



Meeting in Print

December 2021 (Ed. 21)

"Loving Myself"

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Greetings from your CoDA Co-NNections Committee

Welcome to the quarterly issue of Meeting in Print, a CoDA recovery and support publication. Recovery is for everyone, and we hope you enjoy reading these shares. Meeting in Print contains CoDA-approved literature, including shares, uplifting quotes and artistic material from CoDA members. We hope you find this issue both enjoyable and insightful. Please feel free to contact us with comments and suggestions – and, as always, *your contributions!*

Warmly,

Your Meeting in Print Subcommittee

Opening Readings

The Welcome of Co-Dependents Anonymous

We welcome you to Co-Dependents Anonymous, a program of recovery from codependence, where each of us may share our experience, strength, and hope in our efforts to find freedom where there has been bondage and peace where there has been turmoil in our relationships with others and ourselves.

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 families and other systems. We have each experienced in our own ways the painful trauma of the emptiness of our childhood and relationships throughout our lives.

We attempted to use others -our mates, friends, and even our children, as our sole source of identity, value and well-being, and as a way of trying to restore within us the emotional losses from our childhoods. Our histories may include other powerful addictions which at times we have used to cope with our codependence.

We have all learned to survive life, but in CoDA we are learning to live life. Through applying the Twelve Steps and principles found in CoDA to our daily life and relationships both present and past -we can experience a new freedom from our self-defeating lifestyles. It is an individual growth process. Each of us is growing at our own pace and will continue to do so as we remain open to God's will for us on a daily basis. Our sharing is our way of identification and helps us to free the emotional bonds of our past and the compulsive control of our present.

No matter how traumatic your past or despairing your present may seem, there is hope for a new day in the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. No longer do you need to rely on others as a power greater than yourself. May you instead find here a new strength within to be that which God intended - Precious and Free.

The Preamble of Co-Dependents Anonymous

Co-Dependents Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is to develop healthy relationships. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and loving relationships. We gather together to support and share with each other in a journey of self-discovery – learning to love the self. Living the program allows each of us to become increasingly honest with ourselves about our personal histories and our own codependent behaviors. We rely upon the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for knowledge and wisdom.

These are the principles of our program and guides to developing honest and fulfilling relationships with ourselves and others. In CoDA, we each learn to build a bridge to a Higher Power of our own understanding, and we allow others the same privilege. This renewal process is a gift of healing for us. By actively working the program of Co-Dependents, we can each realize a new joy, acceptance, and serenity in our lives.

The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over others - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions of Codependents Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving higher power as expressed to our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.
4. Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message to other codependents who still suffer.
6. A CoDA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the CoDA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.
7. A CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. CoDA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. CoDA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the CoDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, television and all other forms of public communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions; ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



-Linda R.

Community Shares

"Steps 1, 2, and 3 in Action"

Step One

"We admitted we were powerless over others - that our lives had become unmanageable."

"Delivery exception. Incorrect address-apartment/suite number," was the latest update from the shipping company for a package my husband and I were excitedly awaiting. It was scheduled to be delivered a day early on Thursday. Dread instantly filled the pits of my stomach, then annoyance made its way up to my chest, and then anger filled my heart and my face, turning it, I'm sure red! It's amazing how quickly I go from one emotion to the next. I let out an exasperated grunt and then read aloud to my husband, who was laying next to me, the

foolishness, that was the shipping company's update. "Oh! You've messed up now!" I said as I began dialing the company.

Then I had a thought: *Did I mess up?* I ended the call and quickly checked the store confirmation email. No, *they* messed up. Our apartment number was clearly listed in the confirmation email. Armed with "proof" that *I* wasn't in the wrong, I redialed the shipping company. My husband got up and shook his head, clearly annoyed as well and made his way to the other room for his Zoom meeting.

After alternating between pressing "0" numerous times and saying "representative" just as many times, I was "fit to be tied" (as my mother would say) by the time I was able to speak to someone. I took a deep breath and explained the situation. The representative then repeated what I already said for myself. Again, I repeated the problem, which I had already stated in my intro. After being placed on hold, I was told that, yes, my confirmation may state our apartment number but the *shipping label* did not.

"Fine! Let's add it then," I said.

"Unfortunately ma'am we cannot. This will have to be done by the shipper" came the reply from the rep.

Grrr!

I called the store. "Sorry ma'am I see the apartment number here. This is a shipping company issue."

