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Link to Other Parts of the FSM

Below are links to the other 4 parts of the Fellowship Services Manual (FSM). Suggested uses are as follows:

- Part 1 is intended for all members of CoDA, particularly those who intend to do service work
- Part 3 is intended for use by those currently or considering doing service at the levels between meetings and CoDA, Inc. It is intended to be particularly helpful in establishing these service levels.
- Part 4 is intended for use by those currently or considering doing service at the CoDA, Inc. level. It is strongly recommended for all those who will be attending a CoDA Service Conference (CSC).
- Part 5 contains more detailed information related to the various service entities that exist at the CoDA, Inc. service level, including the CoDA Board of Trustees, the various committees and other working groups and individual positions.
- A combined file has been provided which contains all 5 parts in one file. It is intended to be used to make searching easier by not requiring opening 5 different files.

Links:

[FSM Part 1 - Structure and General Information Summary](#)

[FSM Part 3 - Guidelines for Other Service Levels](#)

[FSM Part 4 - Service Conference \(CSC\) Procedures](#)

[FSM Part 5 – World Level Service Details](#)

[FSM Glossary](#)

[FSM Combined File](#)

Section 01 Introduction and Getting Started

Purpose of this Manual

The purpose of this document is to provide CoDA members with all the basic documents and information needed to start and conduct CoDA meetings. You may find additional information on the coda.org website and in the other parts of the Fellowship Service Manual.

This document provides information and guidelines. CoDA recommends that every meeting have a copy of this document. It contains the basic documents that support CoDA unity. Also, other helpful parts of the Fellowship Service Manual (FSM) are available for free on the CoDA.org website. By request, our Fellowship Services will send one hard copy of each to newly registered meetings.

What is a CoDA Meeting

A CoDA meeting is a group of two or more people who come together around their shared desire for healthy and loving relationships. The meeting uses the *Twelve Steps* and *Twelve Traditions* of Co-Dependents Anonymous as the basis for working toward recovery. It is a place to find sponsorship and fellowship as well as the sharing of experience, strength, and hope. A strong sense of acceptance and community makes a meeting attractive both to the newcomer and old timer.

There are minimal requirements to be considered a CoDA meeting. These requirements are to read the four following Foundational Documents as written at every meeting and to register the meeting with either CoDA Inc. or their voting entity. These documents can be found later in this manual. Meetings who choose not to read these documents will not be listed in the CoDA Meeting Directory on the coda.org website since they are not considered CoDA meetings.

- Welcome
- Preamble
- 12 Steps
- 12 Traditions

CoDA groups register with Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. in order to stay in contact with CoDA as a whole. With respect to other questions about group organization (date, time, type of meeting), each group is autonomous except in matters affecting CoDA as a whole. Because the Twelve Steps are the basis of our recovery, we strongly suggest that each meeting set aside at least one meeting per month for Step Study.

As Tradition Four states, (“each group should remain autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole”), it is important that a CoDA meeting present familiar aspects that communicate, “This is CoDA.” While it is rare, some meetings have chosen to adopt a format that varies significantly from CoDA guidelines. This presents confusion, particularly to the newcomer, regarding the nature of our program. If a community service group feels it necessary, a meeting may be informed specifically how it does not appear to be following the unifying principles of CoDA Tradition. If the

meeting decides, by group conscience, not to change, they need to understand that they may no longer be recognized as, nor call themselves, a CoDA meeting and will be removed from Intergroups, and CoDA listings.

The community service group can, by group conscience decision, remove a meeting from their meeting list if it is determined that that meeting is not following the principles of CoDA and does not choose to change. The community service group can then recommend that the meeting be removed from the Intergroup meeting lists. The Intergroup can decide by group conscience whether or not to remove that meeting from their meeting list. If the Intergroup or regional assembly decides to remove that meeting from their list, they can recommend to the CoDA Board of Trustees that that meeting be removed from the Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. meeting list.

The Board may decide by group conscience whether or not to remove that meeting from the CoDA meeting list.

Just as the Twelve Steps offer guidance for maintaining healthy relationships, our Twelve Traditions offer guidance for maintaining healthy meetings. CoDA Conference Approved Literature contains commentary on all the Steps and Traditions. Rely on the wisdom embodied in the Steps and Traditions. Keep in mind that trusted servants take direction from the Fellowship. A group conscience can be a powerful tool.

