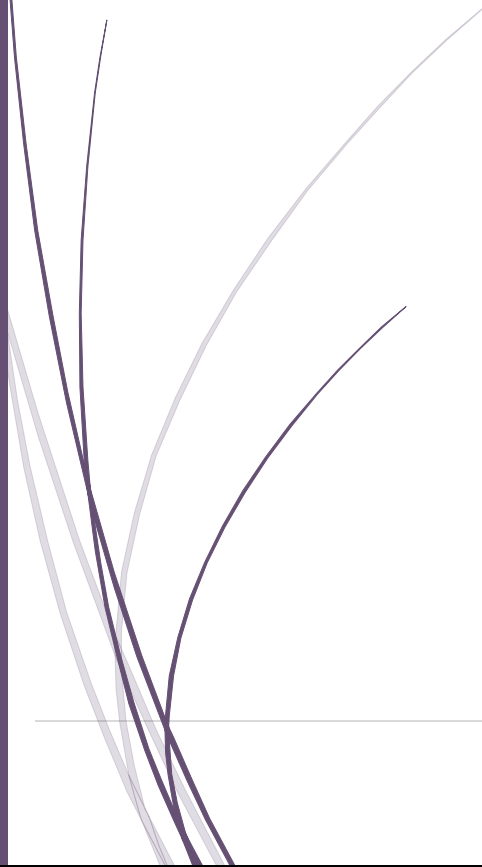
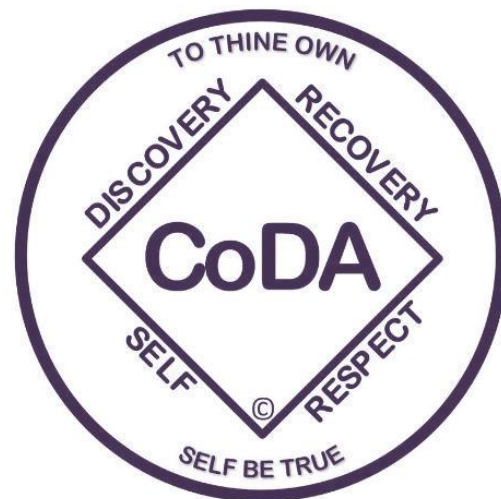


REVISIONS TO BE PRESENTED

**AT
2024 CSC**

CoDAteen Meeting Handbook



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PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

The purpose of this document is to provide CoDA and CoDAteen members with all the basic documents and information needed to start and conduct CoDAteen meetings face-to-face, online or **other alternative meeting formats**. This document provides information and guidelines for **vetting and training CoDA adult hosts and CoDA meeting sponsoring groups who work with teens**. **CoDA recommends that every CoDAteen meeting and CoDA meeting sponsor group has a copy of this CoDAteen meeting handbook**. It has the basic documents that **support CoDA and CoDAteen unity and safety for CoDAteen members**.

CARRYING THE CODA MESSAGE TO TEENAGERS

How do we “carry the message” of recovery to teenagers? Many CoDA members wish they had known about CoDA when we were younger. We are powerless over the past. Today, we can choose to support young people in recovery from codependency.

SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION AND GETTING STARTED

A. WHAT IS A CODATEEN MEETING?

A CoDAteen meeting is a group of two or more young people who come together around their shared desire for healthy and loving relationships. These meetings are guided by a CoDA adult member, adult host/meeting sponsor, who has the desire to work with teenagers and young people. The meeting uses the CoDAteen Twelve Steps and CoDAteen Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous as the basis for working toward recovery. It is a place to find teen sponsors or co-sponsors, and fellowship as well as the sharing of experience, strength, and hope. The CoDA adult host/meeting sponsors do not sponsor the CoDAteens. The CoDAteens personally sponsor or co-sponsor each other as we did in CoDA's beginning.

CoDAteen groups are hosted or sponsored by an adult CoDA group, Intergroup, Region, or Voting Entity and are required to register with Co-Dependents Anonymous for the safety of the group and to have support from CoDA as a whole. CoDAteen adult host/ meeting sponsors have specific behavioral and safety requirements for working with minors, but overall, the CoDAteen meetings should function as closely as they can to an adult CoDA meeting.

CODATEEN MEETINGS ARE REQUIRED TO READ THE FOUR FOLLOWING FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS AS WRITTEN AT EVERY MEETING:

CODATEEN PREAMBLE

CODATEEN WELCOME

CODATEEN TWELVE STEPS

CODATEEN TWELVE TRADITIONS

With respect to other questions about group organization (date, time, type of meeting), each group is autonomous. 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 CoDAteen meeting clearly communicates the message, *"This is CoDAteen."*

B. PURPOSE OF A CODATEEN MEETING

The basic purpose of a CoDAteen meeting is to allow young people to discover a healthy and loving relationship with themselves, a Higher Power and others. This happens according to their experience with CoDAteen step work, CoDAteen sponsorship, and, most importantly, identification with others in the CoDAteen group. Seeing others with similar feelings and problems find a common solution is the key to trusting in a "Higher Power of our own understanding".

Dysfunctional families, caregivers, or other adults involved in a teen's life often present poor role models. Sometimes they offer mixed and negative messages which foster self-destructive beliefs and lower self-esteem. It will take a daily healing process of positive affirmations to reverse this impact.

CoDAteen meetings are designed to offer the necessary tools of recovery from codependency and unhealthy relationships. They also offer the example of other members sharing their experience, strength and hope which can bring about healthy change. These examples are far more powerful than words. Attending CoDAteen meetings can be the beginning of a new way of life.

C. COMPARISON BETWEEN CODATEEN MEETINGS AND "ADULT" CODA MEETINGS

CoDAteen is based on *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*. The CoDAteen meeting format is like CoDA's suggested meeting format. CoDAteens have similar service positions and make meeting decisions based on the group conscience process just as adult CoDA meetings do.

CoDAteen members, through their group conscience process, can decide if they want to allow attendance by an adult CoDA member other than the regular CoDA adult hosts for special purposes. For example, a CoDA member may be available to share experience, strength, and hope relating to teen issues.

An adult CoDA member may be available to hold a CoDA-related workshop for CoDAteens. These decisions are made by the teens, not the CoDA adult hosts/meeting sponsors. Aside from these exceptional circumstances, CoDAteen meetings are not open to adults, except for the approved CoDA adult hosts, who meet the requirements of CoDA's *Minimum Behavioral and Safety Requirements and other requirements which may be recommended by the CoDAteen Committee and/or* the sponsoring CoDA group, Intergroup, Region or Voting Entity.

D. STRUCTURE OF CODATEEN

The adult CoDA sponsoring group acts as a service board for the CoDAteen group as stated in Tradition Nine: "CoDAteen as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve".

The **adult** sponsoring CoDA group, Intergroup, Region, or Voting Entity is responsible for guiding the CoDAteen group in understanding and applying the **CoDAteen** Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous. Tradition Four states: "*Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDAteen as a whole*". Without the adult **CoDA** sponsoring group "autonomy" would be impossible to establish.

To maintain healthy communication, each CoDA adult host of a CoDAteen meeting must attend business meetings of the adult sponsoring CoDA group.

The adult CoDA sponsoring group may help with transportation, finances, online meetings, recruitment, training and vetting of adult hosts, and special CoDAteen events.

The **adult** sponsoring group is responsible for assuring that hosts/meeting sponsors and any other adult CoDA member involved with CoDAteen comply with "*CoDA's Minimum Behavioral and Safety Requirements for CoDAteen*" as well as any local area requirements to work with minors.

It is helpful for the **adult** sponsoring CoDA group to liaise with other teen organizations in the area. An important link would be with hospitals and institutions because codependent teens are often overlooked and misunderstood in residential schools, foster care home programs, juvenile halls, and other institutional settings.

