

**DRAFT for endorsement**

**CSC 2024**

**Living Our Recovery  
Through Service**

**Co-Dependents Anonymous**

***Living our Recovery Through Service***

is CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature.

All rights reserved

This publication may not be reproduced or photocopied  
without written permission of  
Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.

First Edition month 2024

First Printing month 2024

For additional copies  
of this booklet and all other  
CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature:

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

Email: [info@corepublications.org](mailto:info@corepublications.org)

For more information about CoDA:

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

Email: [info@coda.org](mailto:info@coda.org)

Phone: 1-602-277-7991

Toll Free: 1-888-444-2359

Spanish Toll Free: 1-888-444-2379

ISBN #

## Table of Contents

The CoDA Service Prayer.....	4
Introduction: A Doorway to Connection, Self-esteem, and Healthy and Loving Relationships .....	5
Gifts of Being of Service in CoDA .....	6
The Five Parts of the CoDA Recovery Pie .....	9
The CoDA Service Structure .....	11
The CoDA Informed Group Conscience Decision Making Process .....	13
What is Service in CoDA?.....	15
Service in Meetings .....	16
Service in Intergroup, Regional Group, or Voting Entity.....	18
Service in CoDA World.....	19
The Principles of CoDA's Twelve Traditions.....	20
A Thoughtful Balance .....	34
We Live our Recovery Through Service.....	38
Is it Codependence or is it Service? .....	43
I am a trusted servant. I do not govern.....	44
I don't have to do it all and I don't have to do it perfectly.....	45
It will get done, even if I don't do it.....	46
I don't have to wait to serve; service is my road to recovery.....	48
Setting healthy boundaries in service .....	49
Service is any contribution I make to CoDA that aids my recovery and someone else's.....	51
Learning to take the bitter with the sweet.....	53
Self-supporting starts with service.....	55
My Service Story.....	57
Dare to Serve .....	58
CoDA World Service Committees and Boards .....	59
<i>The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous</i> .....	60
<i>The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous</i> .....	61
<i>The Twelve Service Concepts of Co-Dependents Anonymous</i> .....	62

## CoDA Service Prayer

Higher Power, please help us stay mindful in our service work, reminding us that we do not seek personal power, nor do we govern or control others to advance our personal agendas.

Instead, we practice:

- Anonymity
- Humility
- Tolerance
- Gratitude
- Amends, and
- Forgiveness.

DRAFT CSC 2024

## **Service is a Doorway to Connection, Self-esteem, and Healthy and Loving Relationships**

*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.*

– Step Twelve of Co-Dependents Anonymous

“Our Twelve Steps and their spiritual principles help us to establish our recovery in our relationship with God, ourselves, and others. They offer us spiritual guidelines to help us work with others. Service work in CoDA enables us to put these spiritual guidelines into practice. It embraces a healthy spirit of giving and enables CoDA to exist. Through service work, we acknowledge and esteem every person and their recovery, talents, and abilities. Service work enables us to deepen the recovery we experience and allows God’s gift of recovery to touch the hearts and minds of other codependents.”

– *Co-Dependents Anonymous*, Third Edition, page 87

*Living our Recovery Through Service*, is a new, expanded version of its predecessor, *Carrying The Message*. Members of the CoDA Fellowship with deep experience and a zest for service, decided it was time to share their love of service as a vital aspect of their recovery with the Fellowship.

The vision for *Living our Recovery Through Service* is to lift up the many spiritual gifts and growth that flow from contributing our time and talents to the CoDA Fellowship.

## Gifts We Receive from Being of Service in CoDA

Being of service in CoDA has been described as the fast track to recovery and the diamond lane of recovery. Here are some short quotes from a variety of CoDA members who have shared the gifts they have received as a result of service in CoDA. Many in our Fellowship speak of service as an unexpected way to accelerate growth and healing:

“I never imagined that by working the Steps and Traditions I would be propelled forward to another level of recovery. This was an amazing unexpected gift.”

“Being of service lets me feel connected and part of something bigger than myself.”

“I discovered I have something valuable to contribute.”

“I break through isolation.”

“It gives me an opportunity to recognize and work through my character defects: perfectionism, the need to control, the need to caretake, and my feelings of fear, guilt, and shame.”

“Service helps to ensure that the meetings I attend will continue to be available for me and the next person.”

“Giving service teaches me to take responsibility for my own needs.”

“I view my service in CoDA on a continuum. At different times I serve differently. I choose the amount of time and

energy I devote to service, depending on my life circumstances.”

“Service gives me a chance to practice recovery in my relationships with others in the CoDA program.”

“It is fun to hang out with others in recovery outside of meetings. I have learned about friendship and problem solving as a team, as equal partners.”

“I was so afraid of doing it wrong, but I volunteered to help anyway, because I felt that small, still voice inside was encouraging me. Eventually, I discovered that the small, still voice was the higher power of my understanding. Wow, thank you CoDA!”

“I met my sponsor when we both served in the same world service committee. I felt comfortable enough to ask for help in a way I had not with people I knew from meetings.”

“Practicing healthy relationships in the program helps me in all my relationships.”

“In having the courage to be a sponsor, I discovered I have something worthwhile to pass on to others.”

“Active participation in service helps me learn how to set healthy priorities in my life.”

“It might be the way I learn to delegate, to let go, and still be responsible for my commitment.”

“Participating in service can be a way I learn to know when I have over-committed, giving me the

chance to ask for help.”

“I learn I am equal to all others.”

“It teaches me balance; when to say “yes” and when to say “no.”

“Sponsorship offers me the chance to use my talents to support the recovery of others and surprisingly myself.”

“I have discovered new talents I never knew I had.”

“My service in CoDA ebbs and flows, depending on the amount of time and energy I am able to devote to it. Service is a major part of my recovery journey.”

“In times of extreme stress and enforced isolation, I have wrapped my CoDA program around me. I thank my Higher Power for the technology that kept me connected. This allowed me to reach out and give service together with others to pass on the message of recovery.”