Things to Consider when Starting a new CoDA Meeting

- **Where**

Meetings can be held almost anywhere. Try area churches, synagogues, counseling centers, hospitals or places where other groups are held. Though each group is autonomous, for reasons of safety and anonymity, CoDA cautions about holding meetings in individual homes. When choosing a meeting place, please keep in mind personal safety. Also keep in mind that many places are requiring insurance policies and CoDA does not have an umbrella policy that covers meetings. For more information see the Frequently Asked Questions later in this document.

- **When**

Based on a time that's best for you to serve, choose the day and time of the week you want to hold the new meeting.

- **Rent**

It's important that rent (no matter how small) be paid for the meeting place. In this way, we honor our Seventh Tradition: "Every CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." Since you won't know how large a meeting will be at the start, try to keep rent to a minimum. Rent may be a percentage of the meeting's collection, a monthly or quarterly fee, or anything to which you and your landlord agree. Some places let you use the space more as a courtesy than as a revenue source, so don't be afraid to negotiate. At the same time, don't abuse their generosity. An annual donation may be appropriate if no rent is charged.

- **Help**

Ask for help, especially in the beginning. Invite people from other meetings to help you get the

new meeting going. It helps to have several people present when newcomers show up. And be sure to post a sign at the new meeting location each week so that people can find your room easily.

- **Announce**

Let people know about the new meeting. Visit other meetings with the necessary information (e.g., date, time, directions and/or a map). Place announcements in counseling centers and hospitals. Some local newspapers publish meeting notices at no charge. Just remember the Eleventh Tradition: “Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.....” As people see the announcements and hear about the meeting, they will come.

- **Select Type of Meeting**

After a few initial meetings, take a group conscience to choose a type of meeting. For possible types of meetings see “Some Different Types of CoDA Meetings” below.

The following items need to be discussed and decided by the group conscience process:

- What guidelines will be used for sharing?
- How might the meeting deal with crosstalk?
- How will newcomers, literature, and other issues be handled?
- When will regular business meetings take place?

- **Register your meeting**

You may register your meeting online at coda.org or use the forms in this document. Once you have an official number, the meeting will be listed in the CoDA Meeting Directory. If your Voting Entity or Intergroup maintains a meeting list please notify them as well. Please use your assigned group number on all correspondence with CoDA.

- **Define what tasks must be done, such as:**

- Holding the key to unlock and lock facility
- Lead meeting (read format)
- Get speakers if applicable
- Great newcomers
- Buy chips and recognize time in program
- Run and document business meetings that are run on a regular basis
- Stay connected to facility manager
- Set up and clean up meeting room

- **Select and Fill Positions (elected if possible, otherwise volunteers)**

- Treasurer: The Treasurer holds all Seventh Tradition donations, pays rent, and sends excess funds beyond a prudent reserve to the local Intergroup, Voting Entity and/or Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.
- Group Service Rep (GSR): The GSR is elected by the meeting to act as a liaison between the meeting and the next service level providing information in both directions.
- Literature Person: The literature person orders, sells and keeps inventory and cash flow records of the group's literature.
- Contact Person(s): The contact person responds to telephone, email or other inquiries.

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?"

The GSR or secretary shares community, Voting Entity, or CoDA, Inc.. announcements. Any member may also share CoDA announcements. Some meetings choose to also allow CoDA related 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: Some meetings ask the person celebrating if they would like to share a few words of recovery. In some meetings the group claps after each birthday is recognized for birthdays of 30 days to 9 months; for 1 year or more the group sings "Happy Birthday", ending with "keep coming back".

14. **Optional- Announce:** "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 20 minutes. To enhance the power of our recovery program, CoDA suggests considering having at least one meeting per month be devoted to studying one of the Twelve Steps.

15. **Optional, strongly suggested-** Read the *CoDA Guide to Sharing, What is Crosstalk?* or both.