1. **Steps for an adult CoDA meeting, Intergroup, Region, or Voting Entity wishing to sponsor a CoDAteen meeting.**
 - a) Call a group conscience business meeting to determine if there is sufficient support within your group to host a CoDAteen meeting.
 - b) Read and review "*CoDA's Minimum Behavioral and Safety Requirements for CoDAteen*" during the **CoDA** group conscience business meeting.
 - c) Determine if there are two **CoDA adults** in your group who fit the minimum requirements for hosting a CoDAteen meeting.
 - d) Please note that for safety's sake, it is mandatory that adult hosts/meeting sponsors follow the "*CoDA's Minimum Behavioral and Safety Requirements for CoDAteen*."

- e) It is preferred for safety's sake that two adult hosts are present at every CoDAteen meeting. If possible, there should be a male and female adult at every CoDAteen meeting.
- f) The **adult sponsoring** CoDA meeting group should be able to provide an approved substitute **adult host** when the regular adult host/meeting sponsor is unavailable.
- g) It is necessary that the two **adult hosts** do not have a marital, romantic, or sexual relationship with one another.
- h) Contact your local police department or authorities for the most up to date requirements and any necessary procedures to allow adults to work with teens. They may require fingerprints and/or background checks.
- i) Determine if there are funds available to **pay for rent, and/or virtual meetings**, and CoDA/CoDAteen literature to start the CoDAteen meeting. The adult **sponsoring** CoDA group may financially support the CoDAteen group, if necessary, within the scope of Tradition Seven.
- j) May keep CoDA welcome and anniversary medallions, and literature available such as:
 - o CoDAteen Meeting Handbook inserts: [*IN THIS MOMENT Affirmations*](#), [*CoDAteen Tools for Recovery*](#), [*Suggestions for CoDAteens*](#), [*THE SLOGANS, Codependency & Recovery. The Differences*](#)
 - o [*Co-Dependents Anonymous*](#), the basic text, also known as the *CoDA book or the CoDA blue book*.
 - o Free Pamphlets for download: [*Establishing Boundaries in Recovery*](#), [*Communication and Recovery*](#), [*Am I Codependent*](#), [*Your First Meeting*](#), [*Information for Professionals*](#), [*What is CoDAteen?*](#)
 - o Find other free resources at CoDA.org/codateen
 - o More items for sale at: Buy at Corepublications.org
 - o Other CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature chosen by the group.

2. Considerations for a meeting location for CoDAteen:

- a) Is the location convenient and accessible? How might teens get there?
- b) It is suggested face-to-face meetings take place in the same location as the adult meetings.
- c) Will we meet after school when it is convenient for the teenagers to attend?
- d) CoDAteen groups may choose to hold a virtual meeting.
- e) The most convenient time, day, and start date are set by the CoDAteens and adult hosts/meeting sponsors through a group conscience.
- f) All CoDAteen meetings MUST register their CoDAteen meeting at [How to register a CoDAteen meeting](#) to be approved and verified by the CoDAteen committee.
- g) Decide what ages the group is willing to accept and include that information in your registration under special information on the application form.

3. **Announce the CoDAteen Meeting**

Announce your meeting through local websites, groups, social media, posters, and handouts. Suggested places to announce meetings are:

- a) Local high schools and colleges
- b) Teen and youth centers
- c) Guidance counselors' offices
- d) Treatment centers
- e) Professional offices of doctors and nurses
- f) Medical and mental health clinics
- g) Medical centers and hospitals
- h) Detention Centers
- i) Shelters
- j) Local newspapers
- k) CoDA or other Twelve Step meetings, for example, Alcoholics Anonymous, Alateen, Adult Children of Alcoholics, etc.
- l) On the CoDA website (www.coda.org) ([Calendar - CoDA.org](#))
- m) On your local VE, Region or Intergroup website
- n) Libraries
- o) Religious and spiritual places
- p) Municipal centers
- q) Supermarkets or grocery stores
- r) Video or music stores, movies, bowling alleys, etc.
- s) Handouts should include QR codes for ease of access

4. **Can two adult CoDA members host a CoDAteen meeting without the support of a local CoDA group, Intergroup, Region or Voting Entity?**

- For the safety of all involved Co-Dependents Anonymous and CoDAteen do not approve CoDAteen meetings without the support of a local CoDA group, Intergroup, Region or Voting Entity.

E. **THE ROLE OF ADULT HOSTS/MEETING SPONSORS INSIDE AND OUTSIDE MEETINGS.**

The main role of adult hosts/meeting sponsors in CoDAteen meetings is to model CoDA emotionally mature recovery behavior. They can encourage the teens to reach out to each other and to the adult hosts/meeting sponsors whenever needed using the voluntary phone list. Adults do not serve as personal sponsors to individual CoDAteens. CoDAteens sponsor or co-sponsor each other.

CoDA adults in CoDAteen service need to always use caution in any one-on-one interactions with minors, including in person, via phone, or other electronic means. Remember that communications such as text messages and emails can be saved, forwarded, and manipulated. Be sure you know the CoDAteens and that everything you say or write is appropriate for the **CoDA** adult and CoDAteen relationship. **Avoid giving opinions about or otherwise intervening in a way that puts the adult in an adversarial role with the teen's parent/guardian.**

1. **Ways **adult** hosts/meeting sponsors can create a safe place for teenagers to share with each other:**

- a) Meet the **CoDA's Minimum Behavior and Safety Requirements** for **CoDAteen**, work the CoDA Steps and Traditions, and use CoDA's tools in their own lives and within the CoDAteen meetings.
- b) Model recovery in all interactions, including admitting mistakes and not having all the answers.
- c) Turn to their **own** Higher Power for help.
- d) Arrive early to greet the CoDAteen members.
- e) Start the meeting on time.
- f) Treat each teen equally, without favoritism.
- g) Communicate directly with each other and with CoDAteens.
- h) Be a good listener.
- i) Use "I" statements.
- j) Let go of control and trust the group conscience process as the CoDAteens make decisions about their group.
- k) Encourage the **CoDAteen** group.
- l) Encourage CoDAteens to take on service roles.
- m) Encourage CoDAteens to sponsor or co-sponsor one another.
- n) Support CoDAteens in their recovery in a positive manner.

2. **The adult hosts/meeting sponsors are responsible for ensuring that the CoDAteen meeting information is accurate on the CoDAteen meeting list at [CoDA.org/codateen](https://www.codateen.org). Contact the CoDAteen Committee at codateen@codateen.org for all updates.**

F. MINIMUM BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS FOR CODATEEN

To ensure the safety of CoDAteen members, at the recommendation of the CoDA Board of Trustees and the CoDAteen Committee, all CoDA members who work with CoDAteens are required to be sponsored and approved by an adult CoDA group, Intergroup, Region or Voting Entity. Through **informed** group conscience, an **adult** sponsoring group is required to adopt a process to approve **CoDA** adult hosts/meeting sponsors who work with CoDAteen members and must register with

CoDA.org/codateen. The approval process must meet the minimum requirements listed below.

Every **CoDA adult host** involved with CoDAteen service **must**:

1. Be a CoDA member regularly attending CoDA meetings who has a **CoDA** sponsor or CoDA **co-sponsor** and is working the CoDA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions according to the CoDA program of recovery.
2. Be at least 25 years old with a minimum of three years of recovery in CoDA and have participated in CoDA service work.
3. Not have been convicted of a felony or equivalent criminal charges internationally.
4. Not have been charged with any form of child abuse.
5. Not have been charged or demonstrated any inappropriate sexual behavior or be named on any sex offender list.
6. Demonstrate emotional stability and sobriety.
7. Remain free from mind altering substances during meetings and service work.
8. Not have demonstrated violent tendencies or coercive abuse that could harm a CoDAteen member.
9. There must be two **vetted** and approved CoDA **adult hosts** at every CoDAteen meeting, but if this is not possible, **one adult host** who is approved and sponsored by a CoDA group and meets all other requirements may be acceptable.
10. The group requirements must prohibit overt or covert sexual interaction between any adult and CoDAteen members.
11. The group requirements must prohibit conduct contrary to applicable laws. Research your local area for requirements according to the law.
12. The group requirements must contain procedures which include **Parental Permission Letter** and medical care for the **CoDAteen** to participate when necessary. In some circumstances, it might be possible to accept a referral from a counselor, teacher, or doctor. (See *sample Parental Permission Letter in Section 5- Service Forms in the CoDAteen Handbook*)
13. The CoDA adult sponsoring group and CoDAteen Committee share the responsibility of following the CoDAteen approved process for training and vetting the adult hosts using recommendations and resources offered by the CoDAteen committee and this **CoDAteen Meeting Handbook**. has
14. Adopt a process for addressing problem behaviors within the **CoDAteen** group, using recommendations and resources from the CoDAteen Meeting Handbook and other resources at CoDA.org/codateen.