## Five Parts of The CoDA Recovery Pie



### The Secret Ingredient Is Service

The Five Parts of the CoDA Recovery Program are found in the *Newcomer Handbook*, Second Edition, 2021

1. Attending Meetings
2. Sharing and Fellowship
3. Working the Steps
4. Sponsorship
5. Service

1. What percentage of my recovery do I put into each part of the pie?

---

---

2. Which parts of the pie am I underworking or overworking?

---

---

3. How do I feel about each area of the pie?

Attending Meetings

---

Sharing and Fellowship

---

Working the Steps

---

Sponsorship

---

Service

---

4. Are there any areas of my recovery that I could invite my Higher Power into?

---

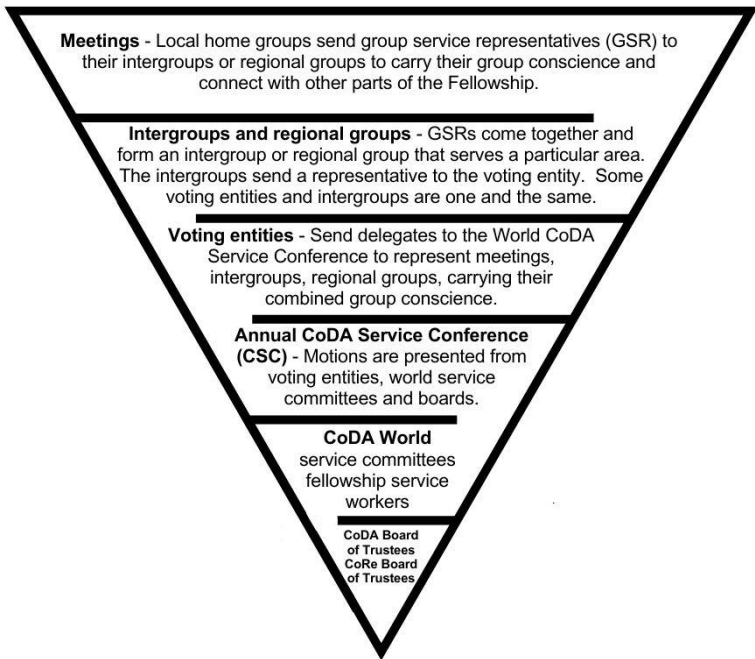
---

5. What actions can I take to become more willing in these areas?

---

---

# Service Structure of Co-Dependents Anonymous



The structure of Co-Dependents Anonymous can be visualized as an inverted pyramid.

The broad top of the pyramid represents the members and meetings that make up the CoDA Fellowship. This is where the authority, power, and direction resides within the Fellowship. The voices of CoDA members are reflected in their informed group conscience decisions while considering some basic principles of the Traditions, such as unity, humility, and anonymity.

The authority, voice, and power of the local groups flows through their trusted servants to intergroups, regional groups, and voting entities (VE). Voting entities elect delegates who attend the annual CoDA Service Conference (CSC). The delegates carry the meeting and regional group conscience with them to the annual CSC, where they vote, reflecting the will of the Fellowship.

Towards the bottom point of the pyramid, we find the CoDA World Service Committees, which are composed of CoDA members who volunteer to serve the Fellowship in a variety of functions.

The tip of the pyramid is the CoDA Board of Trustees, whose volunteer members are elected at the CoDA Service Conference. The CoDA Board is responsible for the legal and financial management of CoDA, Inc. Board members are trusted servants who act for the Fellowship between CoDA Service Conferences.

CoDA Resource Publications, Inc. (CoRe) is a separate non-profit corporation that publishes and distributes CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature, coins, and other CoDA items which are sold on [corepublications.org](http://corepublications.org). CoRe sales enable the Fellowship to be self-supporting.

At every part of the pyramid, we use the group conscience decision making process, ideally to reach a consensus or a majority vote. This process is the foundation for the entire service structure of CoDA.

## The CoDA Informed Group Conscience Decision Making Process

“Service decisions are not emergencies. Sometimes, the group conscience can be cumbersome and time consuming. Yet it can teach patience and acceptance of others and their struggles.” (*Traditionally Speaking*, p 10)

The informed group conscience decision making process involves:

- Connecting with and trusting our Higher Power
- Willingness to share
- Willingness to listen to all the information including all individual points of view
- Mutual respect even when we disagree
- Patience
- Trust
- Voting
- Acceptance of the result
- Willingness to learn to work within all of the *Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*

It is important for groups to have monthly business meetings to take care of the concerns and business of the group. This is an opportunity to volunteer for service and be voted in by the group. Healthy and safe meetings rotate service positions. A group conscience can be called by any member at any time to address issues that may arise.

CoDA's 30 Second Rule may be called when disturbances arise or the discussion becomes unmanageable. After 30 seconds of silence has been observed, we say the *Serenity Prayer* and resume our discussion.

Groups may take a group inventory annually and, when needed, to solve problems that may arise. The group conscience helps groups gain perspective on how they are doing and highlights its strengths and weaknesses. Group inventories can be found in *The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Workbook*, and *Traditionally Speaking: Finding Solutions* booklet.

More information can be found in the Fellowship Service Manual (FSM), and the booklets *Traditionally Speaking: Finding Solutions* and *Building CoDA Community: Healthy Meetings Matter*.

DRAFT CSC 2024

## What is Service in CoDA?

When we work *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*, we will discover ways to serve the Fellowship that are personally satisfying, challenge us, and help us grow. Service opportunities are always available to those who look and listen.

In CoDA, each of us is free to find the ways to serve that are right for us. If we are doing more than we are comfortable with, we may need to reconsider our motives and our methods. If we have been resistant to becoming involved and now feel we want to volunteer, opportunities are always available. Prayer, meditation, and checking in with our intuition and the Higher Power of our own choosing, can help make our way clear.

Being of service in CoDA can be a new beginning, a chance to work with others in healthier and more loving ways.

“For me, service is an antidote to the self-centered nature of the disease of codependence; service is a doorway to self-esteem, connection, and unconditional love.”

- CoDA member

“Service allows me to pass on what has been given to me so freely by the Fellowship of Co-Dependents Anonymous, sponsors, and fellows.”

- CoDA member

## In our meetings, we can volunteer to serve in many ways.

- Attend regularly to ensure the meeting continues to exist
- Commit to a home group
- Work CoDA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
- Share in CoDA meetings
- Listen respectfully to others in the group
- Open the room for the meeting
- Greet newcomers
- Set up the chairs
- Lead a meeting
- During the meeting, read one of CoDA's four foundation documents: The Preamble, The Welcome, The Twelve Steps, The Twelve Traditions
- Read one of the following which may include: What is Crosstalk?, CoDA Guide to Sharing, For Safety Sake, CoDA's Twelve Promises, or other CoDA meeting readings
- Read the CoDA literature of the day that the group is studying, such as *Co-Dependents Anonymous*, our basic text, also called the CoDA book or the blue book
- Be the time keeper, if required
- Contribute Seventh Tradition funds to support the meeting and CoDA as a whole
- Take a turn serving as an officer, such as secretary or treasurer. Descriptions can be found in the Fellowship Service Manual.



