by facilities such as hospitals or rehabilitation centers. These facilities may provide CoDA meetings on-premises and include CoDA information on their web site as a service. This is fine. Although we may not endorse a related facility or outside enterprise, a facility or outside enterprise may endorse us. Their sites may provide information about CoDA and/or link to CoDA developed/maintained sites.

An exception to this policy is when a CoDA event (Convention, Conference, retreat) is held at a location that has a web site. A reference to the facility web site may be included in the announcement of the event. It is appropriate for the CoDA Fellowship to obtain information about the place were the event will be held.

It is impossible to know which web sites have linked to your site. If asked, it would be acceptable for a site to link to a CoDA sponsored site. However, in order to maintain the spirit of the Traditions, it is a good practice to request that the linking site makes it clear that they are linking to your site for information purposes and not as an affiliation.

Linking to sites that have been developed and sponsored by CoDA service bodies or communities is the safest choice. The CoDA web site does not link to web sites outside of CoDA. Many web sites that include CoDA information may also include information and links that have nothing to do with codependency. CoDA linked sites should not endorse, link or reference related facilities or outside enterprises. CoDA does not endorse sites developed and maintained by non-CoDA organizations, so we don't link to sites that are not affiliated with a CoDA group.

### Avoiding opinions on outside issues:

The Tenth Tradition says "*CoDA has no opinion on outside issues."* We need to consider the good of CoDA as a whole, which may be affected if a CoDA web site links to a site that has opinions on outside issues

Another problem that may be encountered on a web site is provider-included advertising. If a small flashing picture appears saying "If you'd like to see more about this, press here" - it's an advertisement. These advertisers pay site providers to place their ads that allow you link to sites to download free software. Providing information like this violates both Traditions Six and Ten.

*("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." And, "CoDA has no opinions on outside issues; hence, the CoDA name should never be drawn into public controversy.")*

Some Internet providers insert their own addresses at the bottom of a web page to encourage viewers to contact them. Closely associated with this problem is that some of the code generators insert messages such as, "This web site was developed using XYZ Tool." These, are also advertisements and break CoDA's Tradition of non-endorsement.

Use of credit card or financial trademarks is acceptable in the normal course of financial transactions.

## Self-Support:

Setting up a site on the Internet has recurring costs. Many Internet Service Providers (ISP's) make space available for clients as part of their monthly fees for a "personal" web site. A member may want to donate their personal web site space as a service to the sponsoring service body. But what happens if the individual decides to change ISP's? What if they move? What if they decide that CoDA isn't for them anymore?

Tradition Seven says *"every CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting."* So it's best that the group provide its own Internet presence. The important issue is that the group be responsible for the site, not an individual.

## Responsibility for Page Content:

No one may publish CoDA copyrighted material without the express written permission of CoDA Copyright infringement is one of the most common problems that have occurred with the explosion of the Internet. Using copyrighted material without permission has the potential of deeply affecting CoDA as a whole. The only CoDA materials that may be reproduced on a web site are those items on the CoDA web site and the appropriate Copyright notice must be included. Excerpted material must also be acknowledged.

## CoDA Service Items/Literature:

CoDA's service items include the Meeting Starter Packet, the Fellowship Service Manual, the Steps, Promises, Traditions, & meeting format. All service items appear on the www.coda.org website. They may be photo-copied for use in CoDA meetings or posted on CoDA community websites.

CoDA does not allow quotations from our literature on any website, nor does CoDA allow photo-copying of literature. Literature includes but is not limited to: *The CoDA Book, the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions Workbook, Newcomer's Handbook* and other items which we sell through CoRe. Although text of CoDA's literature is not posted on the CoDA.org website, short descriptions of literature (blurbs) and ordering information are available online.

We, as a Fellowship, own the literature, develop it, approve it and maintain it. We have entrusted the Board of Trustees of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. the legal responsibility to protect our property. That includes rigorous protection of our copyrights from use without permission. If copyright infringement is found to exist, the following steps should be taken:

- Bring it to the attention of the Board of Trustees
- The Board of Trustees will take appropriate action to preserve CoDA rights and resolve the violation, up to and including notification of the Internet Service Provider, and legal action.

### An Extension of Press, Radio and Films:

Tradition Eleven, which calls for maintaining "*personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, film,"* also applies to the Internet.

### Technical Issues:

Technical issues may arise during the development of web sites. Detailed questions about coding, page structure, and other issues cannot be covered in this general overview. Your Internet Service Provider may be able to provide you with technical assistance. Trustees or committee chairs may be contacted via e-mail, the CoDA web site, www.coda.org by postal mail.