"Someone and I do mean SOMEONE, WILL fix this TODAY!" That was my mental thought along with an excruciating mental scream.

I called the shipping company back. I began to bargain. I suggested the package stay at its current facility and I'll simply pick it up. "I'm sorry ma'am, that is just not possible. The store will have to give us a call and update the address."

I called the store back. A magic email was allegedly sent to the shipping company. I clearly did not believe this and so I suggested a conference call. The representative insisted that it'll be all taken care of once I called the shipping company back.

I once again called the shipping company back. There was no email.

With steam coming out my ears, I dialed back to the store. I told them I would be willing to hold while they called the shipping company or I could simply do a conference call, right at that moment.

"I'm sorry ma'am, but we are not allowed to make outside calls. I wouldn't even be able to call you back if this call got disconnected. Nor are we allowed to be on a conference call." I counted to 5. "I would like to cancel the order."

"Unfortunately ma'am the order cannot be canceled at this time. If you would like to cancel, then you will have to wait 48 hours after the original scheduled delivery date and then give us a call. At that time we will put in a request for a refund. Once the package has arrived back at our facility, we will then go through the process of refunding your account which would then take approximately 5-7 business days ma'am."

I hastily said thank you and hung up.

I was just about to call back the shipping company when I heard a calm voice in my head say: "You've now called both companies three times, for a total of six calls. Their response has not changed. I asked myself, *what is it called when you do the same thing over and over and expect a different result?*"

"Insanity" I replied aloud to myself. I instantly remembered Step One. This situation had become *unmanageable*. I had no control over the shipping company or the store. Suddenly, with clarity, I realized I was *powerless* over the situation.

Step Two

"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."

There was nothing further I could do, well, except for one thing. I got my prayer cushion (I'm getting older) out and got on my knees, and asked my Higher Power, whom I call God, to please handle the situation for me. I admitted that the situation was out of my control and that it was clear that I needed restoration of my sanity.

Step Three

"Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood God."

Still on my knees, I admitted to God that this situation was best left in His hands than mine.

I was in bed relaxing when my husband came back into our bedroom. He looked at me strangely, after I cheerfully asked about his meeting. We chit-chatted for a bit and it was *he* who had to ask what was the conclusion of the whole package ordeal. I had already forgotten it!

The next day, Friday, my husband asked about the package. I checked, and it said, "Address corrected" with a new delivery date of Monday. I was AMAZED!

Monday while out, I received an email that the package was delivered! I checked the time of delivery, which oddly was ten minutes *before* we had left the house. There was no package at the door when we left. I didn't bother to panic or get upset. God's got this.

Once we arrived home and confirmed that there was in fact no package at our door (we wouldn't have missed it anyway because the item was large), I simply, and calmly, called the shipping company.

They repeated the address back to me. It was correct, except for the apartment number. They had delivered it to the wrong apartment! I thanked the rep and hung up as my husband and I hastily made our way to the apartment number that was shared.

I saw our package immediately! I mentally thanked God, and I was out of the car before it even fully stopped. I ran up the steps, checked to be sure my name was on it and ran back down the

steps. Thankfully it wasn't heavy. My husband chastised me for getting it instead of waiting for him. I was too happy to care about his Southern ethics. We had our package!

When we got home, I shared with my husband how miraculous this all was. I was proud of myself for how I used the steps to handle the situation. My husband nodded and said, "Yep, you were 'cooler than a fan' for sure." After a beat, we both burst out laughing as we stared at our new bladeless fan.

"Keep coming back. It works if you work it. Work it 'cause you're WORTH IT!"

-Shy D. 9/1/21



-Linda R.

"Loving Myself Back into Wholeness and Connection"

I am grateful to have come so far. It's been over forty years in 12 step programs and almost 10 years in CoDA. So many of the program promises have come true for me in such wonderful ways! Yet, I'm still recovering from the co-dependent survival patterns I learned so well in childhood.

I still have plenty of unfinished business waiting for my understanding and acceptance. I am still often triggered into feeling social anxiety. This can happen more when I become too hungry, angry, lonely, tired, or stressed. At such moments I can be taken over by young inner "parts" of me who come on line if I am pushed outside of my "window of tolerance." These parts are trying to help. Once upon a time these codependent strategies were vital and necessary for helping me to survive. But I've grown up, and I have learned that those survival strategies do not lead to wholesome relationships. It helps that I've now experienced truly wholesome relations with myself and others. This is my new vision and standard; being fully alive and connected in nourishing ways.