- Ensure that a portion of the group's Seventh Tradition funds go to the intergroup, regional group, voting entity (VE), and CoDA World. See [coda.org](http://coda.org)
- Ensure that CoDA Conference endorsed literature is ordered from [corepublications.org](http://corepublications.org) or your country's designated CoDA publisher
- Serve as the Group Service Representative (GSR) to the intergroup or regional group carrying the conscience of your group
- Sponsor or co-sponsor other CoDA members
- Ensure that CoDA is not part of an outside organization, business, religious or personal
- Facilitate a group conscience or business meeting
- Start a new meeting
- Start a Step and Tradition study group
- Add your name to the meeting contact list
- Become the meeting contact on [coda.org](http://coda.org) or your country's CoDA website
- Ensure the meeting is listed and updated annually at [coda.org](http://coda.org) or your country's CoDA website
- Submit your writing to the CoDA Literature Committee or to Co-NNections
- Safeguard the Traditions

**In our intergroups, regional groups, and voting entities,  
we can volunteer to serve in many ways.**

- Maintain a website, email address, or phone number to handle CoDA inquiries
- Serve as an officer on a rotating basis
- Attend an intergroup, regional group, or voting entity meeting
- Help organize events such as a mini-conference or conference, picnics, camping trips, or other fun-filled fellowship activities
- Co-host a CoDA Teen meeting
- Develop and present a workshop based on CoDA principles and CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature
- Assist your Voting Entity to host the annual CoDA Service Conference and International CoDA Convention
- Take the CoDA message into hospitals and institutions
- Maintain a current CoDA speakers' list
- Keep the meeting list current on [coda.org](http://coda.org) and your local and national websites
- Serve as a delegate to the CoDA Service Conference
- Assist the delegate in gathering local group conscience to take to the, CoDA Service Conference
- Share information from CoDA World with your local Fellowship
- Submit your writing to the CoDA Literature Committee or Co-NNections
- Safeguard the Traditions

## **In CoDA World, we can volunteer to serve in many ways.**

- Serve as a delegate for your voting entity at the annual CoDA Service Conference
- Join a CoDA World Service committee
  - CoDAteen
  - Communications
  - Co-NNections
  - Delegates Relations
  - Events
  - Finance
  - Hospital and Institutions
  - Issues Mediation
  - Literature
  - Outreach
  - Spanish Outreach
  - World Communications
- Submit an application to become a member of the Board of Trustees of CoDA, Inc
- Submit an application to become a member of the CoDA Resource Publications, Inc. (CoRe)
- Work within your voting entity group conscience to create a motion to bring to the annual CoDA Service Conference
- Volunteer to assist your voting entity to host the annual CoDA Service Conference
- Submit your writing to the CoDA Literature Committee or Co-NNections
- Safeguard the Traditions

## What to do when conflicts arise in service:

- Pray for guidance
- Talk with your sponsor
- Take it to a group conscience or business meeting.
- Consult CoDA literature, for example
  - *Experiences with Crosstalk* booklet
  - The CoDA Welcome regarding “other powerful addictions”
  - *Co-Dependents Anonymous*, Third Edition, Chapter Four, “Service to Others”
  - *Building CoDA Community: Healthy Meetings Matter* booklet
  - *The Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions Workbook of Co-Dependents Anonymous*
  - *The Traditionally Speaking* booklet
  - “Dealing with Disagreements” on [coda.org](http://coda.org)
- Do a group inventory using CoDA’s Twelve Traditions.
- Examples of group inventory lists are found in the literature listed above.
- Consult local intergroup, voting entity, or regional group..
- Consult Issues Mediation Committee.
- Review the Fellowship Service Manual, FSM, on [coda.org](http://coda.org).

## Principles of CoDA's Twelve Traditions

When we are new to CoDA, we tend to focus on going to CoDA meetings, learning about the disease of codependency through the Patterns and Characteristics of Codependents, working *The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous* with a sponsor, co-sponsor, or in a step study group, and taking comfort from CoDA's Twelve Promises. We hear, and even take our turn reading *The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*, all the while wondering why they are read and what they mean.

While CoDA's Twelve Steps provide us with a blueprint for understanding our disease of codependence, reconciling our past, and healing our relationships with ourselves, our Higher Power, and others, CoDA's Twelve Traditions take us forward, giving us guidelines and boundaries for our service work and living our lives.

We now invite you to consider *The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous*, what their principles mean to you, and how you might apply those principles in your service work and your life.

Each of the following pages contain a tradition, along with a few words that summarize its principles, and its corresponding prayer. There is space for you to write your thoughts, followed by a quote from a CoDA member, for inspiration.

## Tradition One

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.

### Principles: Unity and Common Welfare

#### Tradition One Prayer

Higher Power, deepen my awareness to include the welfare of the whole, setting aside my discomfort and personal agenda. Help me speak my truth and allow others the same privilege, trusting that the spirit of unity supports my own recovery.

#### What do the Tradition One principles mean to me:

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*I find this tradition as an important guideline to always remember. I get to loosen my grip on my opinions and exhale. Our spiritual structure is for all people who seek recovery in CoDA for all walks of life in whatever stage they find themselves. It is a safe place to be open without judgment.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Two

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.

**Principles:** Equality and Trusting the Process

### Tradition Two Prayer

Higher Power, grant me the humility to be a trusted servant, remembering that no one person governs. Together we seek the guidance and loving expression of Your will through our informed group conscience process.

**What do the Tradition Two principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

*As a tool in my everyday life, Tradition Two reminds me that without my program, trusting the process is impossible. I want to govern and be the authority or I give that power to others. With my loving Higher Power, I can be of service in all my relationships, inside or outside the fellowship. I can let go of what I think the outcomes should be, turn my emotional attention to my Higher Power, and start to become an equal and loving participant in all my relationships. I learn to trust myself, the process, others, and to become part of. The seeds of humility and willingness begin to take root.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Three

The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.

**Principles:** Acceptance and Inclusion

### Tradition Three Prayer

Higher Power, help me let go of my fear and expectations in my desire for healthy and loving relationships. Grant me courage to be honest, open-minded, and willing to acknowledge healthy boundaries as I accept myself and others.

**What do the Tradition Three principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

*For me, Tradition Three speaks of inclusion. All are welcome in CoDA. All genders, all races, all ethnicities, all languages, all spiritual beliefs, and non-beliefs are welcome in the CoDA program. Over time, I have come to accept myself and others.*

- CoDA member



## Tradition Four

Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole.

**Principles:** Autonomy and Responsibility

### Tradition Four Prayer

Higher Power, let me embrace the spiritual principles of autonomy and unity. Help me become aware of how my decisions affect other people and the community as a whole. May I honor You, using the gifts I have received to give service as I recover.

**What do the Tradition Four principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

*CoDA meetings and groups are united by the CoDA principles and CoDA literature. I appreciate the consistency, familiarity, and unity I find in CoDA meetings wherever I go, as they read the foundational documents and follow the same basic recommendations for meetings. I also enjoy that meetings have their own flair as guided by the group conscience and Higher Power.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Five

Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to other codependents who still suffer.

**Principle:** Primary Purpose

### Tradition Five Prayer

Higher Power, help me carry the CoDA message of hope, sharing my struggles as well as my triumphs with other codependents who still suffer. May I listen with an open heart and an open mind. Help me accept responsibility for my part in creating more loving relationships and healthier CoDA meetings.

**What does the Tradition Five principle mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

*Tradition Five keeps me grounded in recovery, during meetings, in service work, and in my relationships. When I get off track, I can consider my primary purpose, which guides me to choose gentleness, compassion, and love for myself and others.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Six

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.

