



# *Meeting in Print*

June 2022 (Ed. 23)

***"Feeling Grateful"***

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*-Jim H.*

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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, as well as 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 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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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## **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.

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# Community Shares

## **“A Question to Myself”**

Is an opinion an onion  
That we can peel  
The skins off  
Until we get to the juicy part  
That makes us cry?

How can I glitter  
Without an edge  
That cuts  
Tender skin  
What if I feel  
From the outside in?

Poem submitted by Glenda





*-Caryn T.*

## **“CoDA is Hope”**

Growing up as a child, I had two strong hard working parents who I later learned and discovered had their own childhood traumas. My mother was a hard working woman determined to constantly keep the house clean. My father was a recovering alcoholic by the time I was in kindergarten and remained so until his passing, when he turned 55, from a sudden heart attack. My father was a workaholic and often spent his time outdoors maintaining the yard and garage, cleaning or fixing the family vehicles.

At a young age, I craved love and physical attention from my parents. I learned at an early age, my mother refrained from giving us physical attention due to early childhood trauma and I still didn't understand why both my parents did not give us physical attention. The most affection my parents gave me was using a word of endearment, “mija” (my daughter) from time to time. Growing up, I learned to accept the limited love and affection from my parents and instead got the unwanted attention by male family and friends. I had to pretend all was okay and did my best to be a good student and daughter.

My first consensual sexual experience was at the early age of 13 and thereafter I became promiscuous and continued to seek love and attention I so desired from males. I ended up dating males who disrespected me and took advantage of me. It all felt wrong but I remained in what I knew was an unhealthy cycle.

At the age of 18, I had a miscarriage five days before graduating from high school. I was told I was “lucky” I had a miscarriage because there would be no way for me to financially provide for the child and this was an opportunity for me to better my life. For many years, I never grieved the miscarriage I had. I have been working since the age of 16 and have not stopped working since then, only taking 3 months off after giving birth to my now two teenage sons. I ended up

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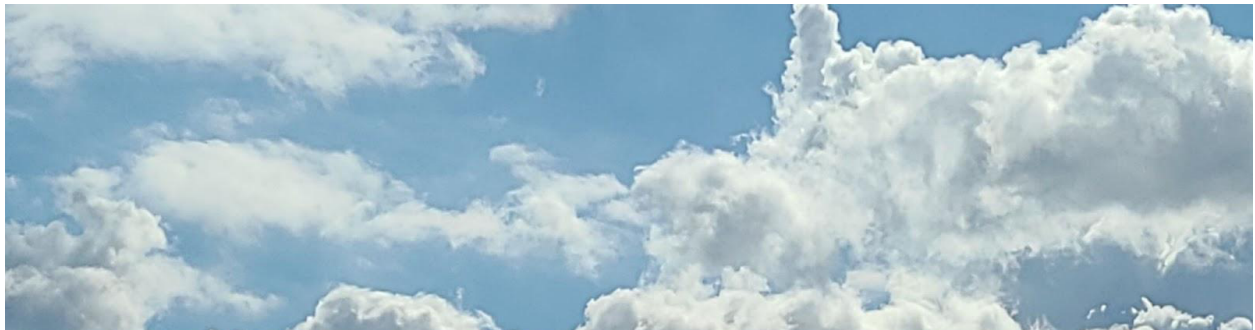
graduating high school and pursued a Master's degree in Social Work because I knew I wanted to help others.

After graduating high school, I remained with my partner, the father of the child I miscarried. Twenty years into my relationship, my partner abused drugs, verbally and emotionally abused me. I promised myself I did not want a life like this for my children and I, but it became my reality for many years creating trauma for my own children. I knew it was unhealthy but I did not find the strength and courage to leave, fear of abandonment and being alone. Instead, I started to engage in outside relationships to help me fill the "void." I was back where I was when I was a teen, dating men who were taking advantage of me and financially supporting them creating a significant financial burden on my family. These outside and secret relationships were exciting in the beginning but soon lead to loneliness, depression and emptiness. Again, I knew something was wrong with me but I could not understand and figure it out.

I began individual therapy approximately in 2017 and my therapist introduced me to CoDA. Intrigued and interested, I researched CoDA and was so relieved to see I could closely relate to the codependency patterns and characteristics. At the time, my area did not have any in-person CoDA meetings but COVID hit and it was to my advantage when I took advantage of the online CoDA meetings and attended my first CoDA meeting September 2020. In my most saddest and difficult times, CoDA meetings got me through the day. I currently subscribe to the CoDA weekly readings, read Co-NNections, and CoDA literature. The Twelve Promises gives me and others hope as we seek healthy relationships with others. CoDA has strengthened my relationship with my higher power.