Write to: Co-Dependents Anonymous
PO Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067

## Summary:

The general things you need to remember are:

- Design the site with newcomers in mind.
- Do not use CoDA copyrighted material.
- Take a careful look at any site that you consider linking to for Traditions related problems. It is strongly suggested that you only link to sites sponsored by other Co-Dependents Anonymous service bodies, including the CoDA web site, www.coda.org .
- Create a Web Site Maintenance Committee within the service body or community to make ongoing revisions to your web site.
- Sponsoring service bodies must be advised of and approve all revisions to their sponsored web site.
- Have fun considering the possibilities of the information that you can disseminate and the creative ways there are to do that.
- A web site is an incredible tool to help spread information to people who suffer from codependency. It just takes a little thought and effort to maintain our adherence to the principles that we have learned to incorporate into our everyday lives.
- Remember, the internet is a way to facilitate bringing more hands and hearts into our Fellowship.

# Section 10 Community Problem Solving Method and Conference Procedures

## Background

During the 1994 Service Conference, the Fellowship allowed the Board to conduct the Conference in a different manner than using Robert's Rules of Order. This manner of conducting business was called the *Community Problem Solving Method* or *Interactive Decision Making Method.* Unlike the more rigid structure of Robert's Rules, this method is relatively simple to learn and lacks the legal and potentially antagonistic tone of standard parliamentary procedure. It is a friendlier and more cooperative method of decision making where motions are made only after information around the problem has been gathered and solutions brainstormed.

At the end of the 1994 Conference, many comments were made as to how smoothly the Conference went in comparison to the years before. For the first time in CoDA's history, all of the agenda items were completed by adjournment. Much of the success of this Conference was attributed to the new method of conducting the business meeting. One of the last actions of the Conference was when the Conference Committee made a motion # 94079 "*That we recommend the 1995 Service Conference use the Community Interactive Method for its Conference."* This motion passed unanimously. As a result of this motion, this is the method the Board used to conduct business at the 1995 Service Conference. It has been used ever since.

## Introduction to the Community Problem Solving Method

**The Community Problem Solving Method follows a basic four-stage process:**

1. Identifying an issue or problem—gathering information
2. Brainstorming—formulating solutions or recommendations
3. Crafting a motion from the suggested solutions or recommendations
4. Voting on the motion (No second or amendments are needed.)

Because everyone has a chance to be heard during each stage of the process, the motions formulated tend to strongly reflect the combined conscience of all the members present. Compromise (finding middle ground) is often reached without extra effort, and minority opinions find a place in the final motion. Thus, unanimous votes are common; bitterness and antagonism are reduced. Within this friendlier structure of the Community Problem Solving Method, it is still possible to adhere to scheduled timelines and conduct official business, including formulating and passing motions that are binding according to the Charter and By-laws of CoDA.

Within the existing structure of the CoDA Service Conference (CSC), each committee usually does the initial groundwork of brainstorming issues and giving possible solutions in the form of preliminary motions. Preliminary motions are presented to the CSC during committee reports. The CSC then has the opportunity to give more input and feedback if necessary. The final motions are then crafted on the floor and the vote taken. There may be some brief time lapse while motions are crafted, but in actuality, time is saved since there are no seconds to be made and no amendments or amendments to the amendments to be dealt with.

Delegates, committee members, and Trustees of CoDA developed the "Community Problem Solving Method" for use at the annual CoDA Service Conference. Although these guidelines apply specifically to the CSC, they may be adapted to conduct business at any level of CoDA.

This method allows people to express their thoughts and opinions in a structured process, and through that process motions are crafted which express the group conscience of the participants.

# CoDA Service Conference (CSC) Guidelines/Procedures

### 1. Use of the Community Problem Solving Method as our Method of Group Conscience Decision Making:

The Community Problem Solving Method will be the guidelines used to achieve group conscience and to facilitate the business of the CSC. Time limits and procedures for the Community Problem Solving Method are outlined in the subsection titled “Community Problem Solving Method of Decision Making: Sequence for Bringing a Motion to Vote.”

### 2. Preparation and Adoption of the CSC Agenda:

It is the responsibility of the Events Committee, consulting with the Board of Trustees to assure that all business matters are presented to the Fellowship. To this end, the Events Committee prepares the initial agenda for the CSC. This agenda is adopted (or modified and then adopted) by a group conscience decision at the beginning of the CSC.

### 3. To Modify the CSC Agenda:

Committees may reschedule their appointed report times on the CSC agenda by a group conscience decision of the CSC. Committees are encouraged to request changes as far in advance as possible. Requests for rescheduling should be made no later than immediately prior to the committee report which directly precede the originally scheduled time slot for the committee requesting a change. (If a committee is not ready to report and has not requested a change to the agenda, the committee's report will be listed as “unfinished business” at the end of the agenda.)

### 4. Role of the Chair/Facilitator:

Conference time management is essential to accomplish our work. The Conference Chairperson is responsible for promoting the smooth and orderly flow of business. The Chairperson may be assisted by a Facilitator.