**Principles:** Focus and Accountability

### Tradition Six Prayer

Higher Power, help me keep my focus on the primary spiritual aim and the power of the CoDA principles. Show me how to build equal relationships with others, releasing control, the misuse of power, and overconcern with material possessions.

**What do the Tradition Six principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

*As a humble and spiritual program, I find that diversion from humility leads to arrogance and exploitation. Exploitation can lead to opinions. Opinions vary from one to another. If that were to continue, my humble CoDA program could become unrecognizable. Staying focused within our traditions, our program flows like clear unmuddied water. - CoDA member*

## Tradition Seven

Every CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

### Principles: Self-support and Interdependence

#### Tradition Seven Prayer

Higher Power, help me become self-supporting; financially, emotionally, physically, and spiritually. Carry me through my discomfort as I become accountable for my behavior. Guide me to give service and financial support humbly, wholeheartedly, and enthusiastically to ensure the health and growth of our CoDA community. May I cooperate as an equal partner in all my relationships so all may benefit, including me.

#### What do the Tradition Seven principles mean to me:

---

---

---

---

*For me, being self-supporting means being accountable, taking responsibility for all my needs, physically, emotionally, financially, spiritually, intellectually, and allowing others the same privilege. Self-care is a foundation for thriving and creativity. I am able to live on my side of the street and allow others the dignity of being themselves. I no longer take responsibility for everything or give when I have nothing to give. I have choices and I respect the choices of others in all my relationships.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Eight

Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

**Principles:** Humility and Generosity of Spirit

### Tradition Eight Prayer

Higher Power, may I appreciate that each of us is a precious creation with unique and valuable abilities and talents. May we contribute as equals to seek shared solutions for the benefit of all. Give me courage to say yes to service requests that will help me grow.

**What do the Tradition Eight principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

*I perform CoDA service work with a sense of gratitude for what the program has gifted me. I have grown into a more fully-functioning human being. My relationships with others have become more healthy as a result. I contribute my time and energy to CoDA as I am able. I take my time and thoughtful consideration before saying 'yes' or 'no' to new service opportunities.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Nine

CoDA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

**Principles:** Spirituality, Stewardship, and Flexibility

### Tradition Nine Prayer

Higher Power, support me as I do my part, humbly sharing in the rotation of service, remembering that no individual is in charge. May I loosen my control and accept the informed group conscience as an expression of Your loving spiritual guidance.

**What do the Tradition Nine principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

*I pondered the seeming contradiction between not being organized and having service committees. I believe that CoDA, as a spiritual program, is not organized, meaning we don't tell people how they must do their recovery. The service structure can have some organization; trusted servants are responsible to carry out the will of the members.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Ten

CoDA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the CoDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

**Principles:** Safety, Integrity, Neutrality, Boundaries

### Tradition Ten Prayer

Higher Power, encourage me to contribute to a safe environment by keeping our meetings focused on CoDA recovery. Help me stay away from hurtful controversy and outside issues, creating space for healthy relationships to grow.

**What do the Tradition Ten principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*It was hard for me to let go of my opinions and judgements. In CoDA service work, I have learned to listen and cooperate for the greater good, letting go of my compulsion to convince people that I am right. Acceptance is a new gift I'm practicing. I have developed stronger internal boundaries and deeper acceptance of myself and others.*

- CoDA member

## Tradition Eleven

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.

### Principles: Attraction and Respect

#### Tradition Eleven Prayer

Higher Power, may I be mindful of remaining anonymous in all forms of public communication. May my life reflect the CoDA principles, attracting new faces to our Fellowship. Help me remember to speak for myself, not for others, or for CoDA as a whole.

#### What do the Tradition Eleven principles mean to me:

---

---

---

---

*I used to struggle with the concept of attraction versus promotion and was asked early in my recovery to find that difference. I found that CoDA is spread by other sources and not promoted to “sell the program.” I was advised to find a meeting in the local newspaper from a friend. I am happy to know that no one person speaks for CoDA; information about the program is provided by the Fellowship through the library of CoDA literature, the CoDA World website, workshops, and recovery fairs to carry the CoDA message. - CoDA member*



## Tradition Twelve

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions; ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

**Principles:** Spirituality and Anonymity

### Tradition Twelve Prayer

Higher Power, thank you for the principle of anonymity as the spiritual foundation of CoDA's Twelve Traditions. Help me let go of expectations and my need for recognition. May I remember to base my decisions on principles rather than personalities.

**What do the Tradition Twelve principles mean to me:**

---

---

---

---

*The equality and humility I learn from the principle of anonymity allows me to separate facts from my feelings. I can perform loving acts without thought of reward, enjoying being of service. I can turn my attention away from mine or anyone else's personality, towards all the spiritual principles held within the program. These principals were beyond the limits I knew before - what an adventure! This helps me 'do the next right loving thing' even when I think my ideas are better. I deepen my integrity and honesty, I learn to say 'yes' and 'no' appropriately. With much relief I realize I'm not the center of the universe, it's not all about me. I am cradled in faith and love.*

- CoDA member

## A Thoughtful Balance

*As we continue to give to others what God has given to us, we continue to receive greater gifts. Our recovery becomes an exciting and rewarding journey of spiritual fulfillment. We gain a balance of all life's experiences, from joy and delight to sorrow and loss. We no longer live life in the extremes. We allow ourselves to become more open to God's continuing miracles and spiritual transformation.*

- Co-Dependents Anonymous,  
Third Edition, page 80

As we attend CoDA meetings consistently, study CoDA literature, and work CoDA's Steps and Traditions, we become aware that somehow, somewhere, someone has provided the resources we use to recover. We feel a glimmer of gratitude and wonder.

We become curious about how these resources came to be. We come to understand that CoDA has been created by and runs on volunteers, who are CoDA fellows, just like us.

If we have felt overloaded and overwhelmed at home, at work, at school, and in our personal relationships, we may resist extending ourselves to take on one more responsibility. We cannot picture volunteering at our CoDA meetings, let alone at intergroup, regional group, voting entity, or CoDA World. We feel that getting to a meeting is all we can do. We may even believe that to say "yes" to service would mean we are

practicing our disease. It may seem that the only healthy answer always has to be “no.”

As children, we believed and absorbed the messages we heard about ourselves in our families of origin, schools, and our cultures. As adult codependents, we have reinforced these messages, invented a few new variations, in an effort to keep ourselves safe.

Here are a few examples of self-limiting beliefs:

“I am not ready to serve. Others know better.”

“I’m not good enough.”

“I don’t know how to do that.”

“I can’t do anything right.”

“I cannot do one more thing.”

“I am too exhausted to help.”

“I might make a mistake.”

Because of our step work and because we have opened our hearts and minds to the experience, strength, and hope of other recovering codependents in our meetings and in our literature, we begin to question the validity of some of our extreme and limiting attitudes.