So in these dysregulated moments I've new powerful tools for returning to my true center. I am frequently triggered into feeling insecure. Someone says or does something, but it's actually the meaning and interpretation I create inside which I then react negatively to. Why? Because I still have destructive beliefs leftover from childhood and other experiences.

Some part of me then takes this external event as proof and picks up these debilitating old negative beliefs about myself. The resurgence of these destructive beliefs and thoughts can quickly generate powerful negative emotions like shame, fear, anxiety, sadness, and hopelessness. The past becomes embodied in present emotions. This is the process by which I can unconsciously maintain a state of irrational guilt and worthlessness.

These emotions are so painful to experience that other parts step up quickly trying to suppress or divert attention away from them. If my recovery mindfulness is not present, then I may again unconsciously act out an old trauma. This is dependent on my body state; when I'm triggered into a codependent hyper-vigilance my body is literally in some kind of a fight

flight freeze state. I forget the steps I've learned for grounding and taking a liberating personal inventory.

So the absolute first step is remembering that I'm powerless and that I've been triggered. The next two are soothing and kindness. I absolutely have to get back to a state of calm before I can do any kind of inventory or return to sober action. This calming practice may be as simple as breathing, calling a friend, taking a walk or just saying kind and empowering affirmations.

This is more challenging if I'm in a public situation. I may not be able to take long to regroup. It might be necessary for me to step out to have a moment's quiet. It may be as simple as pausing and not speaking until I've had a chance to pray and practice self-compassion.

I have one commonly recurring learning opportunity like this; it's when I fall into any kind of comparison or perfectionism. I can then revert to acting out one of my oldest survival patterns; *I must make people love me.*

For example I may "tap dance" for approval by trying to be clever, funny, charming, sincere, or ingratiating. Seen from the eyes of compassion: a very young part has taken me over. He so desperately wants to be seen that he's not really able to see and be present with others.

This young part feels so defective, so deficient, that he's hustling for his goodness again. I've been taken over by a younger version of myself who feels guilty and driven. Inside I feel like I'm all alone onstage. The other people present are now just performance objects; their purpose is to mirror me, like support characters in a movie drama. They might be great, but they're really there to orbit around me, the main character. They're just a plot element in my story now.

At such moments I feel even more outside of myself and separate. This regression is understandable because when I was a child I **really was** repeatedly outcast emotionally...left trying to get attention and acceptance. For years in many ways, I was abandoned and traumatized. I really was judged and kept at a distance.

The effects of these kinds of trauma are predictable. They linger and don't lessen unless they are faced and healed. Until then however, my habit will be to use people in an attempt to

redeem those emotional losses of my childhood...to belatedly get what my parents, older siblings and other adults didn't give me, which was acceptance, love, and validation.

Yet there is only one person who can really fill this hunger, who can re-parent this understandably aching heart, and that's me. I see myself now as a spiritual being who is having a human experience. I've now experienced some of my own wholesome self and love. I know now that I'm on a steady journey of awakening.

I am fortunate to have a truly wise and loving sponsor. He says that *the purpose of sponsoring is for me to learn how to show up for myself*. A psychologist might describe this as finally learning how to re-parent myself.

So my actual healing happens one transformation at a time in such moments when I really work my program. ***The miracle starts with compassionate awareness of my feelings.*** If I can just notice when I'm feeling defective, then I can stop for the moment it takes to love myself out of my trance of unworthiness. Another teacher I trust calls taking this moment *the sacred pause*.

I stop dancing or defending long enough to befriend myself in the moment. First I name the feelings in an honest and understanding way. I give compassion to myself by saying things like *this really hurts...it's understandable...this is a normal human reaction.. I love you... I care for you...you're beautiful, and you're going to be ok.*

I may then reflect on my thoughts and behaviors especially to name whether or not they are helpful, whether they are healthy and connecting. I try to take these 10th step inventories in a respectful and empowering way that leaves me feeling strong and valued. I let go of perfectionism and am grateful for my willingness and courage to look within with compassion.

The healing doesn't have to happen right in the moment either. For example, recently in a book group I started feeling competitive, anxious, and self conscious. However I couldn't seem to pull back enough to just hold myself. Instead I just kept talking and tap dancing, even

though part of me was aware that I wasn't just being with my friends so much as performing at them.

