

## Co-Dependents Anonymous - CoDA

### Hospitals and Institutions (H and I) Meeting Format

This meeting format has been modified from the [CoDA basic format](#) as a guideline for meetings in prison. The style of program your meeting wishes to use (whether Sharing, Topic or Step) can be a group conscience decision made by the members of your group. Bold sections are for the meeting leader to read aloud; plain text sections are optional extras. Meeting leader hands out the foundational and meeting documents to those who would like to read aloud. 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). 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 style="text-align: center;"><b><u>The CoDA Opening Prayer</u></b> ©</p> <p style="text-align: center;">In the spirit of love and truth, we ask our Higher Power to guide us as we share our experience, strength, and hope.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We open our hearts to the light of wisdom, the warmth of love, and the joy of acceptance.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>The Serenity Prayer</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">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. Will the person with the "[Preamble](#)" please read it?

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 newcomer pamphlet or ([Recovery From Codependence, A Brief Introduction](#)), 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. Will the person with the "[Welcome](#)" please read it?"

Option- [short](#) or long version

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 and Characteristics of Codependence](#) or the [Recovery Patterns of Codependence](#) please read them?" Due to the length of the [Patterns and Characteristics](#) these may be split up into two groups and read on alternate weeks.

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**9. Optional** - "At this meeting we celebrate CoDA birthdays of – 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 months and annually. Are there any CoDA birthdays today?" **Note:** Ask the person celebrating if they would like to share a few words of recovery. Generally, for birthdays of 1 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".

### Program Section

Begin your meeting program here. If your meeting 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.

**10. This week we are on Step /Tradition\_\_\_\_\_ , or CoDA Literature\_\_\_\_\_.**

**11. Optional, strongly recommended-** Leader reads the CoDA Guide to Sharing, What is Crosstalk? or both.

### 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."

**12. "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 leader.

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### Closing Section

13. "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."

14. **Optional-** "Will the person with the [Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous](#) please read them?" (*Optional- some groups prefer to pass the Twelve Promises around and share the reading of them.*)

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

16. **Optional-Affirmations:** "We will now go around the room and read a CoDA positive affirmation; you can choose any affirmation from the list, make up your own, or simply pass.

17. **Would all those who care to, please join me in a circle for the closing prayer.**

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

<p><b><a href="#"><u>The CoDA Closing Prayer</u></a> ©</b> 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.</p>	<p><b><a href="#"><u>The Serenity Prayer</u></a></b> 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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For more information please go to

[www.coda.org](http://www.coda.org)

or call toll free

888-444-2359 English

888-444-2379 Spanish

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