We become ready to ask ourselves, “Is it possible for me to contribute in some way?” We do not have to do it all. Service in CoDA means we simply do our part. We serve together and we recover together with other CoDA fellows.

We take a leap of faith when we step out of our old isolating habits and step into service. It may feel scary and awkward to

say “yes.” We wonder if we really can do it. We do it anyway and we find some of our anxiety eases, our self-esteem increases, and we feel more connected with our Higher Power, our fellows and CoDA as a whole.

CoDA is a “we” program. Our recovery is meant to include service because we recover best when we devote some time and energy to working with other recovering codependents. We do not recover in isolation. We need to interact with others who, like us, desire healthy and loving relationships and are willing to do what it takes to get there. Service is where we practice our new found recovery attitudes and behaviors, including setting healthy boundaries, sharing the work, using “I” statements, and exploring emotional sobriety.

To find our next right loving action, we can look to our Steps and Traditions, our own inner guidance, and guidance from the Higher Power of our understanding. We can discuss service with our sponsor and other CoDA friends.

Just like any other challenge in our lives, we can apply the CoDA tools to help us incorporate being of service in our recovery program. When we practice the CoDA tools in service, we learn to apply them to any living problem we might encounter. Through giving service, we begin to experience balance and moderation as spiritual principles in our daily lives.

We become willing to look at service with a new perspective. We now see service as integral to our recovery. We work through our codependent patterns, denial, low self-esteem, compliance, control, and avoidance.

Many in service find these tools to be particularly helpful:

- Ask for help
- Pause
- Attend a meeting
- Talk with your CoDA sponsor
- Affirmations
- Slow down and breathe
- Keep a journal
- Get grounded with CoDA literature
- Color in *Joy in the Journey Coloring Book*
- Take time for prayer and meditation and listen for guidance
- Practice patience
- Say “no” or “yes” without feeling guilty
- Let go of the past and the future
- Remember, one day at a time
- Ask myself, "Am I feeling inspired today?"

What tools do you use?

---

---

---

## **We Live our Recovery Through Service**

Living our recovery by being of service means we practice the CoDA principles in all our relationships. It can be as simple as making ourselves available to our Higher Power for our own healing. As we heal, we become more able to hold space for ourselves and others, walking together on the healing journey of recovery.

We may feel moved to do some kind of CoDA service and yet at the same time, we may feel resistant. We find clues and possible solutions to resolving our ambivalence and resistance. As we work the Steps and the Traditions, our recovery deepens, leading us to try out what we have learned.

We can discuss our thoughts and feelings with another member or share our feelings in a meeting. We can ask our Higher Power for guidance and clarity. We can write about our thoughts and feelings, and review them with our sponsor, co-sponsor, or Step and Tradition study group.

It may help to ask ourselves the following questions when we look at what might be underlying our reluctance to give service.

1. Is anything holding me back from participating in service?

---

---

2. Am I waiting to have more recovery before I give service?

---

---

3. Am I avoiding service in order to isolate myself from my group?

---

---

4. Am I avoiding service because I think I have to do it perfectly?

---

---

5. Which codependent patterns and characteristics might be keeping me from being of service?

---

---

6. Does being of service activate my control issues?

---

---

7. Am I volunteering for a particular task because no one can do it “right” but me?

---

---

8. Do I believe smaller tasks are beneath me?

---

---

9. Do I think I have to be in charge?

---

---

10. Do I think if I don't do it, it won't get done?

---

---

11. Am I doing it because I want to or because I think I have to?

---

---

12. Am I doing more than I want to, perpetuating a pattern of over-commitment and burnout?

---

---

13. Do I feel resentful or overwhelmed about the service I am currently doing?

---

---

14. Do I feel like a martyr or a victim?

---

---



15. What feelings come up when I consider volunteering to be a trusted servant?

---

---

16. Is it possible to put aside my old ideas and challenge the beliefs that hold me back?

---

---

17. While considering giving service am I projecting my inner child, inner teen, or family roles onto others or myself?

---

---

18. Am I willing to do my part and let go of the results?

---

---

19. How might I find a healthy balance when I choose to serve?

---

---

20. Is it possible to think of service as an opportunity to grow?

---

---

21. How does service help me to live my recovery and build healthy and loving relationships?

---

---

22. How is service a doorway to connection and self-esteem?

---

---

23. Am I being of service to the newcomer?

---

---

24. What positive service experiences have I had?

---

---

25. What affirmations can I write and use to support myself in service?

---

---

26. As I give service, how will I remind myself to stay in contact with my Higher Power?

---

---

27. Is there a connection between unconditional love and giving service?

---

---

## Is it Codependence, or is it Service?

One CoDA member described the difference between being of service and functioning codependently in this way:

**Codependence:** “If I don’t do it, it won’t get done right.  
The entire burden is on me again.”

**Service:** “I am doing my part within the group, as others are doing their part. Higher Power is in charge, not me.”

As recovering codependents, we may face an inner conflict when it comes to making a commitment to service and following through. We struggle with taking responsibility for being of service in our meeting, in our intergroup, regional group, voting entity, and at CoDA World Service.

We can ask the Higher Power of our own understanding for guidance and willingness to change our view of service which enhances our recovery. This allows growth and expansion in our perception of our ability to help, give, and do. This becomes an opportunity to carry the message to other codependents.

The following stories reflect the experience, strength, and hope of recovering codependents who have found healthy ways to make service part of their recovery.

## **I am a trusted servant. I do not govern.**

When the need to control seems too difficult to overcome, I can simply let go and let my Higher Power take over. For just one task I can choose to live by this principle, set my old way of “doing” aside, and “be” different. I can complete my task as if I believed a Higher Power was in charge, and in the process discover this to be true.

Turning the outcome over to my Higher Power does not absolve me of my responsibility. I still need to show up and do my part. Somehow, the load is lighter. I feel better about what I am doing and experience the freedom to enjoy it.

DRAFT CSC 2024

**I don't have to do it all and  
I don't have to do it perfectly.**

When a litany of harsh criticism plagues my mind, I can use service as an opportunity to quiet that voice. I can begin by reminding myself that I am always loved and accepted by my Higher Power. Then I can choose to start small.

Speaking honestly at a meeting about my need to do everything perfectly, serves me and others in the meeting. As I become willing to take one small action and let go of control and isolation, I make room for more change.

I have the opportunity to discuss my perfectionism with my CoDA sponsor and other fellows outside of my meeting. I can read CoDA literature which addresses this character defect. I can even suggest perfectionism as a topic in a meeting.

## **It will get done, even if I don't do it.**

In the disease of codependency, we are people of extremes. We are either all or nothing. In recovery we learn to strike a healthy balance.

One way I can resolve the dilemma of volunteering for service work in CoDA is to see service as an opportunity to practice setting healthy boundaries. When I recognize I have done all the service work I can or want to do for now, I respect my limits. This is self-care.