Afterwards I didn't feel a sense of connection but actually felt a little more separate than before our time together. This is one of the most painful aspects of my unhealed codependency, when I can feel alone even amongst safe and loving friends or family.

So upon noticing all later, my first wise response was understanding and compassion. *Ouch, I told myself, I'm sorry you're feeling so insecure. It's really hard to not feel worthy. That's an awful feeling, and it's not true. It's totally understandable that you go back into old habits though. They worked somewhat in the past to get the attention and love you needed to survive. I really care about you and I know you're really good, lovable, safe, and enough. You don't have to be perfect. You don't need to perform anymore. We're not that child anymore. He did great. He survived and grew up. I'm the loving, wise and competent adult he grew up into.*

Then, once I was standing in my adult and loving presence, I opened deeper and asked this hurting part what he really needed... if there was anything else he wanted me to know and understand.

What I got were pictures of a child within me hungering for years and years for simple acceptance and blessing. The adults in his world were competitive, controlling, and fearfully unavailable. Looking back with his eyes I could see how these behaviors of tap dancing and hustling for my goodness actually helped me to survive. As an adult seeing this all through his eyes I was more able to compassionately witness and blessed this part. I shifted my view to gratitude for having these survival skills and tactics. I didn't want to exile this part but to integrate him...bringing these character traits into balance. I concluded by repeating one of my most healing blessings which is *right now, I am only grateful and pleased with myself.*

Then I spent time reflecting upon my behaviors and the results of my behaviors. I let myself see the painful results, how those patterns no longer work. I reminded myself of what does work...like holding myself with love...like courageously stepping outside myself to really see

and be with others fully. By the end of all this nurturing and self care I was restored to myself...fully open and at ease again.

I can now see how being fully present with myself and others is a truly courageous act. Being open and vulnerable with others is an act of respect and dignity. It's not easy to open up to people's ever changing feelings and experiences.

Yet that edgy presence, standing with others in the naked moment, is what my heart is really hungering for. To stand together, open and vulnerable, is as good as sharing life gets. I'm still learning to stand in this presence. Of course I am! It's not what I learned as a child but I'm getting it now.

Finally I invited myself to visualize and honor the connection that I do share with my friends. I pictured them and their lovable qualities. I let the desire to witness, nurture, and just be with them arise naturally inside of my refreshed self trust...another gift from showing up authentically for myself. In this space what could finally arise was my authentic awe, love, and gratitude for their beautiful hearts and minds. This was the place I could really see and experience connection with them...from a heart whose needs were met enough to have trust and room for others inside.

Another way of saying this is that now in my relations I am consciously choosing a more valuable goal: My fearful parts had learned to chase after thin ego foods. They wanted something more real, but were also afraid of it.

Changing habits builds muscles. First, I have a bunch of old shallow payoffs to surrender. Who likes just facing these tensions...Of course I find it difficult to sit back and just be. A part of me wants to talk, to be seen, and to be in control in order to feel safe. That part can then take up all the space needed for more meaningful interactions.

The beautiful thing is that when I'm awake and courageous enough to really share space with trustworthy others, we then together cook up a much more soul satisfying meal. I experience the creative connected ease and flow which arises when I believe in a larger vision of us

together. And because I'm really seeing my friends now, my appreciation and love for them is becoming deep and real.

I believe that when we really pay attention to others...not in a reactive way but truly open to their experience as beings, we inevitably feel closer to them. Understanding others has this effect. It feels like belonging. The same is true within. When I authentically and compassionately witness my own experience I can't help but love myself. Because when I really understand my heart's journey of hunger and longing... it's courage and fortitude... how can I not feel the awe, compassion, and fraternity which is the deep nature within all of us?

-Charlie B



-Linda R.

“Boundaries”

As a recovering codependent I am learning how to set appropriate boundaries.

*With the help of God, and my recovery group friends I am learning to
not allow my emotions to rule me but to think things through first and if needed
to call my sponsor or others when I am in need of a voice to get me focused and
centered on who I really am.*

It's time to set boundaries

It's time to say no

It's time to do something

Or nothing at all.

It's time to say I love you

And because I do

I must begin to love myself

By not enabling you.

I finally looked in the mirror

Without walking away,

I saw what I was becoming

And could not keep living this way.

