

Co-Dependents Anonymous New Meeting Format

[Secretary puts up sign on door, puts door on latch if necessary, puts chairs in a circle, puts out literature on table / middle of floor]

1. *[Secretary introduces themselves by first name only.]* My name is _____. We welcome you to the *[insert meeting day]* meeting of Co-Dependents Anonymous.

2. *Coda Big Book Welcome:* We welcome you to Co-Dependents Anonymous, a program of recovery from co-dependence, 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 behaviour 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 co-dependence.

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. 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.

3. *[If you have any literature such as the Blue Book, the Workbook or the 'Daily Meditations' book, you may wish to now read a section from it.]*

(Format continues overleaf)

4. Statement on Crosstalk: in our meetings we speak about our own experience and we listen without comment to what others share. We work towards taking responsibility in our own lives rather than giving advice to others. This is why crosstalk is strongly discouraged in our meetings. Crosstalk guidelines help to keep our meeting a safe place. For more information please refer to the newcomers 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, minimising another persons feelings or experiences, physical contact/touch, body movements such as nodding ones head or other gestures, verbal sounds/ noises, referring to someone present by name.

5. Statement on 13th Stepping: This term describes unhealthy and inappropriate sexual behaviours that take place within the fellowship. 13th Stepping is strongly discouraged in this meeting. If you feel this is happening to you, please contact a safe member to share your concern after the meeting. Read page 101 of the Coda Big Book for more information.

6. The meeting is now open for sharing. The closing time for this meeting is [*insert time*].

[*On the first meeting of the month*] The closing time for this meeting is [*normal time minus 15 minutes*] to allow for a group conscience to take place.

7. 7th Tradition: Every CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

8. Any CoDA announcements?

9. If there is anyone willing to be a Coda sponsor? Can you please raise your hand?

10. Thanks to: ___ for being the treasurer, ___ for being the literature secretary, and everyone who has made this meeting possible.

11. We read the 12 promises. [*Secretary reads one, then passes around the sheet*]

12. Tradition 12: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. That means: 'Who you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.'

13. We close with the extended serenity prayer for those who wish to join in:

God,
Grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change
The courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference
Grant me patience with the changes that take time
Appreciation of all that I have
Tolerance of those with different struggles
And the strength to get up and try again
One day at a time.