It is not always easy to speak up for myself, ask for help, or let others step in. I do not have to do all the service work myself. I can trust that it may or may not get done by others. It may not get done the way I want it. I may not like the results but I accept them. I let go of over-responsibility, trusting that Higher Power is in charge.

I may need to work through my feelings and attitudes about setting healthy internal boundaries. I may be stuck in self-limiting, codependent patterns that are driven by fear or shame.

- I can use the tools I have found in CoDA.
- I can ask for help and support from my sponsor and recovery friends.
- I can request, listen to, and trust my Higher Power's guidance.
- I can share my attitudes about service in CoDA meetings.

- I can explore my feelings more fully by writing in my journal.
- I can work the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions around my confusion, perfectionism, control, over-responsibility, and avoidance.
- My reactions to others in service may remind me of my past and show me how to heal it through living amends to myself and others.
- I can say “yes” or “no” in the moment.
- I may offer other available times.
- I can say “I will let you know.”

I remember that I am part of a group of recovering codependents who are all seeking healthy and loving relationships. We all do our part in order to keep CoDA meetings, intergroups, regional groups, voting entities, and CoDA World healthy and accessible to all. It reminds me that a power greater than myself is running things and I can relax.

**I don't have to wait to serve;  
service is my road to recovery.**

As a newcomer in CoDA, I wondered what I could possibly do in the way of service, particularly in light of my lack of energy. My sponsor suggested I could offer encouragement and support to someone newer than me. I could listen when the newcomers introduced themselves and make a point of remembering their names, writing them down if necessary.

If any of the newcomers were present the following week or at another meeting I attended, I could welcome them by name. This act of kindness seemed small to me at the time. I was used to giving advice and running people's lives. But I noticed that genuine interest, offered without strings, made a great difference to the newer CoDA members. It did not require much energy. It was easy. It was service. And it was the beginning of reaching out to others in a new and simple way.



## Setting healthy boundaries in service

By having boundaries about what I can or want to do in service rather than what I think I ought to do, feels healthy. Serving in this balanced way keeps me from creating or being drawn into drama, control, low self-esteem, or resentment. I serve by relying on a power greater than myself, which is a relief and brings me joy. I am encouraged and find safety when working with others who also prioritize having clearly defined boundaries.

When offering service I can choose to say “yes” to carrying out some tasks and “no” to others. I can look for things to do that fit my skills, interests, energy, and time. Am I allowing outside issues to cloud my I can allow myself to be led by my Higher Power and challenge myself with something new.

I volunteered to serve as co-secretary of a meeting in order to share the workload with another CoDA member and to support our group. I have volunteered for committee assignments which I have been drawn to. I serve and contribute in honest and loving ways with no regrets. As I serve, I remember to place principles before personalities.

The strength of my recovery deepens as I apply the *The Twelve Steps* and *The Twelve Traditions of Co-Dependents Anonymous* in my service work and daily life.

**Service is any contribution I make to CoDA  
that aids my recovery and someone else's.**

I was a workaholic, an intensely ambitious executive involved with not only my own business, but also with a number of charities. I was used to doing what I considered important things with my time. When someone asked me to help set up the chairs at a meeting, I didn't mind, but I didn't think of it as service. I wanted to get on a committee where I could do some good with my organizational skills.

After about a month of assisting the secretary with the chairs, I suggested that someone should take over this responsibility once and for all. They smiled at me and said, "I thought someone had."

I realized that I had dragged myself to this group, week after week, just because I had to help with those chairs. It had never dawned on me that they had been set up at that meeting many times before I joined the group. It was such a small incident, but the lessons I learned were profound.

## Sponsorship is Recovery In Action

I've got to be honest, I find sponsorship one of the most challenging parts of my CoDA recovery program. To make myself available to sponsor another human being feels overwhelming at times. Taking a closer look at why this is so, I uncovered a startling truth. Sponsorship is recovery in action and I have a problem with action. Why is it so difficult for me to take action where sponsorship is concerned?

- I do not want to be someone else's Higher Power.
- I am comfortable in my isolation.
- I am afraid of committing to a sponsee.
- I worry I will not have the right words at the right time.
- I am confused about setting boundaries with a sponsee.

In the process of sponsoring, I discovered a paradox. Sponsoring calls me to be present for another human being in their recovery work, all the while, it leads me to be present for my own recovery. As a sponsor, I am best able to help another recovering codependent, when I am open to my own healing. My attitude about myself changes.

As I listen to my sponsee share insights about their challenges and reflect on what the next loving action may be, I find myself identifying areas where I have grown and areas where I still struggle.

As I share what I have learned, without giving advice, I hear my Higher Power in my own words. I have come to understand this truth: taking a risk to sponsor serves my recovery as much as it serves my sponsee.

My Higher Power has a real sense of humor in this regard. You see, I was asked to be someone's sponsor while we were going through the line at the church cafeteria where a noon CoDA group meets for lunch. So, between deciding on the chicken and broccoli or bar-b-que, my life changed forever.

DRAFT CSC 2024

## Learning to take the bitter with the sweet

Service in CoDA has always helped me to practice my recovery and has brought greater awareness to my codependent patterns and characteristics. This hasn't always been an entirely comfortable experience. However, it's always been a rewarding one and has helped me to slowly and lovingly grow myself up and step nearer to thriving rather than surviving.

Often in service I have been activated into my feelings: anger, sadness, defensiveness, control, and avoidance, all the good ones! I have learned that once this happens, as the CoDA book says, "I revert to old familiar behaviors to deal with current situations." I have become the child or teenage part of myself; I am in reaction rather than response.

By applying my program, I have learned to think, "who does this person represent from my childhood?" I look to my Higher Power for guidance. I lovingly parent myself from within, and soothe my inner child or teenager.

When I got to CoDA, I thought meetings would and should be positive at all times, that service would be devoid of conflict or confrontation, that everything would be unicorns and rainbows. That wasn't and isn't my experience. Being of service in CoDA has helped me to accept and uncover all that I am, functionally and dysfunctionally. I allow myself to receive my Higher Power's unconditional love. I do not have to be perfect and I do not expect others to be perfect either.

I have learned safety comes from within, from my Higher Power, from my inner loving parent, and not from others. Conflict and disagreement are normal parts of healthy and loving relationships. Service truly is the diamond lane of recovery.

DRAFT CSC 2024

## **Self-supporting starts with service**

When I was about six months in CoDA, I started a meeting with some fellows. We had a meeting in a coffee shop and decided on the format of the meeting, and wrote a script using templates from the CoDA website. We found a venue, had it listed on the CoDA website and at our first meeting had a business meeting to vote in trusted servants.

Things were ok for a while and then people started dropping out of service. I carried on, starting to do more of the service others had covered, taking on more responsibility. New people came to the meeting but didn't want to take on service. I carried on feeling good about offering a meeting for the newcomer.

What I didn't realize was that the more responsibility I took on, I was actually caretaking the meeting and all who came. I was living more and more within my disease, especially my control patterns.