G. OTHER POINTS FOR **CODA ADULT SPONSORING GROUPS TO THINK ABOUT OR CONSIDER**

1. Requiring two **vetted and approved** CoDA **adult hosts** at every CoDAteen meeting.
2. Having background checks, many areas require this by law to work with minors.

3. Deciding on age ranges for your group. In general, CoDAteen is for “teens” ages 13 to 18, however there may be older people (e.g. 18 + who may be college and university students) who may wish to participate. There may also be younger children who are ready for CoDAteen who can participate safely in a sharing and learning experience. Each group may decide through group conscience on an acceptable age range, or they may decide to divide their meetings based on the age range. It is encouraged that older teens begin attending CoDA adult meetings while attending CoDAteen to have a smooth transition or they may form a “young adult” CoDA group.
4. Connecting CoDAteen conferences or conventions with CoDA intergroups, regions or voting entities.
5. Hosting a CoDAteen meeting that meets at the same time and place as the sponsoring CoDA meeting or group.
6. Being conscious of diversity.
7. Avoiding one-on-one interactions.
8. It's suggested to maintain an appropriate ratio of adults to CoDAteen members (Larger meetings may require additional CoDA adult hosts).
9. Ways CoDAteen members can be transported to and from events.
10. Organizing informational and awareness activities, for example, inviting CoDA speakers, setting up workshops, and informational booths about codependency for teens in the CoDA community.
11. Having local legal counsel review the group requirements for working with minors.
12. CoDA World has many resources and free downloads to help, including the CoDAteen Meeting Handbook found on the CoDAteen webpage at www.coda.org/codateen.

H. USEFUL TIPS FOR CODA ADULT HOSTS/MEETING SPONSORS

1. Be able to commit to CoDAteen service preferably for two years or a minimum of one year.
2. Have a willingness to share their experience, strength, and hope of CoDA recovery.
3. Be a healthy role model for CoDAteens in their recovery.
4. Practice patience.
5. Be a good listener.
6. Allow Higher Power to work within the CoDAteen meeting.
7. Be aware that CoDAteen is not equipped to deal with crisis situations, for example, potential injuries to self or others, fighting, etc. In an emergency, the adult host can call 911, the national emergency numbers or national suicide prevention hotline of the respective country or local police if needed. Notify the parents or guardians through their emergency contact information provided to the group, as soon as possible.
8. Be in close contact with the CoDA sponsoring group after an emergency.
9. Continue to work the CoDA Steps and follow the CoDA Traditions in their own CoDA recovery.
10. Maintain regular contact with the CoDA sponsoring group, Intergroup, Region or Voting Entity for support and guidance.
11. When adult hosts are unable to attend their CoDAteen meeting, they are responsible for finding a CoDAteen committee vetted and approved CoDAteen host replacement.
12. Hosting a CoDAteen meeting is a service commitment and is not a substitute for adult CoDA meeting participation.
13. CoDA adult hosts work their recovery by continuing to attend adult CoDA meetings.
14. Our primary responsibility is to model our own recovery behavior as adults.
15. Each CoDAteen adult host must first keep the focus on their own recovery. The CoDAteen meeting exists for the teens' benefit and should be oriented to their needs.
16. Working with CoDAteens can be a most rewarding experience. However, a CoDA adult host who feels triggered or disturbed at the CoDAteen meeting needs to step back and take care of their own feelings and CoDA recovery. They need to arrange for a CoDAteen committee vetted and approved replacement CoDA adult host for the CoDAteen meeting with the assistance of the CoDA sponsoring group.

I. SOME SUGGESTIONS TO HELP ENGAGE THE CODATEENS

1. Have a guest CoDA speaker
2. Use the Establishing Boundaries in Recovery, Communication and Recovery, and Am I Codependent? pamphlets. (Free downloads from coda.org)
3. Read and discuss excerpts from Codependents Anonymous, (also called the CoDA Book or the Blue Book), or the CoDA Blue Book Pocket Edition Use the CoDA Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Workbook.
4. Use the CoDAteen Step Study Guide. CoDAteen Step Study Guide
5. Use the self-evaluation tools (Patterns and Characteristics of Codependency and Recovery Patterns and Characteristics) to open the sharing. (See section 4 of this Handbook.)
6. Other sources for sharing are “In This Moment Affirmations” for CoDAteen, CoDAteen “Do’s and Don’ts,” or The Slogans. (See section 4 of this Handbook.) **Codependency & Recovery. The Differences. The Long CoDA Serenity Prayer.**
7. Not all CoDAteen meetings can be financially self-supporting, but the members should be given the opportunity to donate as they can.
8. Meetings may start off small. Some of the **CoDAteens** are not sure what to share or how to say it.
9. Safety, trust, and confidentiality are issues that need to be addressed.
10. It is a good idea to remember what it was like to be a teenager!
11. To give your meeting the best chance for success, work the CoDA Twelve Steps for your own recovery, follow the CoDA Twelve Traditions, **CoDA Twelve Service Concepts** to help resolve group and personal issues, and reach out to your CoDA community for help.

SECTION TWO: PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A. INFORMING THE PUBLIC ABOUT CODATEEN

- CoDA members and groups can purchase CoDA and CoDAteen literature from CoRe at corepublications.org. This literature may be distributed at community events and provided for outreach.
- Let people know about the CoDAteen webpage on www.coda.org/codateen
- Look for community events and workshops at community centers, hospital health fairs, youth centers, schools, etc. Participating in these events is a great way to get the word out about CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous.
- Check with your local youth centers, social service agencies, rehab centers, behavioral health institutions, hospitals, healthcare centers, local school nurses, or counselors to find out if they are holding events or if they wish to receive information about CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous.

B. HOST A CODATEEN EVENT AT YOUR **CODA** CONVENTION OR OTHER CONFERENCE.

- If your community is holding a CoDA convention or conference, consider hosting a CoDAteen meeting during the event.
- Make announcements at adult CoDA meetings that there will be activities and meetings for teenagers at your **CoDA** event. This way, adult CoDA members know they can invite their teens to the conference. This provides an opportunity for family interaction and to grow together in recovery.

C. ONLINE AND ALTERNATIVE FORMAT CODATEEN MEETINGS

Teens are not always able to go out to a meeting when they need to share. Adult alternative format CoDA meetings may be available online for teens subject to their group conscience.

There are many options, for example, chat room, email, WhatsApp, virtual online platforms, or phone. Social media is an additional way to connect, for example, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat. (See [Anonymity and Social Media Guidelines](#))

For updated information about online meetings, check CoDA.org/codateen

D. SUGGESTIONS FOR CODATEEN MEETINGS AT LOCAL SCHOOLS AND OTHER PUBLIC AREAS

- Some schools allow groups to meet inside the school. Any CoDA member can petition the school although it helps if there is a CoDA member who has a connection, like a parent or guardian who can speak with the school or district.
- The success of the CoDAteen meeting depends on the support of the counselors, teachers, staff, and teens or community centers in the area.
- Teen centers, religious buildings, libraries, shelters, and hospitals are other good places for a CoDAteen meeting. However, transportation may be difficult if there is no public or school transportation.
- Having the CoDAteen meeting immediately after school may encourage participation.
- **CoDAteen meeting** announcements can be posted in classrooms, auditoriums, school bulletins, or other viable resources approved by CoDAteen and the school. **Handouts can include QR codes for ease of access.**
- Be mindful of maintaining the anonymity of the CoDAteen meeting participants.