Despite the control I did not have over my childhood trauma, CoDA and therapy has given me a better understanding and awareness of myself and how I need to be responsible for my own healing. It has been a difficult journey but is a healing journey I am willing to take and share to give hope to others. One day, my life goal is to hold CoDA meetings in my area in English and Spanish so CoDA can provide hope to others as it has done for me.

L.H., Codependent, 4/8/22



*-Jim H.*



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## **“Launched by Love”**

### **LAUNCHED BY LOVE**

**Sentenced  
To boredom  
Nipping at the heels  
Of life  
Sentenced**

**To not liking  
To unliving  
To never doing  
While flames  
Know the heart**

**And clogged arteries  
Pumping dismay  
At what never was  
Beliefs in tired feet  
Dying on thirsty roads**



**Leading from an excited baby's  
First daring step  
Into the unknown  
Astronauts into life  
Launched by love**

glenda h



*-Jim H.*

## **“Twenty Consequences of Being a Codependent in Recovery!”**

1. being angry at the disease and not at the addict.
2. having my anger pass quicker; i.e. 2 hours versus 5 days.
3. being able to sleep at night even when there is a lot going on that I found very disturbing.
4. being able to focus on the solution without angst and agitation.
5. I can summon the courage to change things.
6. I can have serenity to accept the things I cannot change and recognize that is part of the reality of my life.
7. I will not ruminate about my family that is not in recovery and accept that as their choice.
8. I can get peaceful with work, being ok with going home on time, leaving work for another day.
9. I have learned to be supportive without controlling – know when to hold them, know when to walk away, know when to run.
10. I can be patient and accept "not now".
11. Joy beyond all joy! Self care, taking the time to use the bathroom and not being constipated! "Excuse me! Nature calls!"
12. Having less anxiety, breathing more, saying STOP to the worrisome thoughts.
13. Going for a walk at work, using my breaks to enjoy some fresh air, some perspective and some self-care.
14. Having the ability to act "as if"; acting my way into a feeling that I want.

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15. this one is beautiful – I can be here now! I can stay in the present, "i have given up all hope of having a better past", and I can tell myself to stop future tripping, Que Sera, Sera
  16. I can enjoy being in my own lane; someone else's life is theirs to live.
  17. I can practice daily gratitude and I have stopped those desperate prayers, pleading and crying because I know that I know that I know that when I praise, my Higher Power is able.
  18. I can believe in progress, not perfection – it is ok to complete a project and accept it as it is and extend the same courtesy to others as works in progress.
  19. I can have a better attitude, be more optimistic, know that in surrendering to my HP, things will work out accordingly (usually better than what I had planned) – I can be happy, joyous and free!
  20. I can actually walk past the alcohol section of a store without hatred and a terrorist attitude, wishing I had a bomb on my back to blow the bottles to smithereens.

J. Deborah – 3/17/16

Originally published on November 1, 2016

<https://coda.org/2016/twenty-consequences-of-being-a-codependent-in-recovery-11-1-16/>



*-Jim H.*

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## **“Gratitude”**

Before CoDA my life was lived in chaos, reactively bouncing from one disaster to another in surprising speed with shocking results. I was out of control. I came by my addictive personality honestly and set out to put my inheritance to its full use. One day returning from work my late wife suggested I might benefit from CoDA. This was a suggestion she said she received about me from an AA hot line. Being the good codependent I am I immediately found coda.org, read the web site located a nearby Saturday meeting and felt hope. Which is kind of surprising in hind sight since I was not aware at the time of feeling hopeless. My first face to face meeting was a positive experience as helpful as reading the CoDA Foundation documents on coda.org had been. I still attend that meeting. In time, I found a sponsor and began working the 12 Steps. I overcame a fury against God, my parents and myself.

In time after many years of resistance I decided to turn my will and life over to the care of God as I understood God. My 4th Step was dark, deep and painful. Then my defects began to be taken away. I recall the relief and joy when anger was suddenly removed. My joy was short lived because I discovered fear and shame were hiding behind anger. I never experienced the sudden removal of a character defect again. A little over two years ago I joined a Step Study Group to work on helping the God of my understanding to take my fear. About six months in I discovered to my surprise my fear was gone. When it was taken, I do not know. Since its removal was not noticed I had continued to use the language of fear only to discover I was left with normal worries.

The last decade of my life has been the best decade. I feel free, serene and at peace. This is a state I do not take for granted. My recovery feels fragile and requires constant vigil, acceptance and self-love with the grace of my loving God. I accept the pain I caused others and myself before my long hard fall and I understand without my long hard fall I would not have today's recovery. I love the freedom and peace of recovery and will continue to work my program in gratitude.

Don B – 11/3/16

Originally published on November 8, 2016

<https://coda.org/2016/11-8-16-gratitude/>



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## **“Recovery”**

Recovered me.