Eventually, I started to get resentful and began to act out. I was now living in the false belief that "if I don't take responsibility no one will." I was fully playing out the role of martyr.

It never occurred to me that by taking care of others to the detriment of myself, I was violating others' boundaries. I recognized that I was doing for others what they were able to do for themselves. I had to let go of being enmeshed with the meeting.

The meeting started to not make its rent and my sponsor suggested that it might be useful for me to have a look at Tradition Seven. I prayed and meditated a lot on this problem. I did outreach, calling other CoDA members, and I journaled like crazy. I began to see that the meeting was not supporting itself financially nor was it self-supporting in terms of service. I felt crazy and believed I had to control everything because I was scared; somehow it was all my fault that the meeting was failing.

I suggested that we do a traditions group inventory from the back of the CoDA booklet, *Traditionally Speaking*, in our next business meeting. Not many people stayed for the business meeting but some did. As we went through the inventory, I realized that I needed to step back from controlling and caretaking. When I stepped back, space was created for others to step forward.

After some time away I returned to the meeting, which is still going and available for the newcomer. I came to the incredible realization that equality is only nurtured when I use my CoDA program, let go of my self-will, and trust my Higher Power to guide me.



This page is for you to write your own service story.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

DRAFT CSC 2024

Thank you for being of service.

## **Dare to serve**

“Determining our participation in service work is an individual decision. Once we choose the activity or role, we become open to another dimension of our recovery”

– *Co-Dependents Anonymous*, Third Edition, page 87

Without all of us daring to show up and serve, CoDA would not survive.

Each of us has the ability to share our time and talents. Our personal service contribution is the strength and vitality of the Fellowship of Co-Dependents Anonymous.

We become a part of CoDA's spirit of giving.

Together, the sky is the limit!

## CoDA World Service

Joining a committee sets us on a new path of our recovery journey. Serving on a committee creates a deeper connection with ourselves, our Higher Power, and the CoDA Fellowship. This is the next action on our CoDA adventure.

World service committee members share:

“I was surprised to be accepted as part of the team and my voice was equal. There is no hierarchy. I had never felt such a sense of belonging and unity before.”

“Spending time with other recovering codependents in the committee is fun. I am amazed at the amount of laughter and tears we share.”

“What better place to practice healthy communication, set and respect boundaries, and nurture loving relationships.”

“I learn to accept the decisions of the informed group conscience in the presence of our Higher Power. I have come to respect the power of unity.”

“I feel less alone. I am able to set aside my mask and become my authentic self. What a relief! I have arrived!”

# **Standing CoDA World Committees**

## **Created by CoDA Service Conference**

### **CoDAteen** - [codateen@coda.org](mailto:codateen@coda.org)

CoDAteen is a community of young people whose common purpose is to develop healthy and loving relationships. CoDAteen members work the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous, sponsoring each other. English and Spanish meetings are available.

Each CoDAteen meeting must have two vetted CoDA adult hosts and a sponsoring CoDA group or intergroup. CoDAteen meetings must be registered with CoDAteen and CoDA, Inc.

### **Communications** - [comm@coda.org](mailto:comm@coda.org)

Communications includes two working groups, CoDA Email Team (CET) and CoDA Phone (Cphone). Members field calls and emails worldwide from the Fellowship and general public.

Communications provides content for CoDA Announcements email subscribers and assists voting entities to make use of CoDA Announcements. Communications hosts a virtual monthly Fellowship Forum.

### **Co-NNections** - [connections@coda.org](mailto:connections@coda.org)

A stand-alone committee, Co-NNections provides two online venues for CoDA members to share their recovery-based experience, strength and hope with the Fellowship.

1. Weekly Reading (WR) is a written 'share' emailed to subscribers on a weekly basis.
2. Meeting in Print (MiP) is an online magazine consisting of longer stories, poems, and photographs. It is published quarterly on the CoDA website.

All submissions are vetted to ensure they are in accordance with the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and CoDA's web guidelines. Members of the CoDA Fellowship may submit original content relating to their recovery journey in CoDA by emailing it to the Co-NNections committee.

**Delegates Relations Committee, DRC** [drc@coda.org](mailto:drc@coda.org)

The Delegate Relations Committee offers current delegates information and guidance with their responsibilities at the annual CoDA Service Conference (CSC) and supports them through the year within their voting entities.

The committee informs and assists delegates with knowledge in the structure and the work of CoDA World service, including reviewing and helping delegates understand how World committees, the CoDA Board, and the CoDA Resource Publications, Inc. (CoRe) operate.

**Events, CEC** - [events@coda.org](mailto:events@coda.org)

The CoDA Events Committee plans the annual CoDA Service Conference (CSC) and the annual International CoDA Convention (ICC). Events helps to organize and plan other World CoDA recovery events for the Fellowship. They strive to involve local host communities and bring support to their area.

**Finance** - [finance@coda.org](mailto:finance@coda.org)

The CoDA Finance Committee works with the CoDA treasurer and Board to provide financial oversight, analysis, and advice to the Fellowship of CoDA with respect to:

- Prudent budgeting and investing
- Financial stability
- Monetary resources of the CoDA Fellowship

**Hospitals and Institutions, H&I** - [hosp@coda.org](mailto:hosp@coda.org)

H&I corresponds with institutional residents and facilities who contact by email or post. We supply free CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature in English and Spanish to hospitals, prisons, medical facilities, educational, and social service institutions who request them. CoDA members and CoDA groups are encouraged to donate funds to support Books for Inmates and Institution, which funds this service.

The committee is a resource and support for CoDA members, intergroups, regional groups, and voting entities who serve the Fellowship by bringing the CoDA message of recovery to people in institutions. H&I has an inmate sponsorship program.

**Issues Mediation, IMC** - [imc@coda.org](mailto:imc@coda.org)

The Issues Mediation Committee facilitates meditation for disputes in voting entities, intergroups, and other CoDA entities as needed, beginning with the *Dealing with Disagreements* pamphlet on [coda.org](http://coda.org).

The voting entity liaison (VEL) is an IMC member who monitors and facilitates voting entity delegates to ensure they qualify for the CoDA Service Conference (CSC). During CSC, IMC tracks quorum counts and monitors participant attendance to ensure legitimacy for voting in person and online.

Unlike other committees, whose members simply volunteer to join, IMC members are elected annually at the CoDA Service Conference.

**Literature, CLC** - [literature@coda.org](mailto:literature@coda.org)

Members create new CoDA literature for publication and service pieces to post on [coda.org](http://coda.org). CLC edits and updates existing pieces of literature. All literature is written collaboratively, using an informed group conscience to carry the CoDA message to codependents worldwide who still suffer.

At least two years of active participation in CoDA and a working understanding of CoDA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are required. Members of the CoDA Fellowship are welcome to bring new ideas for CoDA literature to the CLC.