E. SUGGESTIONS FOR CODATEEN MEETINGS ON A UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE CAMPUS

- Colleges and universities sometimes provide rooms for Twelve Step programs. Speak to the Community Service Division at the college. The college or university may have regulations that need to be followed to hold a CoDAteen meeting on campus. For instance, they may require that meetings be posted, including the meeting time and place.
- If the university or college says you must become a “club” to meet there, look for another place. Being a club, with a membership list, violates CoDAteen *Tradition Twelve: “Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions...”*
- Sometimes a faculty member needs to be responsible for the space. The faculty member does not need to attend the meeting but needs to sign for liability purposes. It may help to involve a faculty member from either the Psychology or Sociology department.
- A university or college may require that on-campus **CoDAteen** meetings be open to all members of the school community, including staff and faculty. If that is the case, the CoDAteen meeting adult hosts and sponsoring CoDA group need to make a group conscience decision about allowing staff and faculty to attend, keeping in mind the requirements for adults to be involved with minors in their local area.

SECTION THREE: TRAINING RESOURCES FOR ADULT HOSTS/MEETING SPONSORS

It is important for **CoDA sponsoring** groups to adopt a CoDAteen committee approved Training Process and Resource Guide to assist **CoDA** adult hosts/meeting sponsors. Groups can accomplish this by offering workshops, retreats, materials for reading, etc. This section provides recommended resources and CoDA Service Conference endorsed materials.

A. HOW TO HELP CODATEENS PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING

It is important to go over [*Am I Codependent?*](#) and [*Your First Meeting*](#) pamphlets with the newcomer as soon as possible. (See [*Meeting Materials –\(CoDA.org and CoDAteen resources at CoDA.org/codateen\)*](#)) Depending on the age and other factors, it may be necessary to go over this material several times, since some of the jargon may be unfamiliar to younger teens.

However, once they understand their relationship to codependency, they have some basis to relate to others in the **CoDAteen** meetings. Each person can be encouraged to identify with their own stories in others' sharing. As some **CoDAteens** become more experienced, caution them to be careful to avoid therapy "rap" as a means to sounding better than counterparts.

Each **CoDAteen** should share their own experience, strength and hope and avoid lecturing. For example, "*When I did this or that*" is far more powerful than "*You ought to do this*". Sometimes helping with cleanup or putting up chairs is the best way to say, "I care".

Help **CoDAteen** newcomers with appropriate sharing style. Remember in a shame-based home, a teen may be at a loss on how to speak up for themselves. "*Hi, I'm, I am a codependent*", is something worth rehearsing with a new CoDAteen. Encourage the teen to share what they are feeling, for example, "*I feel sad, lonely, happy, tired, overwhelmed...*" or maybe that they are not sure how they are feeling.

Review crosstalk and how to avoid it. Even unintentionally, it is possible to upset someone with an inappropriate comment. Emphasize talking about personal feelings about situations and concerns. For example, "I feel terrible about this meeting's topic". Occasionally, some CoDAteens may need closure about how some sharing was not directed at them or necessarily critical about their comments. It could have been incidental to someone else's experience. You may use the "*Thirty Second Rule*" and/or repeat the "**CoDA Guidelines for Safety's Sake**" crosstalk statement during the meeting as needed.

As much as possible, at the end of each CoDAteen meeting, you may close with a “feelings check in” sharing a few words on how they are feeling in this moment. CoDA adult hosts/meeting sponsors can offer their experience, strength and hope if given permission by the teen in response to difficult situations revealed by the teen after the meeting. Living in the solution is the key to healthy and loving relationships.

CoDA adult hosts/meeting sponsors and other CoDAteens should become acquainted with suggested meeting courtesies or distractions. For example, avoid whispering or laughing while someone else is sharing. Some of these things may seem trivial, but small matters could make a large difference to some teen's tender feelings.

CoDAteens and adult hosts/meeting sponsors should be aware of their facial messages and body language. For example, avoid seductive behavior toward teens. A seeming “jest” could have painful implications for an abused teen. Empathy and getting down to their level, does not relieve adult hosts/meeting sponsors from their responsibility as adult role models.

Refer to Experiences with Crosstalk and Building CoDA Community: Healthy Meetings Matter booklets. (See [Meeting Materials - CoDA.org](https://www.co-da.org/Meeting-Materials))

CoDAteen meetings could be ended with reading positive affirmations or CoDA Promises, in addition to the standard or the long version of the “Serenity Prayer” and/or with a guided meditation written by CoDAteen group members. Eventually they could take turns leading this meditation. (See Section 4- Sample Meeting Format)

B. BOUNDARIES

In each family system, boundaries limiting each family member to specific roles and behaviors are either clear and healthy or fuzzy to nonexistent and unhealthy.

It is not necessary for a CoDA adult host to be a counselor or therapist to host a CoDAteen meeting. It can be useful to review [Establishing Boundaries in Recovery](#) (booklet), *Co-Dependents Anonymous* book Chapter Five on boundaries, and Chapter Two “Our Spiritual Dilemma”. It is important to continue our own course of personal and spiritual growth in CoDA, remembering our own “inner child” or codependent issues may be triggered.

In our case, spirituality begins with trusting the CoDA process and reminding ourselves to continue working a daily step ten and eleven and stay in close contact with the adult CoDA sponsoring group and our own CoDA sponsor or CoDA co-sponsor. Having faith in our Higher Power and seeking a spiritual answer with the CoDA Twelve Steps, CoDA meeting sponsorship, and attending CoDA meetings leads to freedom from shame-based feelings and allows us to create and support healthy boundaries.

In the dysfunctional family, children develop survival tools, which come to be viewed in recovery as shame-based codependent patterns and characteristics. (See Co-

Dependents Anonymous Book Chapter Five on boundaries and Chapter Two “Our Spiritual Dilemma”). The patterns of how these survival tools are used define the shame-based family roles. Such roles provide the illusion of control, which continues until an effective spiritual answer is realized. Effectiveness means touching the heart as well as the deep recesses of the mind.

These shame-based roles may present as follows:

Rescuer, enabler, and helper

Antagonist, persecutor, and provoker

Sufferer, martyr, and victim

Codependents have played all these roles at various times. Sometimes they are used within a few minutes to maintain a false sense of control. Usually, one role may dominate and become the shame-based personality of the actor and play out codependent characteristics and patterns. (See *Patterns and Characteristics of Codependents and Recovery Patterns and Characteristics*)

Hopefully, in our own CoDA step work and the CoDAteen's step work, the primary role becomes identified. Recovery begins as we detach from our old behaviors and connect with our inner selves and our Higher Power. This enables us to address our own codependent patterns and characteristics. The Recovery Patterns and Characteristics are good examples to guide us in a healthy direction. We remember to encourage balance within our lives as well as the CoDAteens'.

The "Serenity Prayer" (long version) may be the best boundary affirmation written.

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.
Grant me patience with the changes that take time,
Appreciation of all that I have,
Tolerance of those with different struggles,
And the strength to get up and try again,
One day at a time.

C. FURTHER SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS AND APPROPRIATE BOUNDARIES FOR CODATEENS AND YOUNG ADULTS

Minors are vulnerable to grooming and coercive authority figures such as adults with inappropriate sexual boundaries, including sexual predators. Many regions/states/provinces and countries require that adults who participate in activities **working** with minors undergo a background check and be fingerprinted. Please check your local area for requirements.

Appropriate boundaries require to not engage in any of these behaviors with **CoDAteens** in or outside of the meeting:

- Sexual contact of any kind. This includes verbal, emotional, or physical seduction, implied contact, flirting or any other behavior that could be construed as sexual in nature.
- Manipulation, exploitation or threatening any **CoDAteen**.
- Showing anger inappropriately by yelling, raging, swearing.
- Controlling the CoDAteen meeting or CoDAteen members by engaging in “caretaking,” “fixing” or “rescuing” behaviors.
- Providing therapy, counseling, or professional services of any kind.
- Business relationships of any kind.