For too long my eyes

Were only on you,

I finally realized

What I had to do

Shall I ignore who I am
And replace myself with you;
To at least start feeding myself
With what God intends for me to do?

Does it mean I don't care?
Does it mean I should hide?
Or does it mean that I
Must step aside.

I cannot go back
To what I was
And live out your dreams
As if I had none

The way will not be easy
But I know I must try;
To uncover who I really am
For there's only so much time.

-John B. September 2021



-Linda R

“Life”

Life-

civilization is in decay.

blown-up egos

Cosmic Balance

The Great Mother

breaks down our ego-accumulations

With its measure only equal to

the power of Grace

Transformation

strikingly paradoxical

joke or trickery,

mysteries and magic

Fearlessness-Flexibility-Destiny-

Higher Perspective

I should leave now,

as I sit here helpless.

Power to deal with challenges with grace.

You master the art of being both-

determined and gentle in your approach.

Be Vigilant, move quickly!

Gentleness

is leaving you with such a heavy heart.

Attention as you move

facilitates connection to-

elemental realm energy

Missing our connection to Mother Earth's

healing energies.

Animal Spirit Calling

Tell me what of the elemental realm energy of the dragonfly?

Expressing the essence of change.

Alchemy transforming the illusion of separation-

into the light of truth.

Harmony into ALL Life.

(Isn't that something we're missing?)

Power to deal with challenges with

Grace.

You master the art of being both,

determined and gentle in your approach.

Be Vigilant,

Act Swiftly-

Gentleness, Dammit!

You're only as young, as you are old!

Pay Attention-

as you move-

Facilitate a connection with the elemental realm

ENERGY!

Drop the Mask of Fitting in-

Just For The Sake of Belonging

Blaze Your Own Trail!

Your Path is your own.

Nobody else can walk it for You.

Love and Healing,

For every Being

Is the ultimate

Universal Goal

of

THE WHOLE

-Pam W.

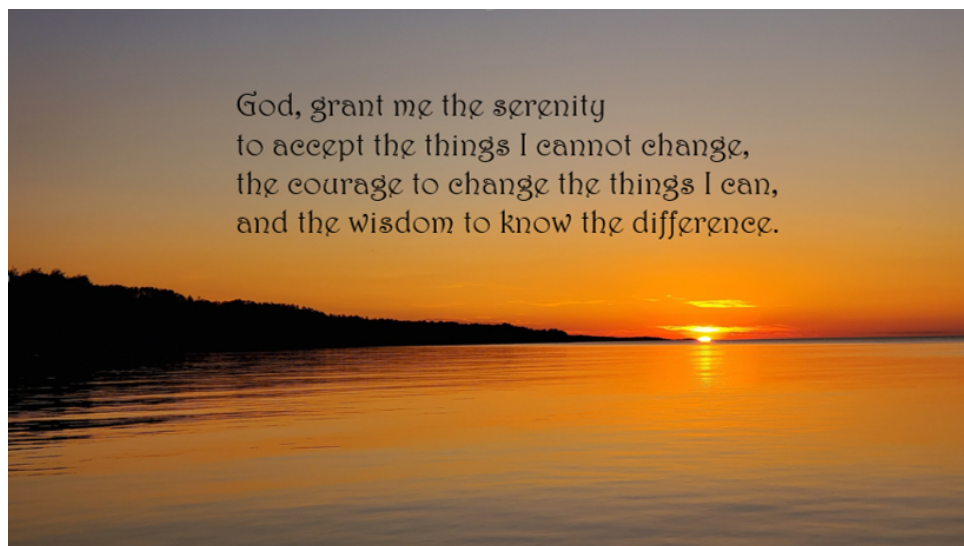
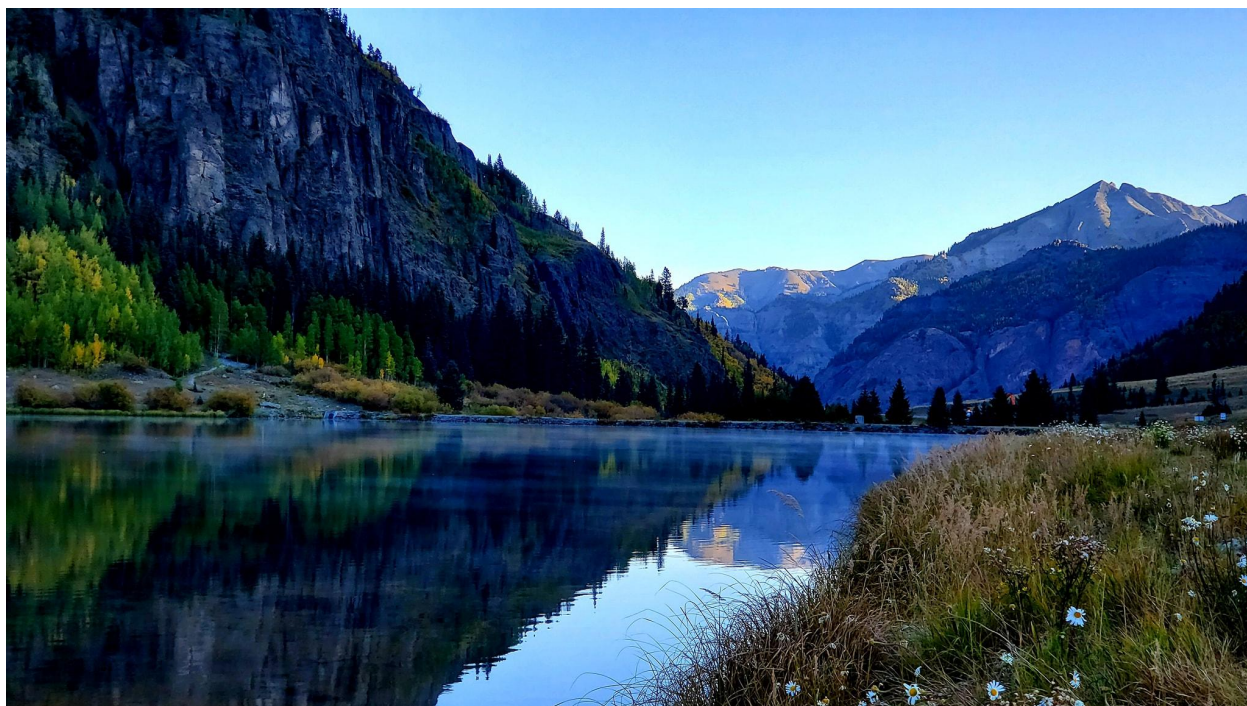