The Chairperson/Facilitator is charged with maintaining order at the microphone and in the conference room. Therefore, when the Chairperson/Facilitator strikes the gavel or calls for “thirty seconds” of silence, all speaking and discussion will cease. Each period of silence will be followed by the Serenity Prayer.

There may be times when the Chairperson/Facilitator may need to interrupt a speaker to ask for clarification, correct a procedural error or maintain time limits adopted by group conscience.
The Chairperson/Facilitator may call for a group conscience at any time in order to reach a quick consensus to complete business.

### 5. Microphones and time limits for speaking:

People addressing the CSC do so at the microphone. This is to assure that attendees can hear CSC business clearly and that all CSC business is correctly recorded.
**One person speaks at a time.**

At appropriate times when conducting business, for discussion of the issues and to make recommendations, there may be one microphone set up for those in favor of a motion and one set up for those opposing a motion. A third microphone is set up in the middle for people who need clarification or may offer clarification.

Speakers must line up at the appropriate microphone and wait to be recognized by the Chairperson/Facilitator. The Chairperson/Facilitator will alternate microphones and will recognize the speakers at each mike before they speak. Those speaking at the center microphone will be recognized over those speakers at the other two microphones. After being recognized by the Chairperson/Facilitator, the speakers identify themselves by stating their first name and the Voting Entity they are representing. Speakers may then address the CSC.

When speaking, express feelings, give opinions, share experience, show reservations and concerns, offer realistic criticism, assess possible flaws, and offer possible alternative solutions and options. Whenever possible, after you share a feeling, **RECOMMEND AN ACTION OR SOLUTION WHICH THAT FEELING SUPPORTS**. The CSC is not a place just to vent or complain.

At the CoDA Service Conference, persons who address the CSC may speak to an issue only once for 1 minute each. Time limits may be changed by group conscience. Persons using the middle microphone for clarification or to make a request for information may speak more than once.

### 6. Speaking privileges and voting privileges:

Generally, speaking privileges (also known as “voice” privileges) are restricted to people who have voting privileges. Conference may grant voice and/or vote as they determine appropriate. During committee reports, however, all participants in the development of that report may speak regardless of voting rights.

Each CoDA Trustee has a vote at the CSC; the CoRe Board has two voting members. (“CoDA Fellowship Service Manual: Section 09-CoDA Service Structure,” and “Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws: Article IV- Membership and Voting.”) Voting Entity Delegates have voting privileges (CoDA Fellowship Service Manual, Section 08, Voting Entity Service, and “Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws: Article IV- Membership and Voting.”) While voting privileges are restricted, all CoDA members are welcome to attend the CSC and work on a CoDA Committee. According to Tradition Two, a group conscience decision grows out of the combined wisdom of the whole group guided by our Higher Power. However, time simply does not permit every person to speak on every issue at CSC. Non-voting members who want to have their opinions shared with the CSC may apply an adaptation of the process used to bring a group conscience opinion to a service board via the Group Representative:

a) Speak with your Voting Entity Delegate and give that person a written summary of the opinion you want expressed.
b) If you have no Voting Entity Delegate, you may request “voice” privileges (see below).

“The CSC may extend voice and/or vote privileges at CSC to any member that it deems appropriate or necessary. Voice and/or vote may be granted for the entire CSC, or on individual issues. This flexibility is sometimes needed to gain the valuable input and services of members who are not specifically included in the above paragraphs.” (“Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. Bylaws: Article IV- Membership and Voting.”)

## 7. Addressing disruptive behavior:

Due to the nature of our Twelve Step recovery program, it is especially important that members feel safe (emotionally and physically) when participating in business service meetings. Group conscience may call for the elimination of speaking privileges or removal from the meeting of a person who attempts to consistently disrupt, interrupt, or otherwise impede the progress of the meeting. (Please refer to the CoDA Fellowship Service Manual, Section 2, The Group Conscience Process, Disagreement, Mediation, and Resolution in Our Group Conscience Process, for additional information regarding conflict resolution.)

## 8. Calling for Thirty Seconds or for a Group Conscience:

At any time during the CSC, any CSC participant may call for “thirty seconds” of silence to ask for Higher Power guidance on a particular issue. Thirty seconds may also be called when gratitude for Higher Power guidance is appropriate. Each period of silence will be followed by the Serenity Prayer. Any voting member may also request a group conscience if it is needed to help the overall efficiency of conducting business.

## 9. Presence During the Group Conscience Process and Passing the Badge:

It is the responsibility of each voting member to be prompt for meetings and to be present during the entire period of time an item of business is discussed. Whenever possible, it is recommended that all voting members be present during all business presented on the CSC floor, including the introduction and discussion of all business and preliminary motions.Voting members must be present during the entire community problem solving method for a motion (presentation of the issue or preliminary motion, discussion and brainstorming, crafting a motion from the suggested solutions) in order to vote on that motion.