What rediscovered lover, I am.

Seen enough to know

all end

is well

if just because it began.

Begin again.

Means - 2/26/22



*-Caryn T.*

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## **“Grateful Recovering Codependent”**

I came into the rooms of CoDA raising a white flag of surrender and desperate for help. I had lost my God, my Soul and Me. I wanted a new life and I had grown sick and tired of the old ways that no longer worked for me. I finally came to believe that change is possible if I looked for it in the rooms of CoDA and by working the 12 Steps. I saw others who discarded old, self-defeating life styles and were happy, joyous and free. I wanted what you had but I didn't know how to get it. You told me, “Keep Coming Back” be patient, and “Listen and Learn” so that I could learn lessons from those that have walked this path before me. You told me to “Let Go and Let God” of my attempts to control people, places and things.

I was too new to CoDA and too overwhelmed by my circumstances to recall one of the many CoDA principles that may apply to my desperate situation. I soon discovered that when I did not know what to do, a simple slogan would put the entire situation into a proper perspective. They were easy to learn and remember when coping with a variety of upsetting circumstances. I printed the slogans on paper and posted them at my CoDA meetings, my workplace and in my house. I loved the slogans and I would repeat “Let Go and Let God” and “One Day At A Time” again and again. “Think” reminded me to wait. I don't have to do anything I'm not ready to do. I learned that it is easier to avoid giving advice when practicing “Live and Let Live.” I learned I can deal with my fears by living today, “One Day At A Time.” I learned that I could look at what I can do “Just for Today” and let that be enough for now. I know today that CoDA is in the hands of our Higher Power, not of any one person, and that you only expect “Progress for me and Not Perfection.” The slogans were my lifesavers. They were my handrail to the Steps. Today I know that the 12 Steps are the solution to all my problems and the answer to have peace, harmony and serenity in my life.

Reciting the Serenity Prayer taught me to “accept the things I cannot change.” It reminds me I am not alone and to ask my Higher Power for serenity, courage and wisdom. It helped me to reconnect to my Higher Power who today is my loving, caring father that I had lost.



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I am forever grateful for the CoDA Fellowship and this amazing program of recovery where I did find My God, My Soul, and Me.

Judy O. – 6/3/18 – A Grateful Recovering Codependent

Originally published on August 21, 2018

<https://coda.org/2018/grateful-recovering-codependent-8-21-18/>



*-Caryn T.*

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# Closing Readings

## **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.

## **Some Affirmations**

I am enough and I have enough.  
This too shall pass; I am grateful for joyful times, I know that painful times won't last forever.  
Higher Power grants me serenity.

## **CoDA Recovery Prayer**

God help me to:  
Accept other people as they are,  
Recognize my own feelings,  
Meet my own needs, and  
Love myself just as I am.

## **CoDA Closing Prayer**

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.

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## Twelve Promises

I can expect a miraculous change in my life by working the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. As I make an honest effort to work the Twelve Steps and follow the Twelve Traditions...

- 1) I know a new sense of belonging. The feeling of emptiness and loneliness will disappear.
- 2) I am no longer controlled by my fears. I overcome my fears and act with courage, integrity and dignity.
- 3) I know a new freedom.
- 4) I release myself from worry, guilt, and regret about my past and present. I am aware enough not to repeat it.
- 5) I know a new love and acceptance of myself and others. I feel genuinely lovable, loving and loved.
- 6) I learn to see myself as equal to others. My new and renewed relationships are all with equal partners.
- 7) I am capable of developing and maintaining healthy and loving relationships. The need to control and manipulate others will disappear as I learn to trust those who are trustworthy.
- 8) I learn that it is possible to mend – to become more loving, intimate and supportive. I have the choice of communicating with my family in a way which is safe for me and respectful of them.
- 9) I acknowledge that I am a unique and precious creation.
- 10) I no longer need to rely solely on others to provide my sense of worth.
- 11) I trust the guidance I receive from my Higher Power and come to believe in my own capabilities.
- 12) I gradually experience serenity, strength, and spiritual growth in my daily life.



*-Jim H.*

## **Resources:**

Find a Meeting - <https://coda.org/find-a-meeting/>

Subscribe to Email lists - <https://www.codependents.org/sub.htm>

CoDA's Events Calendar - <https://coda.org/calendar/>

YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0oWXZDpoVdKbyJOYDh1zTQ/playlists>

If links are not active, copy and paste the url into your browser.

## **Call for Content**

This publication thrives when fellow CoDAs share their recovery. This is a great place to express your creativity through prose (200-2000 words), poetry and artistic images, as long as it follows CoDA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and the Co-NNections Editorial Policy.

See <https://coda.org/service-info/connections-service-info-page/> for more information.