Photo Linda R



-Linda R.

“God Helped Me Let Go”

I hit a bottom in codependency thanks to an intense, five-year relationship that grew very sick. I made this person my higher power, and speaking only for my part, I practiced a variety of character defects, including dishonesty, fantasy, jealousy, and lust. I was so addicted to this situation, so needed this person to continue my codependency addiction, that I could not leave the relationship even when she turned physically, psychologically, and verbally abusive. I was miserable but could not leave. I was powerless, and could only pray for help. I could not take action. By the grace of my Higher Power, she left me in a fit of rage, and I began recovery thanks to the pain of withdrawal, which motivated me to work. When I read the first page of the Blue Book, I knew I was home. After trying co-sponsorship and PPG-CoDA, neither of which seemed to really free me, I was led to a sponsor who took me through all twelve steps in three weeks. We worked intensely and daily. Within three weeks I went from completely non-functional (curled up in bed in the fetal position unable to eat, sleep or work) to functional, even if still in pain. My sponsor required me to start sponsoring others as soon as I reached step 12. I did not feel ready, but I followed instructions, and began carrying the message, which freed me further.

It has been two and a half years since I hit bottom and found CoDA. In this time, I have founded a local meeting, chaired others, let local psychologists know of our group, and continue

to work with sponsees daily. Everything in my life is improving. However, even after doing an inventory on my ex (step 4-5), identifying my character defects and asking for their removal (steps 6-7), I still had obsessive thoughts about my ex. I was not able to make a direct amends because she did not answer my invitation. I wrote a direct amends letter, and practiced it as part of being “entirely willing” (step 8). When obsessive, fantasy thoughts arose (“maybe we will get back together”, “maybe I’ll never find someone as good,”), I surrendered them to my HP; I prayed for her as per p. 552 of *Alcoholics Anonymous*, and I mentally practiced my amends. I took these recovery actions hundreds of times.