D. TRANSFERENCE / PROJECTION

Transference specifically relates to how **CoDAteens** may redirect their feelings from home life to their adult hosts/meeting sponsors. Similarly, adult hosts/meeting sponsors can allow their childhood feelings to influence the way they relate to CoDAteens.

Like codependence, transference is not good or bad, it is just there and needs to be addressed appropriately. Hopefully each CoDAteen sponsoring group will have a diverse group of people who can assist the **CoDA adult host** and the CoDAteen with objectivity.

As **CoDA** adult hosts/meeting sponsors, we should not be reluctant to refer CoDAteens to outside assistance when a situation becomes complicated or unmanageable. We are not therapists. CoDA adult hosts/meeting sponsors exemplifying healthy boundaries and **are key** to CoDAteen recovery.

A **CoDAteen** with an abusive parent/caregiver/**guardian**, could have tremendous anger and projection of mixed emotions towards the **adult host**. If this anger can come out non-violently, it can be useful to encourage such a **CoDAteen** to express their feelings. Repressed anger is the most damaging commodity we may have to deal with in CoDAteen. *Refer to Chapter Five of the CoDA book (third edition) for more information on dealing with these types of behaviors that may come up in **CoDAteen** meetings.*

If we, **CoDA** adult hosts/meeting sponsors, model a spiritual answer, most of the time the basic approaches are going to work. Our primary spiritual approach frequently works without our complete understanding of it.

Be aware that this may be the first time a **CoDAteen** is sharing difficult feelings or past traumas. We are offering a new direction which is based on spiritual courage. Some **CoDAteens** may not be ready for group work, and we may suggest that a CoDAteen seek outside counseling alongside attending CoDAteen meetings. In accordance with Traditions **Six** and **Ten**, we can encourage **CoDAteens** to appeal to the group for help, talk to their parents/caregivers/**guardians** (if it is safe) or suggest outside public agencies and community resources to direct the **CoDAteen** to a place **where** they may obtain additional help, but we cannot give advice or make specific referrals ourselves.

CoDA adult hosts/meeting sponsors experiencing anger toward a **CoDAteen**, or some other inappropriate feelings, need to talk to their **own CoDA** sponsor and others in their own CoDA group and seek guidance from their Higher Power.

E. INAPPROPRIATE/DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR IN A CODATEEN MEETING

At times, new and inexperienced CoDAteens may have problems dealing with issues and "acting out" in CoDAteen meetings. CoDAteens often mirror the exaggerated feelings in the home. When acting out happens and is not remedied by using the "Thirty Second Rule," if possible, you can choose to repeat "CoDA's Guidelines for Safety's Sake" or call an immediate group conscience to discuss the feelings within the CoDAteen group.

If the behavior continues to be inappropriate for the CoDAteen group, the adult hosts/meeting sponsors may ask the CoDAteen to briefly step outside of the meeting or if the meeting is virtual, into a breakout room. A quick review of the CoDAteen's feelings and what "came up" for them may be helpful. At the same time, this does not mean forcing the issue. It is simply a loving way to say, "we must have a certain space to all feel safe in sharing". They may need to "boil out" feelings and welcome privacy. It can be a good time to bond with the seriously affected CoDAteen. It is usually best to leave the CoDAteen to their own process. It is not necessary to precisely define the feeling or problem and fix it. It simply means a feeling came up for them they needed to deal with in their own way, which may not have been appropriate for the rest of the CoDAteen group.

Ideally, it is better to not be one-on-one when working with a CoDAteen's problematic behavior. You may include a second adult host or a CoDAteen who is strong in their recovery. If you must be one-on-one, it is important to take into consideration the CoDAteen's sex or sexual orientation. Do not allow yourself to be alone in a potentially compromising situation.

Attacking and bullying should be addressed immediately and directly in the CoDAteen meeting if it occurs during sharing. It could also be a meeting topic to have a time when CoDAteens can share their experiences with being bullied or abused, or if they have been the bully themselves. (See *Co-Dependents Anonymous Book Chapter Five, section on Physical and Non-Physical forms of abuse and control*)

When a CoDAteen member shares of experiences related to the difficult topics of abuse, violence, or suicide, the CoDA adult host can encourage the CoDAteen to seek help from parents/caregivers/guardian (if it is safe), school counselors, social service agencies, police, and the courts. As mentioned previously, some CoDAteens may not be ready for a CoDAteen meeting and may be helped by additional counseling outside of the CoDAteen meetings. In these situations, it may be useful to gently suggest to the CoDAteen the following example: "When I have seen someone else hurt the way you have described, and from my own experience, I found it might be helpful to speak with someone on an individual basis such as a counselor or a therapist to explore deeper issues, along with attending my adult CoDA meetings."

CoDA adult hosts are careful to limit their part in the discussion to their own experience, and do not give specific advice. It is useful to maintain a list of public agencies, community resources, emergency hotlines etc. to be able to share with the CoDAteen

where to get help. Be cautious and get other opinions from the adult CoDA sponsoring group before trying to rescue or fix a situation.

1. Helpful tips to address inappropriate or disruptive behavior in a CoDAteen Meeting:

- a) For the safety of the **CoDAteen** and the **CoDA** adult **host**, avoid one-on-one interactions whenever possible.
- b) Use **CoDA** Guidelines to “Sharing for Safety Sake” and the “Thirty Second Rule”
- c) Use a “Feelings Check.” (Each person may raise their hand in turn and state very briefly in a few words how they are feeling in this moment.)
- d) If the **CoDAteen’s** behavior is disruptive to the group, a member may call 30 seconds and recite the Serenity Prayer or the Long **CoDA** Serenity Prayer and may re-read the **CoDA Guidelines to Sharing for Safety Sake**.
- e) A **CoDAteen** group conscience can be called immediately within the meeting to resolve the issue if needed.
- f) Encourage use of the tools of the program. (See [Tools for Recovery](#), or [30 Questions-Steps 1,2,3](#))

SECTION FOUR: **CODATEEN** MEETING STRUCTURE AND FORMAT

A. **CODATEEN SERVICE POSITIONS**

The sponsoring CoDA group may help the **CoDAteens** in developing their service positions. For example, the adult **CoDA** treasurer would work with the **CoDAteen** treasurer in opening bank accounts, **online banking**, maintaining financial records, and expense forecasting. Such activity is a vital part of recovery. Some **CoDAteens** may need **extra** assistance with how to handle money.

Any **CoDAteen** member can call for a group conscience business meeting to address special concerns. The adult **hosts** are not there to rescue or fix. They are there to keep the tasks appropriate to the development of the **CoDAteen** group.

These are suggestions of positions that have worked with **CoDA** meetings in the past. Each meeting may decide how to distribute responsibilities among the trusted servants of the **CoDAteen** meeting, combining, or expanding positions as needed. A **CoDAteen** meeting does not need to have all these positions.

1. **CoDAteen Meeting leader/coordinator/facilitator:**

(It is suggested that this position rotates with each **CoDAteen** meeting or at timed intervals, for example, monthly, or biannually)

- a) Takes a **CoDAteen** leadership role for the duration of the meeting.
- b) Assumes overall responsibility for **CoDAteen** meeting format.
- c) Invites **CoDA** or **CoDAteen** speakers or finds a volunteer to handle speaker invitations.
- d) Guides the **CoDAteen** meeting according to **CoDA** endorsed guidelines.

2. **CoDAteen Secretary:**

(Suggested term of office - **3 months – 6 months**)

Is the business representative for the **CoDAteen** meeting and acts as liaison to the meeting **in conjunction with the adult host as follows:**

- o Maintains a meeting room or **CoDAteen** online/phone/virtual account.

- Plans and conducts **CoDAteen** group conscience or business meetings regularly (agenda items may include elections, meeting format, procedures, etc.) and keeps records of the **CoDAteen** meeting group conscience decisions.
- Ensures the information about the CoDAteen meeting is accurate with the Intergroup, Region, Voting Entity and CoDA World meeting lists. If changes are needed to the CoDAteen meeting, contact the adult host/meeting sponsor to update changes.