If a voting Delegate has to leave the room during CSC business, an Alternate Delegate may vote in the absence of the Delegate by exchanging badges. Voting Alternate Delegates, who have been passed the badge, must be present during the entire problem solving method for a motion in order to vote on that motion. If a motion or preliminary motion is on the floor, a badge may not be exchanged until discussion and voting on that motion is completed. When a Delegate or Alternate uses a badge to address the CSC concerning a motion, he or she may not pass that badge until the discussion and the vote on that motion have been completed.

A volunteer may be asked to hold badges of any voting member that needs to leave the room during this process. These badges will not be returned until the vote has been taken. “A group conscience decision grows out of the combined wisdom invested in the whole group.” (CoDA Fellowship Service Manual, Section 2). It is important that voting members be present and open to all view points presented to be able to vote for the one they see as best for CoDA.
It is also important for voting members to stay for the entire CSC whenever possible. When too many voting members leave early, there is no quorum to conduct business.

## 10. Fifteen-Minute Breaks Between Committee Reports

Other than breaks for meals, a fifteen-minute break occurs between committee reports unless group conscience determines otherwise. It is highly recommended that committees utilize the fifteen-minute break time to hand out copies of their reports and preliminary motions prior to their verbal reports. This provides the CSC an opportunity to consider key points and prepare for any discussion. The fifteen-minute break is in place for this information to be distributed.

### 11. Distribution of Information
All information distributed to the CSC must be information that either reflects a committee's group conscience or is board-approved CSC material. A group conscience vote from the CSC is required before any other materials may be distributed.

### 12. Committee Report Times
Committee members must be present and ready to report when the allotted time occurs for their committee business. By group conscience vote of the CSC, committees may reschedule their appointed report times on the CSC agenda. Committees are encouraged to request changes as far in advance as possible. If a committee is not ready to report and has not requested a change to the agenda, the committee's report will be listed as “unfinished business” at the end of the agenda, unless otherwise decided by group conscience.

### 13. Time Limit for Committee Reports
At CSC, Committee reports are usually scheduled for a maximum of one hour each but may be adjusted otherwise by Conference group conscience. If the time expires, and a Committee is not finished, their time may be extended or the remaining business for that committee may be submitted at the end of the CSC agenda under “unfinished business.” Committee business not discussed or resolved at CSC will be referred to the Board of Trustees for resolution. Ratification of Board decisions may or may not be necessary at the next CSC.

### 14. Avoiding Committee Work on the CSC Floor
Because CSC and Committee report time is limited, it is recommended that Committee work (reviewing issues, gathering information, brainstorming, forming recommendations) not be conducted on the CSC floor. New issues should be referred to a Committee before that Committee's report whenever possible. If CSC participants have comments about Committee handouts received in the Delegate packet before CSC, they may send those comments to the Committee any time before that Committee’s report.

If a new issue arises during a Committee report, it is recommended that the issue be sent back to Committee for discussion. The Committee may then present a report on that issue during the “new business” section of the CSC agenda. New issues may be discussed during a Committee report if the group conscience vote of the CSC chooses to discuss the issue. If a committee motion is tabled, it falls into the “unfinished business” or “old business” section of the CSC agenda.

After a Committee gives its report and questions have been addressed, the Facilitator can ask if the CSC accepts the report. If the CSC accepts the report, that means it approves the Committee’s plans for the coming year and supports funding those plans.

APPROVAL OF THE ACTUAL CoDA BUDGET, INCLUDING ALL COMMITTEE BUDGETS, ONLY OCCURS DURING THE FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT.

If members of the CSC choose not to accept the report in its entirety, motions may be needed on each of the committee’s plans individually.

### 15. Motions
Before presentation, preliminary motions are legibly written on the supplied motion forms and those forms are handed to the person responsible for recording motions. Next, a preliminary motion is read into a microphone. At that time, voting members may discuss the preliminary motion at the microphones.

# COMMUNITY PROBLEM SOLVING METHOD OF DECISION MAKING: SEQUENCE FOR BRINGING A MOTION TO VOTE

The following is a possible way for placing limits on the discussion of a motion. This process is designed to allow approximately 20 minutes per motion. Naturally, some motions will take more or less time and will not necessarily be stopped mid-process if the allotted time per motion runs out before completion. Group conscience and trusting in a Higher Power will help balance the imperfect allocation of time needed for voting on motions.

The process is not designed to handle formal amendments, "motions to table", "points of order" or other such traditional business terms and situations. During the period of time at the beginning of the CSC when CSC procedures are put in place, this timeline or a comparative one may be put in place. By group conscience, everything is flexible in this method, especially time and speaker limitations.