After not seeing her and having no contact for two and half years since the breakup, we ran into each other in the park one evening. I greeted her enthusiastically. I asked how she was. Her answer was curt. Then I asked if I could take three minutes of her time to make an amends. (I had the amends more or less memorized). She did not let me finish the sentence. Apparently, she is still experiencing fear and pain regarding our past. So much was evident in her body language. Seeing her so scared, I quickly took my leave, and since then I have been free of the obsessive thoughts about her. Somehow, God brought us together one last time to show me that she never was my Higher Power; that she is just another “bozo on the bus” like me.

What is remarkable to me about this healing is that the day before a similar resolution occurred with someone else I had dated and practiced codependency with. So why the sudden healing? I think it is because I was finally ready to let go; I was finally ready to see that there is no benefit left in these sick relationships (step 1: “conceded to my innermost self...”). I confess that, up to that point, some part of my addict mind wanted them to return. After seeing my ex in the park, after seeing her flatly refuse my direct amends, after seeing her unchanged demeanor, I suddenly have a new internal boundary: I would never accept someone who does not fit my safe and sound ideal for relationships. I did not set the boundary myself. I let go of things and my Higher Power put me in a place of safety.

Looking back now, I have trouble believing I ever accepted the disregard, cheating, and disdain I experienced in that relationship. I would not go back to her. Letting go is the key. When I can’t let go, I work the steps, which means I do spiritual work that in my mind has no direct relation to the situation I identify as a problem. And then miracles happen. I only have to follow my Higher Power’s will. The program allows me a structure by which to do so.

-Mike M.



-Linda R.

“Inner Child--A Dialogue”

A gentle male voice coaxes,

"It's safe."

The five-year-old boy lay still as a hunted possum,

he's been coaxed, then shredded before,

the voice persists,

"I know it's scary but--"

a small quiver flowers up from the stillness,

"He'll judge."

"I'll be here."

Light envelopes

as an enormous life-wearied palm is outstretched

now a tiny, soft hand lay centered in its warmth,

breathing slows... tensions ease.

Suddenly a red-faced demon mountains up raging,

"Lazy... stupid... worthless,"

till the boy shrivels, cowers and shakes,

then the gentle voice bravely laughs,

"You are a phantom."

Now the demon shrivels,

and the boy again clasps that firm palm wondering,

"Will he ever die?"

The gentle voice silent shrugs, pauses

then smiles wide,

"I do know," pointing to the boy's tiny chest,

"I'll always be right there."

-Richard W.



-Linda R.