3. CoDAteen Group Service Representative (GSR):

(Usual term 1 to 2 years rotation)

- a) The GSR is the link between the CoDAteen meeting and the next level. Ideally, a GSR is an established member of the group, with experience, knowledge, and understanding of CoDAteen's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.
- b) Attends the local CoDAteen intergroup, region or voting entity service meetings.
- c) Carries the **CoDAteen** group conscience to the next local service level and then reports to the meeting on the outcomes.
- d) Notifies the **CoDAteen** meeting of any local or CoDA World updates, announcements, and flyers.

4. CoDAteen Treasurer:

- a) Keeps accurate financial records of the **CoDAteen** group, and regularly reports to the group about income, expenses, and prudent reserve. (Note: A prudent reserve is determined by the group conscience of the **CoDAteen** meeting, usually two- or three-months' worth of group expenses).
- b) Pays rent to the **CoDAteen** meeting facility or alternative format account for use of the meeting room.
- c) Disburses Seventh Tradition funds following the **CoDAteen** meeting group conscience. **A suggested guideline is offered earlier in this document.**
- d) Turns over records and funds to a new **CoDAteen** treasurer.

5. CoDAteen Literature Person:

- a) Makes CoDA or CoDAteen Conference Endorsed Literature available at the **CoDAteen** meeting.
- b) Keeps track of the group's **CoDAteen/CoDA** literature supplies and re-orders as needed.
- c) Obtains funds from the **CoDAteen** group treasurer to restock **CoDAteen/CoDA** literature.

- d) Refers newcomers and other CoDAteen members to available CoDA and CoDAteen Conference Endorsed Literature.
6. **CoDAteen Phone Contact Person(s):**
- a) Make first name and contact information available on local and CoDAteen World meeting lists.
 - b) Is available to respond to inquiries about the CoDAteen meetings, online and social media applications for CoDAteen.

B. SUGGESTED CODATEEN MEETING FORMAT

You may be flexible with this sample format, however, to be considered a **CoDAteen** meeting you must read the four foundational documents: *The CoDAteen Preamble*, *The CoDAteen Welcome (long or short)*, *The CoDAteen Twelve Steps*, and *The CoDAteen Twelve Traditions*. (see Section Five for the documents- they may be printed from the CoDAteen website and passed around at the meeting to invite others to join in the opening section). The style of program your meeting wishes to use (whether Speaker, Sharing, Topic or **CoDAteen** Step) can be a group conscience decision made by the members of your **CoDAteen** group. You may also copy and display our “For Safety’s Sake” tent card during meetings.

OPENING **CODATEEN** SECTION

1. “Good evening (morning, afternoon) and welcome to the _____ (insert meeting name) meeting of CoDAteen, part of Co-Dependents Anonymous. My name is _____ and I am a codependent. I am your **CoDAteen** meeting host tonight (today). CoDAteen asks those with cell phones and pagers to please turn them off or silence them for the duration of the meeting, so we can keep our focus on the meeting without interruptions.” ***If this is a virtual meeting, please keep video on at all times and name yourself with first name only. Please stay on mute unless speaking.**
2. “Please help me open this meeting with a moment of silence followed by a prayer”. (This is the meeting leader or group’s prayer of choice: the *Serenity Prayer*, the **CoDA Serenity Prayer** or the *CoDA Opening Prayer*)

<u>The CoDA Opening Prayer</u> ®	<u>The CoDA Serenity Prayer</u>
In the spirit of love and truth, we ask our Higher Power to guide us as we share our experience, strength, and hope.	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.
We open our hearts to the light of wisdom, the warmth of love and the joy of acceptance.	Grant me patience with the changes that take time, appreciation of all that I have, tolerance of those with different struggles, and the strength to get up and try again.
<u>The Serenity Prayer</u>	One day at a time.
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.	CoDA step prayers are available at https://coda.org/meeting-materials/step-prayers/

3. The **CoDAteen** group meeting leader reads the CoDAteen "**Preamble**" as written.
4. "We welcome any newcomers who are attending their first, second or third meeting of CoDAteen and ask that you raise your hand and introduce yourself by your first name only... *(call on raised hands and wait for introductions)* Welcome to CoDAteen. We suggest that you listen for similarities rather than differences in our shares. We suggest that you attend at least six **CoDAteen** meetings before deciding whether CoDAteen is for you."

Optional – In a **face-to-face** meetings newcomers can be welcomed by clapping after each or all have introduced themselves. If your meeting gives out welcome chips and/or newcomer packets, you may distribute those.

5. "We will now introduce ourselves and do a "Feelings Check." Let us raise our hand in turn and introduce ourselves by our first name only, stating very briefly in a few words how we are feeling at this moment. There will be an opportunity to share more fully later in the meeting." *(Meeting leader introduces self and then introductions continue around the room.)*
6. The group **CoDAteen** group meeting leader reads the CoDAteen "**Welcome**" as written (long or short version).
7. "**CoDAteen's Twelve Steps** are the spiritual guidelines for our individual recovery. Will the person with the **CoDAteen** *Twelve Steps* please read them?" **Optional-** some groups prefer to pass the *Twelve Steps* around and share the reading of them face-to-face. **If virtual each member can give service by offering to read.**
8. "**CoDAteen's Twelve Traditions** are the guiding spiritual principles of our meetings. Will the person with the **CoDAteen** *Twelve Traditions* please read them?" **Optional-** some groups prefer to pass the *Twelve Traditions* around and share the reading of them face-to-face. **If virtual each member can give service by offering to read.**

CODA AND CODATEEN ANNOUNCEMENTS SECTION *(some groups do this after the Program Section)* **Note:** If you do not have trusted servants for the below positions or hosting a hybrid/online meeting, 9 to 14 may need to be modified or eliminated. **For example:** "Go to the link in the chat to sign up for the phone list." Or "You can purchase **CoDA or CoDAteen** literature online or download free pamphlets at www.coda.org"

9. "There are **CoDAteen** meeting schedules and phone lists on the literature table. Our phone list is just for using privately. **CoDAteens** may use this list in case they need to reach out and talk with someone, have a problem, or need a ride to a meeting. All are welcome to please feel free to take a copy."

(New CoDAteen Meeting roles and positions will be filled as the meeting becomes more established and CoDAteens have attended meetings regularly. Adult hosts/meeting sponsors will guide new CoDAteens in taking on these new responsibilities and in facilitating CoDAteen Business Meetings, with informed group conscience)

10. "Our CoDAteen literature person is _____. Do you have any announcements?"
11. "Our CoDAteen treasurer is _____. Do you have any announcements?"
12. "Our CoDAteen Group Representative is _____. Do you have any announcements?"
13. "Our CoDAteen Phone list contact person is _____."
14. "Restrooms are located....." Announce any meeting facility issues (smoking policy, etc.)
15. "Are there any CoDAteen announcements?" *(The CoDAteen group service representative (GSR) or CoDAteen secretary shares community, Voting Entity, or CoDA World announcements, unless already shared above. Any member may also share CoDAteen or CoDA related announcements.)*
16. **Optional-** "We give chips at this meeting in recognition of your time in CoDAteen recovery. Are there any CoDAteen's here for the first time today, 30 days, 60 days, 90 days, 6 months, 9 months, 1 year, 2 years, etc.?"
17. **Note:** Some CoDAteen meetings ask the person celebrating if they would like to share a few words of recovery. In some meetings the group claps after each CoDAteen member is recognized; for their length of CoDAteen recovery of 30 days to 9 months; for 1 year or more the group can sing a celebration song, ending with "keep coming back".
18. **Optional- Announce:** "If you would like to celebrate your CoDAteen birthday, please let our CoDAteen secretary know at least one week ahead of time" OR "Is anyone here celebrating their actual birthday and would like to let it be known to the group today?"

CODATEEN PROGRAM SECTION

Begin your CoDAteen meeting program here. If your meeting has a speaker or reads from CoDA or CoDAteen literature, this usually lasts 10 to 20 minutes. Introduce the speaker, after the speaker shares, they pick a topic for discussion.

