



CoDA Service Conference 2016

Motion Form

Committee: PA Voting Entity

Date: August 15, 2016

Motion Number: 1

Result (data entry purposes only) _____

Motion: 1. That in both versions of the Welcome the words “and/or other” be inserted between the word “family” and the word “system.”

2. That this change be implemented immediately in all versions of the Welcome on the web and be inserted into printed versions as they are reprinted.

3. That the present version of the long form of the Welcome continue to fulfill the requirement of being read at every meeting until meetings are able to make the change in their meeting documents.

Intent: 1. Some of us who feel a need for CoDA may not come from families that are particularly dysfunctional, but we have been exposed to other dysfunctional systems that have contributed to our codependency.

These may include sexism, racism, consumerism, cut-throat competition, and religious organizations and schools, among others. The family may or may not also be a significant contributor. Indeed, for some, the

family is a refuge from that dysfunction, so that suggesting that codependency is rooted only in the family may hinder recovery.

2. To make CoDA more welcoming to codependents who have experienced their families as refuges from societal dysfunctions such as racism, class discrimination, gender stratification or bullying.

3. To offer a basis for forgiveness and understanding of families whose dysfunction arises from societal influences. This is important for recovery for many.

Remarks: Here are responses to some objections to the motion:

- 1. “All dysfunction comes from the family.” Even if that statement were universally true, it leaves open the possibility of the family itself being influenced by the larger society, which surely happens for some families at least. As codependence underlies so much addictive and compulsive behavior, so also can a society infect families with stress and dysfunction.**
- 2. “Adding the words would let the family off the hook.” This objection was raised by one meeting in the process of voting at the intergroup level on the original proposal. This first proposal called for the insertion of simply “or other” between “family” and “system.” In an effort to accommodate that objection the present proposal was crafted, the intergroup was otherwise again unanimous and so also all PA meeting responding to the poll among them.**

3. “The Welcome is a most basic document. We should not even consider changing it.” This surely is a serious objection. Here are three responses.

A. CoDA and all our documents constitute a living program meant to evolve in service to suffering codependents as their needs evolve and as we advance in our understanding of our program through the guidance of our Higher Power.

B. Change has been written into the very structure of CoDA through the establishment of the Service Structure Committee (SSC) charged with considering and presenting to Conference possible changes to foundation documents. Objections 1 and 3 were raised by that committee which resulted in this motion being returned to the Voting Entity. The PA Voting Entity then overwhelmingly decided to have its delegates submit this slightly revised version to Conference, in accordance with guidelines on p. 54 of the Fellowship Service Manual.

C. CoDA is an inverted pyramid with individual meetings, guided by a Higher Power, at the top. All other levels down to World Service committees such as SSC exist to provide service to those meetings. Therefore, even foundational documents such as the Welcome are subject to Group Conscience from that top level, beginning with one Voting Entity and presented for approval by the whole Fellowship at the CoDA Service Conference.

For clarification, here are the relevant paragraphs of the Welcome with the change proposed shown in italics and underlined.

Short Form used in some CoDA publications:

Codependence is a deeply-rooted, compulsive behavior. It is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional family *and/or other* 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.

Long Form used in other publications and required in all meetings:

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 *and/or other* systems.