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 min. | 1. Committee Chair puts a preliminary motion on the floor and presents the basic reasoning in favor of passing the preliminary motion. Comments may be made as to why the particular solution reflected in the preliminary motion was the final committee recommendation. |
| 5 min. | 2. The Facilitator asks for questions and information pertaining to the preliminary motion |
| 6-12 min. | 3. Statements in favor of and in opposition to the preliminary motion are given:<br>a. Alternating microphones, Up to 3 people can speak for and up to 3 people can speak against the preliminary motion, for 1 minute each. An even number of speakers is not required and either pro or con may start.<br>b. If more than 3 people want to speak pro or con, they may briefly confer among themselves to decide which three people will speak for the group. The speakers will try to include the non-speakers' main points. It is recommended that speakers not repeat the points another speaker has already addressed.<br>c. Recorders note main points for and against the preliminary motion.<br>If a Committee feels a motion needs more time for discussion within the Committee's allocated time, by a group conscience of the assembly, more time can be used for questions and answers, and twice as many statements pro and con may be heard. Of course, group conscience can also just put a time limit on this input with as many speakers speaking alternatively as possible within the time limit. Conferring so as points aren't repeated is still advised |
| 5 min | 4. Changes are made to the preliminary motion per group conscience. When finalized, the motion is read back to make certain it is in its final form. |
| 1 min. | 5. The Facilitator calls for a vote: Those in favor; Those opposed; Abstentions.<br>a. Motions that receive 2/3 or more votes are binding on the Board of Trustees unless that motion is later deemed in conflict with the law or the CoDA Bylaws.<br>b. Motions with 2/3 vote for Committee work only require support from the Board; the Board does not do Committee work. |
| 1 min. | 6. One additional speaker on the minority opinion maybe heard at this time. |
| 30 sec. | 7. Any participant may call for "30 seconds of silence" at any time in order to remind the assembly of Higher Power's guiding presence and/or to slow down an escalating debate. Each period of silence will be followed by the Serenity Prayer. |

# COMMITTEE GUIDELINES FOR CRAFTING MOTIONS

The Community Problem Solving Method can be used by Committees working to examine issues and put their recommendations together into preliminary motions for the CSC.

The Community Problem Solving Method is similar to the process often known as “Brainstorming.” It involves members calling out their ideas as someone writes the ideas down. Members do not criticize or comment on the ideas offered--all ideas are treated equally and are just written down. Keeping a self-check on body language such as rolling of the eyes is important. The idea is to release inhibitions of our critical thinking and get out as many ideas as possible in a short period of time. The group can agree to a time limit on each phase of the process.

**A. What is the issue?** [5 Minutes]
During the first phase of the process, members call out their ideas focused on an issue. *"What is the problem if any?"* may be a question for focus. The brainstorming might possibly fall easily into a Pro and Con issue and can be divided accordingly. The members then may see the need to eliminate items that don't seem to fit or apply. The next step of this phase may be to prioritize issues that need immediate attention, while leaving the rest for later to consider. This process can repeat itself for individual issues if needed.

B. **Brainstorm the important elements of the issue.** (Pros and Cons) [5 Minutes]
Let ideas flow freely. Every idea is valid.

C. **What information is needed to reach a solution? What sources need to be checked? Who will follow up with gathering the information?** The next step of the process involves gathering information pertinent to the problem. Some people may have immediate information that can be gathered by the brainstorming technique, but other information may involve asking resource people their side of the issue, gathering statistics, gathering facts and such. A plan that designates who will do what by when can then be set. When the next step of the process is ready to be undertaken, the information is reviewed and pros and cons if necessary.

D. **Brainstorm possible solutions to the problem.** [10 Minutes]
Brainstorming possible solutions to a situation is next, with the same brainstorming guidelines in effect as in the first step. Solutions that don't seem possible are eliminated in the next step, and prioritizing may once again be appropriate.

E. **Prioritize solutions.** ~~and~~ If needed list pros and cons of the solutions. [10-15 Minutes]

F. **Craft a preliminary motion.** [10 Minutes]
Formulate the ideas and possible solutions into a recommendation that can be offered to the CSC as a preliminary motion. Details as whose responsibility it would be to carry out the motion in what frame may also be appropriate. The crafting of the preliminary motion follows. People who are good with language syntax may be in charge of the crafting.

G. **Prepare your preliminary motion for consideration at the CSC**.
Fill out the appropriate motion form including the intent of the motion for future reference (there are no other “minutes” of the CSC). Prior to your report, give the completed motion forms to the person recording motions. Any changes can be made as needed during discussion of the motion.