If there is no speaker you may ask someone to talk about a problem, read from CoDA or **CoDAteen** literature or pick topics from the "[In This Moment Affirmations for CoDAteens](#)" "[Suggestions for CoDAteens](#)", [the Slogans](#) or [Codependency & Recovery. The Differences](#)

To enhance the power of our **CoDAteen** recovery program, it is suggested considering having at least one meeting per month be devoted to studying one of the **CoDAteen** Twelve Steps. (You can use the [CoDAteen Step Study Guide](#) or the *CoDA Workbook for Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.)

19. **Read:** "CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous does not accept harassment, bullying, 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, or for any other reason. If you feel you are being treated disrespectfully in this meeting, please notify the person leading the meeting."

20. **Read** [CoDA Guidelines for Sharing - For Safety's Sake](#) -

"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 difficult task. We encourage people to begin slowly and carefully. It is the intention of every CoDAteen member and **CoDAteen** 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. While many of us were growing up, no-one listened to us. We were told our feelings were wrong or that they did not matter. We were often interrupted and criticized. We need to know in our **CoDAteen** meetings that we can share without fear of interruption, criticism, or contradiction."

FOR SAFETY'S SAKE

We use "I" statements when sharing. (I feel; I believe.)

We share our own experience, strength, and hope—no one else's.

We do not comment on what others share.

"We are aware of the time available for shares." OR "We share three to five minutes, keeping the focus on ourselves."

We help ourselves and others by being emotionally present and honest.

We let others experience their own feelings.

We keep advice to ourselves.

“As codependents we are learning to set boundaries and recognize that they are vital to recovery. This is why we discourage feedback, crosstalk and advice giving. We need to learn to keep the focus on our own recovery rather than rescuing or controlling others. If you think that these guidelines have been violated, please ask the **CoDAteen** meeting host to read them again at the end of a particular share.”

21. “I would like to again thank _____ for sharing. We will now take turns and share on today’s topic or _____.”

Optional- “Would each of you please limit your sharing to 3-5 (or less if meeting has a lot of attendees) minutes to allow for everyone to share?” **CoDAteen** group conscience can decide how to indicate when time is up, i.e., a timer, tapping on something, or a gentle reminder by chairperson.

CODATEEN CLOSING SECTION

22. **Read:** “Our Seventh Tradition reminds us that while we do not have dues or fees, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We ask that you donate only as you can. The money you offer to the group buys **CoDA and CoDAteen** literature and pays **CoDAteen** meeting expenses.” *(Pass the basket or communicate specifics of how to contribute for an online meeting, for example “See the link in the chat to donate”)*

Optional- some **CoDAteen** meetings choose to ask for Seventh Tradition donations at the beginning of the meeting, during the announcements section. **Virtual meetings can use their own form of electronic payment based on their group conscience.**

23. **Read CoDAteen Closing Statement:** “As we bring this CoDAteen meeting to a close, I would like to remind you that CoDAteen is an anonymous program. Everything shared here is confidential. Only in this way can we feel free to say what is in our minds and hearts, for this is how we help one another in CoDAteen.”

“Who you see here, What is said here, When you leave here, Let it stay here.” (with a group response of “Hear, Hear!”)

“What each person says is their own opinion. Take what you want and leave the rest. A special note for **CoDAteen** newcomers: whatever is bothering you has also worried others. You will come to realize that there is no situation too difficult to be

bettered and no unhappiness too great to be lessened. We are not perfect. We hope the welcome we've given expresses how much we care, love and accept you exactly as you are. Keep coming back and keep an open mind, and you will find a new love and acceptance of yourself and others, One Day at a Time."

Optional- "Will the person with the [Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous](#) please read them?" (You may pass around to read individually)

Optional- (highly recommended) **Share Affirmations:** Starting with the leader or a volunteer each person in turn gives a positive affirmation such as: "I know a new freedom for me" or "I am enough". You may also use readings from the *In this Moment Affirmations for CoDAteen* or [CoDA's Making Choices Booklet](#) or have CoDAteens make up their own.

24. "Thanks to our speaker." (If this is a speaker meeting)

25. "Thanks to those who read and who have given service at this CoDAteen meeting."

26. **The CoDAteen group leader in a face-to-face meeting requests everyone to join in a circle for the closing prayer of choice. The following are the CoDA endorsed prayers.**

The CoDA Serenity Prayer

(Long version)

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.
Grant me patience with the changes that take time,
Appreciation of all that I have,
Tolerance of those with different struggles,
And the strength to get up and try again,
One day at a time.

The 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.

C. THIRTY SECOND RULE

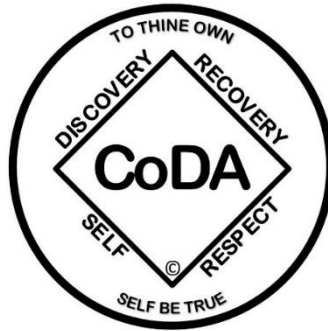
- G. Occasionally, a member(s) may engage in unsafe behavior by not respecting the boundaries of others, or someone may perceive that to happen. In such a situation, any member may call for a "time out" or "thirty seconds." During a time out or thirty seconds, everyone ceases talking and spends time seeking guidance from their Higher Power. At the end of the thirty seconds, someone calls "time," and members say the **CoDA** Serenity Prayer before resuming the meeting.

SECTION FIVE: **CODATEEN **PARENTAL/GUARDIAN APPROVAL FORM,** **FOUNDATIONAL DOCUMENTS AND OTHER** **CODATEEN MEETING MATERIALS****

PARENTAL / GUARDIAN APPROVAL FORM

Once your CoDAteen meeting has been established, permission from the teen's parent or guardian is required to be sent to the Adult Host/Meeting Sponsor's using the [CoDAteen Parent/Guardian Approval Form](#) Parent/Guardian Approval Form

The Preamble, Welcome (long or short), Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions must be read at every meeting.

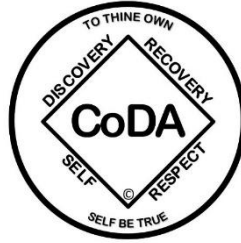


CODATEEN PREAMBLE

CoDAteen, a part of Co-Dependents Anonymous, is a Fellowship of young people 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 CoDAteen, 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 CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous, we can each realize a new joy, acceptance and serenity in our lives.



CODATEEN WELCOME

(Long Version)

We welcome you to CoDAteen, a part of 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 family members, parents, guardians, caregivers, teachers, other adults, and even our friends**, 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 CoDAteen 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 – 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 CoDAteen and 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.



CODATEEN WELCOME

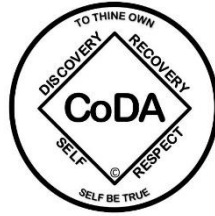
(Short Version)

We welcome you to CoDAteen, a part of Co-Dependents Anonymous - a program of recovery from codependency, 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.

Codependence is a deeply-rooted, compulsive behavior. It is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional families and 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.

We have all learned to survive life, but in CoDAteen we are learning to live life. Through applying the Twelve Steps and principles found in CoDA to our daily lives and relationships, both present and past, we can experience a new freedom from our self-defeating lifestyles. Our sharing helps us to free the emotional bonds of our past and the compulsive control of our present.

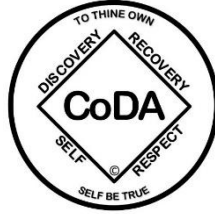
No matter how traumatic your past or despairing your present may seem, there is hope for a new day in the program of CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous. May you find a new strength within to be that which God intended - Precious and Free.