**Outreach** - [info@coda.org](mailto:info@coda.org)

The Outreach Committee helps members in the CoDA Fellowship to reach out within their communities to codependents who still suffer. Outreach welcomes input and ideas about recovery through sharing experience, strength and hope.

**Spanish Outreach, SPO** - [espanol@coda.org](mailto:espanol@coda.org)

Spanish Outreach is a group of Spanish speaking CoDA members who have attended CoDA meetings for at least one year and have experience in service in CoDA. SPO members volunteer to help the Spanish speaking codependents who are still suffering, through the different means of communication that the committee has and other activities.

**World Connections Committee, WCC** - [wcc@coda.org](mailto:wcc@coda.org)

WCC collaborates with members, voting entities, and regional groups world-wide to support and broaden the experience, strength, and hope between voting entities, Co-Dependents Anonymous Inc., and the whole Fellowship.

## CoDA World Service Boards

### **Board of Trustees, Co-Dependents Anonymous Inc.**

board@coda.org

Trustees are CoDA members who are elected at the CoDA Service Conference. Trustees may serve up to two consecutive three-year terms. The board meets monthly and is responsible for the legal and financial matters that are necessary for the not-for-profit corporation, Co-Dependents Anonymous, to function.

### **Board of Trustees, CoDA Resource Publishing, Inc.**

info@corepublications.org

Trustees are CoDA members who are elected at the CoDA Service Conference. Trustees may serve up to two, three-year terms. The board meets monthly.

CoDA Resource Publishing, Inc. (CoRe) is a separate not-for-profit corporation, whose mission is to publish, and distribute, literature developed and endorsed by the CoDA Fellowship. CoDA Service Conference endorsed literature and other recovery items are sold at corepublications.org and on a variety of electronic platforms, in both English and Spanish. CoRe provides recordings of speakers from various CoDA events and creates and sells recovery medallions to celebrate recovery milestones. All profits from the sale of CoRe publications are used to support CoDA financially.



## **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 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 codependents, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.·

*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

# THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

## of Co-Dependents 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. Every 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 public forms of communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

*\* The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous.*

# THE TWELVE SERVICE CONCEPTS

## of Co-Dependents Anonymous©

1. The members of the Fellowship of Co-Dependents Anonymous, in carrying out the will of a loving Higher Power, advance their individual recoveries, work to insure the continuance of their groups and their program, and carry the message to codependents who still suffer. They may also collectively authorize and establish service boards or committees and empower trusted servants to perform service work.
2. The Fellowship of CoDA has the responsibility of determining, through its group conscience, the service work to be performed, and the best manner to perform such work. This authority is expressed through our group conscience. Authority carries responsibility; thus, CoDA groups conscientiously provide adequate funding and support for the service work they authorize.
3. Decisions about service work in the Fellowship and all CoDA affairs are made through the group conscience decision making process. For this spiritual democratic process to work, every member of the group is encouraged to participate, consider all the facts and options concerning the issue, listen respectfully to all opinions expressed, then reflect and meditate to find a loving Higher Power's will. Finally, we deliberate honestly and respectfully to determine the proper course of action. Unanimity in the group is the desired outcome; a majority vote is a group conscience.
4. All those who volunteer to do service work for CoDA by serving on committees, boards, or corporations are trusted servants, not authority figures. Ideally, trusted servants volunteer out of a desire to follow their Higher Power's will, out of gratitude for the gifts they have received from CoDA, out of a desire to grow in their ability to create and keep healthy

relationships, and to contribute what they can of themselves to CoDA. The Fellowship recognizes the need to select the most qualified people willing to serve as trusted servants. At times, trusted servants may hire individuals outside of the Fellowship for commercial services.

5. Trusted servants are directly responsible to those they serve and are bound to honor the group conscience decision making process and uphold those decisions concerning their service work. The Fellowship also recognizes the need and right for members to honor their own experience, strength, and hope and their Higher Power's will as expressed to them. When the group conscience violates an individual's own truth and makes participation impossible, the individual may relinquish the service position.
6. The Fellowship guarantees trusted servants the right and authority to freely make decisions commensurate with their responsibilities and the right to participate in group conscience decisions affecting their responsibilities. Each CoDA member is also guaranteed the right to respectfully dissent during the group conscience decision making process. A member may freely and safely express any personal grievances as long as no particular person or group is unexpectedly singled out as the subject of the grievance. Members are encouraged to honor their own integrity as well as the integrity of others.
7. Trusted servants do practice the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in their service work and in all of their affairs. Trusted servants do not seek power, prestige, wealth, status, or acclaim; do not govern, coerce, or attempt to control others; and do not push a personal agenda, promote controversy, or advance outside issues at CoDA's expense. Since issues over authority, will, money, property, and prestige can and do arise in service work, trusted servants need to practice emotional sobriety, including anonymity, humility, tolerance, gratitude, making amends, and forgiveness.

8. The CoDA Service Conference (Conference), through its group conscience decision making process, guides the Fellowship in making policy decisions and in following the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. The Conference, though providing guidelines, holds no authority over the decision making process of individual groups. The group conscience process is our decision making process. Failure to honor this process may violate Traditions One and Four and a sanction may be imposed. The harshest sanction Conference can impose on an individual or group is to no longer recognize it as belonging to CoDA; this sanction may only be imposed on those who consistently violate the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, as determined by guidelines accepted by Conference
9. By tradition, the CoDA Service Conference gives responsibilities to working committees composed of Conference Delegates and other CoDA volunteers or to separate service boards or corporations. All are directly responsible to the Conference. The scope of the work a committee does is determined by the Conference group conscience. The chairperson of each committee assumes the responsibility to ensure the work assigned to the committee is completed in a timely manner.
10. When the CoDA Service Conference is in session, the CoDA Board of Trustees is directly responsible to the Conference. When not in session, the Conference assigns its decision-making authority on material matters to the Trustees. The Board of Trustees is authorized to monitor the work of Conference-appointed service committees and may provide assistance or guidelines when necessary. The Trustees serve as the board of directors of CoDA, Inc., the non-profit corporation, are assigned custodial control of all money and

property held in trust for the Fellowship, and are responsible for prudent management of its finances.

11. The powers of the CoDA Service Conference derive from the pre- eminent authority of the group conscience decision-making process. Arizona State law gives the Board of Trustees legal rights and responsibilities to act for the Fellowship in certain situations. CoDA, Inc.'s Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws are legal documents enumerating these Board rights and responsibilities.
12. The Fellowship strives to practice and encourage spiritual principles in all its material, financial, and business affairs, including fairness, equality, and respect for individual rights. Every member within CoDA has a voice and is encouraged to use it. Every member has the right to know what is happening within our organization. To honor this right, and in the spirit of CoDA unity, our CoDA, Inc. organization publishes and distributes group conscience decisions, such as minutes of our service boards and motions from our CoDA Service Conferences, in the most inclusive and timely manner possible.

DRAFT