# GUIDELINES FOR BOARD, COMMITTEE, and VEI REPORTS, ISSUES, and MOTIONS PRESENTED AT CoDA SERVICE CONFERENCE (CSC)

## Guidelines for Foundational Item Changes:

1. **Definitions:**
   a. **Foundational items** involve those things that define what the CoDA program is, including but not limited to the Welcome (long and short version), Preamble, Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Patterns & Characteristics of CoDependents and Recovery, Twelve Promises and Twelve Service Concepts (does not include by-laws)
   b. **Operational items** involve those things that keep the "business" of CoDA World Fellowship functioning.

2. To ensure that VE's have an opportunity to review VE Issues, Motions and By-Law Changes prior to CSC, all Items must be submitted to events committee and web-coordinator by cutoff date.
   a. 60 days for VE Issues, Motions (must also be sent to Board)
   b. 75 days for By-Law changes (must also be submitted to Board Secretary)
3. Items submitted must clearly indicate whether they are a Voting Entity Issue, Motion, or By-Law change.
4. All items submitted must be included as Conference documents in the Delegate Package in one of the following categories:
   a. Foundational items submitted on time
   b. Foundational items not submitted on time
   c. Operational items
5. The delegate package must be available on the website and notification of availability (via email blast) distributed no later than 50 days prior to the start of the CSC. If paper copies are required for people without internet availability, they must be mailed no later than 50 days prior to the start of conference.
6. Emails to be sent to registered delegates, previous delegates and community/VE/orphan meeting contacts, as well as to all emails currently receiving email blasts, notifying of postings as they occur.
7. **Voting at conference will follow these rules:**
   a. Foundational items submitted on time and all operational items may be voted on at the current CSC following the normal rules
   b. Foundational items submitted after cutoff date may still be brought to the floor by CSC vote; otherwise, vote is postponed until following year.

## Guidelines for Committees Presenting Reports at CSC

1. **It is helpful to include the following in reports to the CSC:**
    a. The status of all Fellowship issues received in the past year from Voting Entities.
    b. The Fellowship issues received at the current CSC
    c. Committee responses to Fellowship issues.
    d. A summary of the progress you have made on other projects you have been working on and plans for any new projects.
    e. A of your financial plan including goals and budget for the coming year.

2. **Responses to Fellowship issues may include:**
    a. Determination that the Fellowship issue has already been addressed; therefore, the recommendation is not needed. Include references to CoDA guidelines already in place that address the issue
    b. Determination that the Fellowship issue recommendation/s cannot be implemented due to Step or Tradition violations.
    c. Acceptance of the Fellowship issue recommendation to resolve issue; present preliminary motions based on that recommendation.
    d. Decision to table the Fellowship issue for further discussion. Offer an estimated timeframe for making a decision on the issue.

## Guidelines for Presenting Fellowship Issues to CSC

1. The Voting Entity discusses an issue and forms a recommendation by group conscience process.
2. The Voting Entity sends their issue and recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
3. The Board may respond to the issue or they may send the issue to an appropriate committee.
4. If a Committee receives a Fellowship issue, they examine the issue and determine a response by group conscience.
5. Board or Committee responses to Fellowship issues are presented at the CoDA Service Conference during Board or committee reports. Responses may also be published in the Quarterly Service Report (QSR) between CSC's.
6. The Delegate is responsible for following up on the status of their Voting Entity issues and reporting back to their membership.

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~~**Section III-** A - K - ***Meeting Starter Packet***~~ ... [3]

# Section 11 CoDA Service Forms

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

- When you mail in your Group Registration Form to CoDA, your meeting will be listed on the CoDA website for people searching for a meeting in your area. You will also receive a Group Number and a copy of the Fellowship Service Manual.

- Please use the Contribution Form when you send in 7th Tradition donations to CoDA It helps us keep track of the source of money and lets us know where to send an acknowledgement.

- You may want to use the combination form, Changes in Group Information and Seventh Tradition Contribution 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.

- 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.

- The CoDA Meeting Funds Record is a way of helping 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.

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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

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.*

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

Rev 02/2001

CoDA

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

## Changes in Group Information

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 international contact directory.
Signature:
_____

### Mail Contact Person

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

Signature: _____

## Seventh Tradition Contribution Form

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.*

_____

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

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.

# 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 (First name & Last initial)** | **Phone #** | **OK to leave message?** | **Best time to call?** | **Avail as temp Sponsor?** |
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# CoDA Meeting Funds Record

| Date | Transaction Description | Amount Received | Amount Paid Out | Balance |
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# Section 12 CoDA CLC Style Sheet:

## CoDA Literature Committee (CLC) Style Sheet:

*The following are CLC recommendations for style and capitalization in CoDA literature submissions.*

| Use | Instead of | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| CoDA | CODA or Co-DA | CoDA is a registered name; use upper/lower case as shown |
| CoDA Board | CoDA board | Capitalize the B |
| CoDA Conference endorsed literature | CoDA Conference Endorsed Literature | Capital C for references to CoDA Service Conference only |
| CoDA Literature Committee (CLC) | National Literature Committee | Spell out first time with acronym. Subsequently, use acronym only. |
| CoDA program of recovery | CoDA Program of Recovery | Only capitalize CoDA |
| CoDA Service Conference (CSC) | CoDA service conference | Spell out first time with acronym. Subsequently, use acronym only |
| codependence | co-dependence | No hyphen |
| codependency | co-dependency | No hyphen |
| codependent | co-dependent | No hyphen |
| Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc | Co-Dependents Inc. | Registered name: Use the hyphen and put a comma before Inc. |
| commas: ___, ___, and ___. | ___, ___ and ___. | Also true for “or” and “but” |
| community service groups | Community Service Groups | No caps |
| Co-NNections | Connections | Co-NNections is a registered name; use upper/lower case as is. |
| CoRe | CoRE | CoRe is a registered name; use of upper/lower case is important |
| crosstalk | cross talk or cross-talk | Do not hyphenate words that can be better written as one word. |
| experience, strength, and hope | Experience, Strength, and Hope | No caps |
| Fellowship | fellowship | Refers to any level of the CoDA organization |
| fellowship | Fellowship. | Generic use; i.e. socializing after the meeting. |
| First Step, Second Step, etc. | 1st Step, 2nd Step, etc. | Spell out numbers |
| First Tradition, Second Tradition | 1st Tradition, 2nd Tradition, etc. | Spell out numbers |
| group conscience | Group Conscience | Use lower case |
| Higher Power | higher power or H.P. | Spell out with caps |
| newcomer meetings | Newcomer Meetings or meetings | No caps |

| Use | Instead of | Comments |
|---|---|---|
| no-crosstalk rule | "No Crosstalk" or no crosstalk rule | Do not use quotes for colloquialisms or slang. Hyphen is used for clarity; i.e. That group has a no-crosstalk rule. vs. That group has no crosstalk rule. |
| old-timer | old timer | Use hyphen |
| *Patterns of Codependence* | Patterns of Codependence | Use Italics and caps when referring to foundation documents |
| *Preamble* | Preamble | Use Italics and caps when referring to foundation documents |
| same sex | same-sex | Used as a noun; i.e., members of the same sex |
| same-sex | same sex | Used as an adjective; i.e., same-sex marriage |
| self-determined, self-help, self-discovery, self-esteem, self-governing | Self determined, self help, self discovery, self esteem, self governing | |
| *Serenity Prayer* | serenity prayer | Use Italics and caps when referring to prayers |
| service-related | service related | Used for service-related items. Use without hyphens in instances such as "This topic is service related." |
| sharing and writing sessions | Sharing and Writing Sessions | No capitals |
| speaker meeting | Speaker Meeting or "speaker" meeting | No capitals; no quotation marks |
| sponsor, sponsee | Sponsor, Sponsee | No capitals |
| Step One, Step Two, etc. | Step 1, Step 2, etc. | Spell out |
| the *CoDA Closing Prayer* | The CoDA Closing Prayer | Use Italics when referring to prayers; small "t" for "the" |
| the *CoDA Opening Prayer* | The CoDA Opening Prayer | Use Italics when referring to prayers; small "t" for "the" |
| the *Twelve Promises* | The Twelve Promises | Use italics and caps for foundation documents; small "t" |
| The *Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous* | The Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous | Use capital "T" when referring to copyrighted titles; italicize |
| the *Twelve Steps* | The 12 Steps | Use italics when referring to foundation documents; small "t" for "the"; spell out #. |
| The *Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous* | The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous | Use capital "T" when referring to copyrighted titles; italicize |
| the *Twelve Traditions* | The Twelve Traditions | Use italics when referring to foundation documents; small "t" for the |
| The *Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous* | the 12 Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous | Use capital "T" when referring to copyrighted titles; italicize |
| Tradition One, Tradition Two, etc. | Tradition 1, Tradition 2, etc. | Spell out |
| trusted servants | Trusted Servants | No capitalization |
| *Welcome* | Welcome | Use Italics when referring to foundation documents |
| well-being | well being | Use hyphen |

# Section 13 Use of CoDA Seals & Symbols

TM

This is the CoDA Seal, it is trademarked and may not be altered. Registered "Voting Entities" may use it, or customize it by adding their name/country to the outside perimeter of the seal. Content inside the circle may not be altered. Permission to use this seal must be granted by CoDA

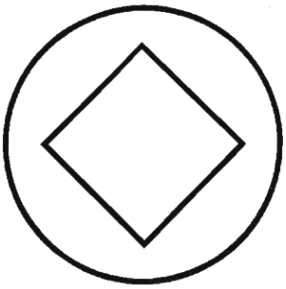
This logo is only used on Conference Endorsed literature.

No other permission is granted for its use.

