

Basic Meeting Format

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

Opening Section

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

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

<p><u>The CoDA Opening Prayer</u> ©</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><u>The Serenity Prayer</u></p> <p>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</p>
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2. **The group meeting leader reads the CoDA "Preamble" as written.**
3. **"We welcome any newcomers who are attending their first, second or third meeting of Co-Dependents Anonymous, and ask that you raise your hand and introduce yourself by your first name only..."**
Optional- Newcomers can be welcomed by clapping after each or all have introduced themselves. If your meeting gives out welcome chips and/or newcomer packets, you may distribute those.
4. **"So that we can get to know each other better, let's take this time to introduce ourselves by first name only."** *(Meeting leader introduces self and then introductions continue around the room.)*
5. **The group meeting leader reads the CoDA "Welcome" as written.**
6. **"CoDA's Twelve Steps are the spiritual guidelines for our individual recovery. Will the person with the Twelve Steps please read them?"** *Optional- some groups prefer to pass the Twelve Steps around and share the reading of them.*
7. **"CoDA's Twelve Traditions of are the guiding spiritual principles of our meetings. Will the person with the Twelve Traditions please read them?"** *Optional- some groups prefer to pass the Twelve Traditions around and share the reading of them.*
8. **Optional** *-"Will the person with the Patterns of Codependence or the Recovery Patterns of Codependence please read them?" **

Announcements Section

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

10. a) "Our literature person is . Do you have any announcements?"

b) "Our treasurer is . Do you have any announcements?"

c) "Our Group Representative is . Do you have any announcements?"

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

11. "Restrooms are located ."

Announce any meeting facility issues (smoking policy, etc.)

12. "Are there any CoDA announcements?"

Group announcements (any member) GSR or secretary shares community, Voting Entity(VE) , or CoDA World Fellowship announcements.

13. **Optional-** "We give chips at this meeting. Are there any CoDA birthdays today-30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, 2 years, etc.?"

Note: *If your meeting gives chips or medallions, give them here. Ask the person celebrating if they would like to share a few words of recovery. Generally, for birthdays of 30 days to 9 months the group claps after each birthday is recognized; for 1 year or more the group sings "Happy Birthday", ending with "keep coming back".*

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

Program Section

Begin your meeting program here. If your meeting has a speaker or reads from CoDA literature, this usually lasts 10 to 15 minutes. To enhance the power of our recovery program, CoDA recommends at least one meeting per month be devoted to Step study.

16. **Optional, strongly recommended-** Read the *CoDA Guide to Sharing, What is Crosstalk?* or both. These may also be read by passing them person-to-person, reading one or more item as it goes around the room.

CoDA Guide to Sharing

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

What is "Crosstalk"?

Crosstalk can be: giving unsolicited feedback, advice-giving, answering, making you and we statements, interrogating, debating, criticizing, controlling or dominating. It may also include: minimizing another person's feeling or experiences, physical contact or touch, body movements, such as nodding one's head, calling another person present by name, or verbal sounds and noises."

"In our meetings we speak about our own experience, and we listen without comment to what others share. We work toward taking responsibility in our own lives, rather than giving advice to others. Crosstalk guidelines help keep our meeting a safe place."

"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

17. **"Our Seventh Tradition reminds us that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We ask that you donate as you can. Seventh Traditions donations are used to support meeting expenses and literature, and to support CoDA at the community and national levels."** **Optional-** *some meetings choose to ask for Seventh Tradition donations at the beginning of the meeting, during the announcements section.*

18. **"As we bring this meeting to a close, I would like to remind you that CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the anonymity and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that what you see here, what is said here, when you leave here, let it stay here."**

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

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

21. **"Thanks to those who read and who do service at this meeting."**

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

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

The Serenity Prayer

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

The CoDA Closing Prayer ©

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