THE CODATEEN 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 our 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 codependent teens and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

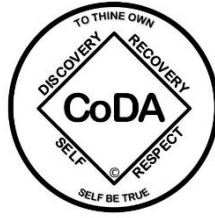
"The Twelve Steps are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc



THE CODATEEN TWELVE TRADITIONS OF CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS^{©*}

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDAteen 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 CoDAteen is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.
4. Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDAteen as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose: to carry its message to other CoDAteens who still suffer.
6. A CoDAteen group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the CoDAteen name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.
7. Every CoDAteen group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. CoDAteen should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. CoDAteen, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. CoDAteen has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the CoDAteen 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 public forms of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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THE TWELVE PROMISES OF CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS

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 presence. 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.

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IN THIS MOMENT AFFIRMATIONS

IN THIS MOMENT, I am happy.

IN THIS MOMENT, I am my own best friend.

IN THIS MOMENT, I love myself just the way I am.

IN THIS MOMENT, I do something I enjoy and plan something special to look forward to.

IN THIS MOMENT, I am not affected by others' emotions, opinions, or approval of me.

IN THIS MOMENT, I take responsibility for myself, and I let you do the same.

IN THIS MOMENT, I say "no" without feeling selfish.

IN THIS MOMENT, I live through this day only and do not tackle my whole life problems at once.

IN THIS MOMENT, I have the courage to ask for help and let go of the outcome.

IN THIS MOMENT, I ask for the willingness to talk about what is bothering me and turn it over to a Higher Power of my own understanding.

IN THIS MOMENT, I enjoy the new sense of freedom I feel by "letting go."

IN THIS MOMENT, I strengthen my mind. I study and learn something useful. I read something that requires effort, thought, and concentration.

IN THIS MOMENT, I am patient.

IN THIS MOMENT, I am grateful for all that I have.

IN THIS MOMENT, I speak calmly and with respect.

IN THIS MOMENT, I am courteous and tolerant of other's struggles.

IN THIS MOMENT, I release myself from worry and indecision and turn them over to my Higher Power.

IN THIS MOMENT, I feel all my feelings, including peace, calm, happiness, and excitement, or even when I feel pain, anger, despair, or hopelessness. They help me to discover who I am.

IN THIS MOMENT I recognize my feelings are important; they are neither good nor bad.

IN THIS MOMENT, I am courageous.

IN THIS MOMENT, I enjoy all the beauty that surrounds me.

IN THIS MOMENT, I respect my boundaries and the boundaries of others.

- Physically, I am aware of keeping a safe, respectful, and comfortable distance between you and me.
- Emotionally, I keep an imaginary bubble around me and courageously trust my own feelings. This bubble guards me and helps keep out the things that are not true about me.
- Intellectually, I do my own thinking and talking. I allow others the same privilege. I listen without interrupting and allow others to have their own feelings.

SUGGESTIONS FOR CODATEENS

DO'S AND DON'TS

1. Do remember you are not the only one who is having problems with relationships.
2. Do look for help in CoDAteen and Co-Dependents Anonymous.
3. Do learn all you can about codependency.
4. Do be honest with yourself and others.
5. Do use your talents in ways that interest you.
6. Do develop healthy boundaries.
7. Do remember that you may not be the only member of your family who is emotionally involved with codependency.
8. Do learn to forgive yourself and others - you only hurt yourself by holding grudges.
9. Do find a CoDAteen member or a safe person outside of your family to confide in.
10. Do take a daily inventory and admit your faults to one person. (Step Ten)
11. Do trust your Higher Power and spend time in prayer and meditation. (Step Eleven)
12. Do pass on your knowledge of CoDAteen to others. (Step Twelve)
13. Don't make it easy for anyone to abuse themselves or others by covering up for them and taking on their responsibility. (Don't enable others.)
14. Don't try to change anyone's behavior. You can't. Only they can.
15. Don't argue with anyone who is angry. Your safety may be at risk.
16. Don't try to get revenge on anyone who has treated you unfairly. The situation will only get worse.
17. Don't take it personally when anyone blames you for their bad moods.
18. Don't use drugs or alcohol as a means of escaping the family situation or to not feel your feelings.
19. Don't condemn, judge, or criticize yourself or others; remember that codependency is a disease of silence, self-neglect, and abandonment.
20. Don't take your parents or other people's problems as the number one thing in your life.
21. Don't expect things to get better overnight.
22. Don't expect to change anyone other than yourself.
23. Don't allow self-pity to grow.
24. Don't let other peoples' problems, or your own, overwhelm you. You can say the Serenity Prayer and use the tools of the CoDAteen program to turn it over to your Higher Power.

CODATEEN TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

What are recovery tools?

The map for our recovery from codependency includes the CoDAteen Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, attending CoDAteen meetings, working the program with a sponsor, trusting in a Higher Power, and using other CoDAteen recovery tools. If we are willing to use these tools daily, we can succeed at living happier and more meaningful lives.

These tools may include:

- Asking for Help - Reaching out to others may be difficult. Some of us fear rejection, making it hard to open up to other people. However, in recovery we learn to ask for help when needed, from our Higher Power, sponsor, CoDAteen members, or trusted friends.
- Telephone, Texting, What's App, other Electronic Messaging - Those of us who have the convenience of cell phones allow us to connect to others in real time, so we are never too far away from support.
- Telephone List - Most meetings keep a phone list of CoDAteen members and/or adult hosts/meeting sponsors who are available to those who wish to reach out.
- Social Media – CoDAteen members often connect with each other worldwide on social media. This is especially true in areas with few face to face meetings and CoDAteen members.
- Sponsorship – CoDAteen sponsors guide other CoDAteens in working the CoDAteen Steps and Traditions. They listen carefully and share their experience, strength, and hope. As sponsees, we may share parts of our journal, our Fourth Step inventory, or letters to a family member with our sponsor. (For more information, see the CoDA pamphlet, [Sponsorship: What's in it for Me?](#))
- Literature – Reading CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature about codependency as seen through the eyes of others who have gone through what we have experienced, can provide new perspectives and support for the CoDAteen. (CoDA literature is available in English and Spanish for purchase at corepublications.org)

- Slowing down and Living in the Present - In stressful moments, deep breathing may help us to collect our thoughts, so we are able to reflect on what is happening in the moment. We can acknowledge that we cannot change past events. The future does not yet exist. When we concentrate on today, most of us find that we have whatever it is we need for the moment. (For example, food, shelter, clothing, a job, friends, health, a Higher Power in our lives.) When we take life “one day at a time,” it becomes manageable.
- Slogans - Slogans can be used by members during sharing and in times of stress. They may be considered “thought stoppers” to be used repeatedly when obsessive, thinking threatens. See “Slogans” and “In this Moment Affirmations.”

THE SLOGANS

LIVE AND LET LIVE -- To get the most out of your life, don't judge or criticize others or concern yourself about what they do.

FIRST THINGS FIRST -- Do first what's most important - you'll get more done. It's a great way to organize your time and energy.

THINK -- Hold back that rash word or thoughtless action.

THINK -- about ways to improve yourself.

THINK -- before you make decisions.

EASY DOES IT -- Haste makes waste - of time and effort. Relax - get rid of tension and rushing.

LET GO AND LET GOD -- You can't fix everything that's wrong with the world, and with your family and friends. Let it go! God can't work in our lives if we're standing in the way.

ONE DAY AT A TIME -- Today is the most important day of your life. Use it. Forget yesterday - and don't worry about what might happen tomorrow.

LISTEN AND LEARN -- There's something of value to be learned from everyone you meet. Look for it and use it.

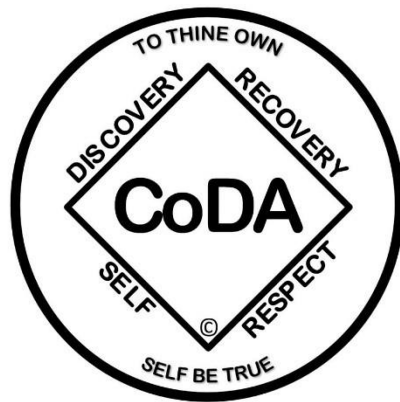
Revisions to be presented at 2024 CoDA Service Conference

C.O.P.E. – Cut out pleases everyone.

Meeting Makers Make it

FEAR – Face everything and recover

More Will Be Revealed



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