This symbol was chosen at the 1989 Service Conference as the newsletter symbol. The name *Co-NNECTIONS* was also chosen at the 1989 Conference.

This symbol was also used by *Co-NNECTIONS*.

CoDA groups may use the following seals on their letterheads, newsletters, journals, flyers, and other publications. They can be customized with the name of the CoDA organization outside the seals below.



©

This symbol may be displayed outside of a CoDA meeting place to symbolically identify it as CoDA without using the CoDA name and without using the word codependents or codependence.

[End of text]

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## Section 14 Foundational and Meeting Resource Documents

(*Section III in Meeting Starter Packet)*

*The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous©*_____
72
*The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous©*_____
73
*The Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous©*_
74
*Patterns of Codependence©* _____
75
*Recovery Patterns of Codependence©*
76
*Preamble ©* _____
77
*Welcome © (long version)*_____
78
*Welcome © (short version)*
79
The Use of Prayers in CoDA_____
80
"For Safety Sake" tent card
81
Basic Meeting Format_____
82

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## ~~Section I-B - *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.

Page Break

**Section I-B, cont. - *Meeting Starter Packet***

## 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 1004 Denver, NC 28037.**

Voice Mail: 704-483-3038 Fax number: (704) 483-3088.

~~E-mail address for CoRe is: 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 CoDA~~
~~***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 Services 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 04- Attracting Members- Community Outreach~~

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

~~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.~~

- ~~**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.~~
- ~~**The Press Release** consists of two press releases that can be used to announce your meeting in your local newspaper.~~
- ~~**Welcoming Newcomers** offers a list of suggestions for communicating to the newcomer that they are welcome and included as attending one's first meeting can be scary.~~
- ~~**The Flyer for Bulletin Boards** can be individualized with your meeting and contact person information and posted to announce your meeting.~~

**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:**

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

- 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.

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

**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.

**Section II-C - *Meeting Starter Packet***

# 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*

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 content of this publication, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only - the use of the *Twelve Traditions* in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after AA, but which address

~~other problems, does not imply otherwise.~~

Page Break

# Co-Dependents Anonymous (CoDA)
# A Twelve Step self-help program for Codependents

## ~~Patterns of Codependence~~

**~~Codependents 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 send a self addressed, stamped envelope to :~~

~~Search for meetings online at www.coda.org~~

~~For a meeting list~~
~~Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:~~
~~CoDA Web page: www.coda.org~~
~~Local meeting at:~~

~~For a meeting list~~
~~Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:~~
~~CoDA Web page: www.coda.org~~
~~Local meeting at:~~

~~For a meeting list~~
~~Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to:~~
~~CoDA Web page: www.coda.org~~
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~~CoDA Web page: www.coda.org~~
~~Local meeting at:~~

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# ~~Section 05 - Commonly Asked Questions~~

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

### ~~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 CoDA, 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 CoDA meeting list.~~

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

Page Break

**~~Section I-C, cont. - *Meeting Starter Packet*~~**

## ~~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, 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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Page Break



## ~~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.~~
  - ~~PO Box 33577~~
  - ~~Phoenix, AZ 85067-33577~~
- ~~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 CoDA, 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.~~

**~~Section I-C, cont. - *Meeting Starter Packet*~~**

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

~~No. The CoDA 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 Co-dependents Anonymous, Inc. EIN is specific to the corporation of CoDA. Having an "umbrella" tax status would require that each group submit all their information, including the identifying information of their officers, to CoDA for the official record. In addition, CoDA 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, Inc. 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.~~

## ~~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.

**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.

**Section I-C, cont. - *Meeting Starter Packet***

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.~~

## ~~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. This paragraph is just concerned with understanding form SS-4 to apply for a Tax ID/ EIN.~~



~~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.~~

## ~~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, or 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.~~

## ~~Section I-C, cont. - *Meeting Starter Packet*~~

## ~~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 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.~~

## ~~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.~~

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

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~~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.*~~

# ~~Section 06 The Trusted Servants of CoDA~~

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

~~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: (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.~~

### ~~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.*~~

**~~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.~~

# ~~Section 14 – Foundational and Meeting Documents~~

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

# ~~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.~~

~~The *Twelve Steps* 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 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.~~

## ~~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.

**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
*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.~~

Page Break

# ~~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.~~

# ~~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.~~ |

## ~~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.~~

Page Break

# ~~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 well-being, 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.~~

~~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.~~

## ~~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.~~

~~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~~

# 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.**

## Basic Meeting Format

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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

**"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*", long version or short version 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* 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?"*~~

## ~~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/regional, 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.~~

~~15. ***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."

**"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.

## Closing Section

16. **"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.*

17. **"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."**

18. ***Optional-*** "Will the person with the ***Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous*** please read them?"

19. **"Thanks to our speaker."** (If this is a speaker meeting)

20. **"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.~~

Page Break