Closing Readings

The Serenity Prayer

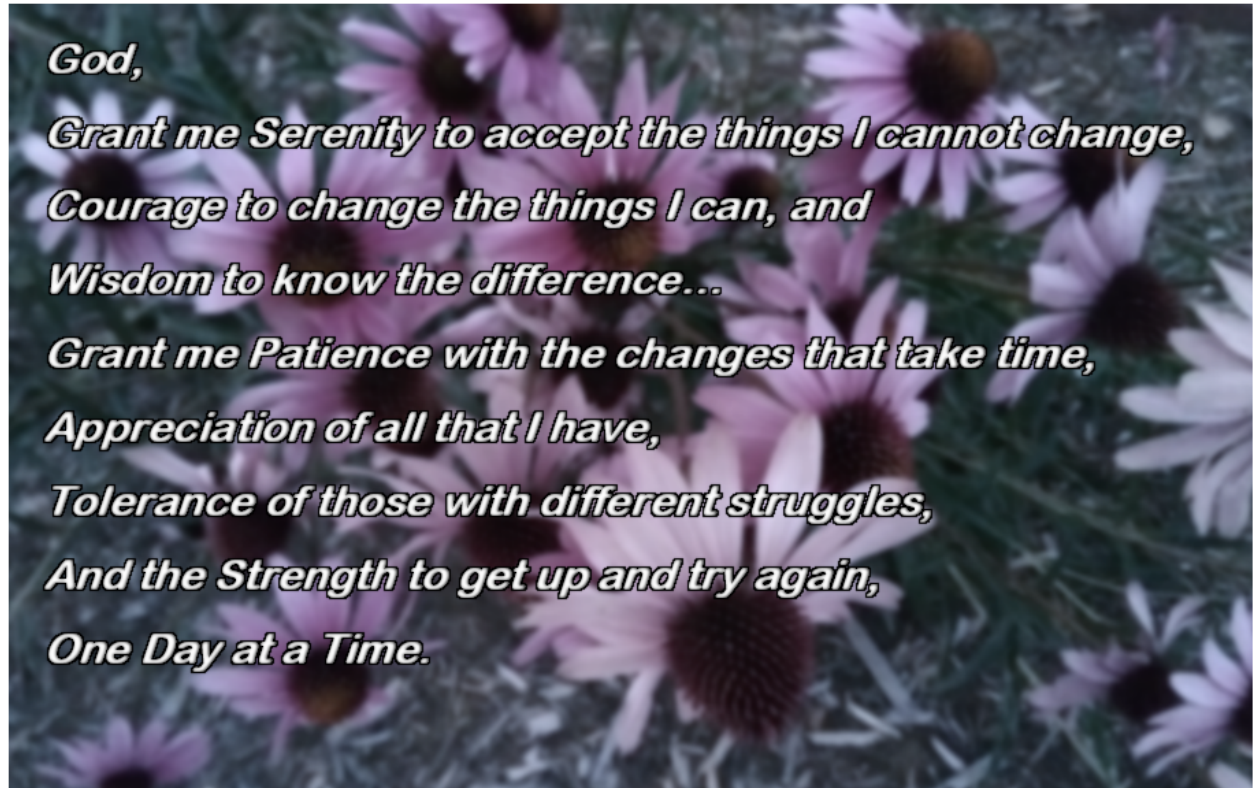


Photo: Caryn T.

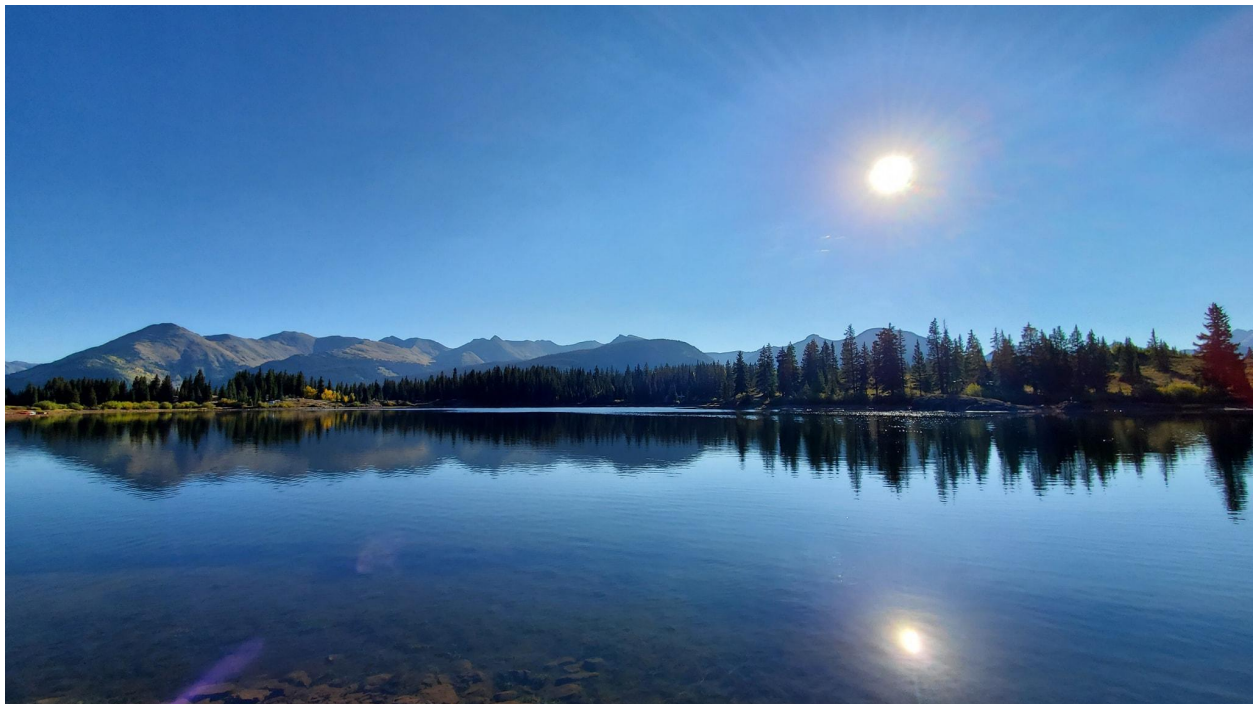
Meeting Close

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.

Affirmations and Promises

“I promise to take time for myself to enrich my own mind.”
“Today I will live in the moment, embracing even the smallest joy that comes my way.”



-Linda R.