Co-Dependents Anonymous does not accept harassment, bullying, 13th stepping or expressed intolerance of any kind. No person should be subject to unwanted verbal or physical conduct which intimidates or shows hostility towards that person because of their gender, class, age, appearance, national origin, skin color, disability, language, sexual orientation, pregnancy or for any other reason. If you feel you are being treated disrespectfully in this meeting please notify the person leading the meeting.

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



CoDA Group Registration Form

The completion and return of this form to CoDA will register your meeting. Your meeting will be assigned a number and be registered in our CoDA meeting directory.

Group Name: _____ Group Meeting Place: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ County: _____ Community/VE _____

State/Province: _____ Zip: _____ Country: _____

Meeting Type: _____ Day: _____ Time: _____

The Steps and Traditions support a diverse and inclusive membership within our Fellowship as well as freedom to every group to define itself: who attends descriptions, focus, logistics, timing, etc.. i.e. open, closed, smoking, type of meetings, etc.

Group Conscience Comments: _____

Primary Contact Person

Secondary Contact Person

Name : _____

Name : _____

Address: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

City: _____

State/Province _____ Zip: _____

State/Province: _____ Zip: _____

Country: _____

Country: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

I give my permission to list my first name and phone number in the CoDA Contact Directory.

I give my permission to list my first name and phone number in the CoDA Contact Directory.

I give my permission to list my first name and email in the detailed meeting information available on the CoDA website.

I give my permission to list my first name and email in the detailed meeting information available on the CoDA website.

Signature _____

Signature _____

Please complete one form per meeting Day and Time and return to:

Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.

P.O. Pox 33577

Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577

<http://www.coda.org/>

Or email to: **meetings@coda.org**

CoDA

Co-Dependents Anonymous,
Inc. CoDA P O Box 33577,
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577 (602)
277-7991 www.coda.org



Changes in Group Information

Date: _____ Group No: _____
Group Name: _____
Group Meeting Place: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
County: _____ Community/VE _____
Country: _____
Day: _____ Time: _____
____ New Meeting
____ Change in Location, Day, Time, or Type
____ Contact Changes

Last known contact person

The Steps and Traditions support a diverse and inclusive membership within our Fellowship as well as freedom to every group to define itself: who attends descriptions, focus, logistics, timing, and etcetera.

Group Science Comments: _____

i.e.: open, closed, smoking, type of meetings, etc.

Primary Contact Person

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: (____) _____
E-mail Address: _____

I give my permission to list my name, phone number, and e-mail address in the international contact directory.

Signature: _____

Secondary Contact Person

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Phone: (____) _____
E-mail Address: _____

I give my permission to list my name, phone number, and e-mail address in the international contact directory.

Signature: _____

NOTE: As the PHONE contact for your meeting, your first name, last initial, phone number, and e-mail address will be appearing in the CoDA Contact Directory available on the CoDA web site. By your signature above, you are giving permission to have your first name, last initial, phone number, and e-mail address given out to those needing a CoDA contact for your meeting. As the MAIL contact, you are agreeing to receive written communication for your meeting from within the CoDA organization.

Seventh Tradition Contribution Form

Date: _____ Group No: _____
Group Name: _____
Group Meeting Place: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
County: _____ Community: _____
Country: _____
Meeting Day and Time: _____
Check/Money Order #: _____
Dated: _____ Amount: _____
Check/MO Signed By: _____

Contribution Acknowledgement To Be Sent To:

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Country: _____
Telephone Contact No: _____

Follow-up information:

Date sent: _____
Acknowledgement Rec'd: _____
Cancelled Ck Rec'd: _____

It is suggested that a copy of this form be kept for your records.

Return completed form to:

Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.
P O Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577
meetings@coda.org



Meeting's Phone List

Date of List: _____ Meeting Day: _____ Time: _____

This meeting makes use of a phone list, which can be a valuable tool in recovery. The people whose name appears on this list have offered to listen to other members and share their experience, strength and hope, not advice. This does not constitute any obligation on anyone's part.

Please keep in mind the following: This list is not to be used for any form of solicitation or announcement. Please respect the privacy and anonymity of the members on this list.

Name (First name & Last initial)	Phone #	OK to leave message?	Best time to call?	Email address	Avail as temp Sponsor?

Meeting Funds Record

Date	Transaction Description	Amount Received	Amount Paid Out	Balance