

Attending Meetings

Attending meetings is a crucial part of the recovery program of Codependents Anonymous, CoDA. Showing up and participating in whatever way we are able is how we grow in CoDA.

Attending meetings puts us in contact with other recovering codependents who share our experience. We discover we are not alone.

Attending meetings begins the process of learning to work the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

What Happens in a CoDA Meeting?

CoDA meetings use a consistent format that includes reading, as written, the four foundational documents: The Preamble, The Welcome, The Twelve Steps, and The Twelve Traditions.

Meetings usually open with an introduction by the facilitator and the reading of either *The CoDA Opening Prayer* or *The Serenity Prayer*. Other readings may include, "The CoDA Guide to Sharing" and "What is Crosstalk?"

Meetings vary in length from an hour to 90 minutes. Meetings can be in person, online, or by phone. See coda.org for listings of official CoDA meetings.

The format and topic for the meeting will be read. Formats may include sharing, Step or Tradition study, a speaker, CoDA literature study. A time for individual sharing will follow. Sharing usually takes most of the meeting time. There will be time for CoDA announcements.

A basket will be passed around for Seventh Tradition donations. Donations must be sufficient to cover meeting expenses, such as rent and the purchase of CoDA literature. Surplus funds are forwarded to other levels of the CoDA organization to support members' service work. Giving supports the meeting and CoDA as a whole.

Some groups read affirmations. Meetings typically read *The Twelve Promises* and close with either *The CoDA Closing Prayer*, *The Serenity Prayer*, or other CoDA prayers.

Meetings use CoDA Conference endorsed literature or read a disclaimer explaining that the literature used is not endorsed by CoDA. CoDA literature should be available for sale before and after the meeting and is available for sale online through coda.org.

CoDA groups conduct regular business meetings, also called group conscience meetings, to give members the chance to have a voice in how the meeting is run. Attending a business meeting is an opportunity to participate in CoDA service. Business meetings can be scheduled either during or outside the regular meeting time.

Sharing

Sharing is optional. During sharing, we talk about our lives and our feelings. Newcomers may feel anxious or distracted, dreading the idea of talking. Some may find it hard to stop talking once they start. Newcomers are encouraged to share as they feel able. It is recommended to begin slowly; some wait weeks before speaking.

When sharing in CoDA meetings, we use "I" statements to help keep the focus on

ourselves and to help us express our feelings directly and honestly. We limit our sharing to 3-5 minutes. This boundary allows time for everyone to share.

Listening

Listening to others share in a CoDA meeting is how we begin to understand the program. Learning to listen deeply is a skill that takes practice. Many find learning to listen to be one of the best gifts of recovery.

As we take the time to sit and listen to others share in CoDA meetings, we begin to identify with the experience, strength, and hope of others. Although their specific stories may be different from ours, we hear the truth that resonates with our experience.

Crosstalk

In CoDA meetings, we practice "no crosstalk." This means we refrain from asking questions, interrupting, giving feedback or advice, referring directly to another person's share, calling another person present by name, or making "you" and "we" statements. Although it may feel awkward at first, experience has shown us that CoDA's crosstalk guidelines help keep our meetings a safe place.

Not conference endorsed.

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.

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.

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.

Other Twelve Step Programs

Many CoDA members attend other Twelve Step fellowships. CoDA is not a replacement for other programs, just as other programs are not replacements for CoDA.

Additional Readings

- *Experience with Crosstalk*
- *Twelve Steps Handbook*
- *Co-Dependents Anonymous*
- *Newcomer Handbook*
- *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Workbook*
- *CoDA Prayers*

BOX FOR MEETING INFO HERE

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CoDA Seal

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Attending Meetings 2.0

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