

CoDA Communication Committee

Policies and Procedures Manual

(Derived from the Operations Manual adopted by Committee Group Conscience 8/26 & 11/18/2011,
Revised 11/4/2016 to July 2017, and 1/1/2021-4/15/2021,
11/15/2021, 4/26/2

I. Mission Statement of CoDA Communication Committee (comm)

CoDA's structure is thought of as an inverted pyramid. The groups themselves form the highest level of the pyramid. Each level down as the pyramid narrows is formed by the local area intergroup, area voting entities (county, state or country) and finally at Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. at the tip.

- The Communications Committee's focus is on improving communications up and down the inverted pyramid within the World CoDA Fellowship.
- Work towards ensuring that every codependent throughout the world will have access to all the CoDA information that is important to them
- Work towards ensuring that all people within the World CoDA Fellowship have a better understanding of what is involved in making the fellowship work
- Provide a mechanism for two way communication with codependents in distant or isolated locations, particularly those without active communities or voting entities to support them
- Address those areas of communication not currently handled by the Outreach Committee

II. Method of Operation

Composition and Organization

The Committee is composed of active members of the CoDA fellowship who have regularly attended CoDA meetings for at least two years, and who have a working knowledge of the Steps and Traditions. A Chair and other positions shall be chosen by the committee.

The Communications Committee is organized using subcommittees, and the committee proper provides organizational support to the two long-standing "semi-autonomous" subcommittees/working groups; CoDA Email Team and C-phone. In 2020 a new sub-committee was added, bringing the total sub-committees to 3 – Audio/Visual/Media (AVM). Each of the three operate separately from one another with the committee proper handling extra-committee communications with the board and the Fellowship through written and Conference reports. Receiving reports from all subcommittees along with any needs for major decisions that are made by the standing committee at regularly scheduled monthly meetings. All subcommittees submit major decisions and/or expected needs/expenditures in a written agenda item for discussion and approval during the standing committee regular monthly business meetings. It is the responsibility of the sub-committee to submit/provide all supporting documents for their agenda item/proposal.

General guidelines

- We will prioritize the work to be done on the basis of our Conference-approved Mission.
- We will perform our work in accordance with the CoDA Fellowship Service Manual (FSM).
 - In particular, the GC process and communication through email and other means
 - We will participate in all meetings either personally or by comments on recordings, or reading the agendas and minutes. Sub-committee members are encouraged to attend monthly meetings, but not required.
 - We will tender votes for all group conscience decisions within the time called for.
- We will regard our work as an extension of our personal journey of recovery and growth.
 - We will support the recovery and growth of one another as best we can
 - Specifically, we will try to act always in a positive manner, avoiding personal criticism or negativity: Principles before Personalities

Committee Responsibilities and Policies

- Meet at least bi-monthly using the Comm Chairs Zoom Account.
- Choose a Chair and other positions to accomplish the following, either directly or through delegation:
 - Conduct individual communications in pursuit of committee policy
 - Obtain committee approval for more public communications
 - Committee members will have a set amount of time to review and provide feedback. Non-response during that time will be assumed to be approval.

- Set a regular schedule for meetings; schedule other meetings as needed
 - Provide agenda at least several days in advance
 - Prepare or provide background information for items on Agenda.
 - Conduct meetings in accord with committee meeting procedures.
 - ⊖ Communicate committee actions and concerns through the Chairs Forum and to the committee Board liaison.
 - Perform required actions in a timely manner, such as:
 - Provide directly or by delegation, quarterly and annual reports to the Fellowship, after committee approval, through the Quarterly Service Report (QSR) and to the CoDA Service Conference (CSC).
 - Prepare expense report forms and other needed documents.
 - Follow guidelines for appropriateness of expenses.
 - Create a yearly budget for the committee and submit to Finance Committee after committee approval (**this is only required now if a face-to-face meeting is allowed.**)
 - Track committee expenses to make sure they are within budget.
 - With committee approval, prepare and submit committee motions for CSC.
 - Present report and motions to CoDA Service Conference.
- Any member may initiate or participate in discussions
- Any member may call for a Group Conscience vote, using the following procedures if by email
 - Initiate conversation beforehand and/or obtain a second for a GC vote
 - “GC” is to be in caps in the email title
 - A specifically worded proposal is to be presented
 - All persons entitled to vote are listed so each can register her/his vote
 - A deadline for voting is announced
 - The person calling the GC shall keep track of the votes and announce the results.

Committee Meeting Procedures

- Meetings may be chaired by any member. “Chair” in this section refers to that member.
- Round robin discussion & voting sequence is established by the sequence of joining the meeting, Chair being last.
- The Chair shall limit discussion, by suggesting a vote or tabling so that the agenda is covered during the time allotted or extended by vote. Any member can add to the agenda topics for discussion/vote in advance of the meeting.
- An exception is that Time Critical items must be voted on.
- As stated in the FSM, unanimity is the goal, a majority vote is binding.
- Abstentions, as part of the total vote, are listed as abstentions.
- Other elements of Robert’s Rules are applied at the option of the chair.
- Discussion and vote on changing these procedures may be requested by any member

Committee decision making process

All decisions are made using the group conscience process as defined by Tradition Two:

For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving Higher Power as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Any committee member may suggest new items to be addressed by the committee. Once an item has been suggested, it will be discussed during a conference call and a determination will be made, by group conscience, whether we should pursue it. Committee members will be asked to volunteer to work on it. If no one volunteers the item will be placed on a list for later consideration.

III. Website Content Management System (CMS)

The Comm chair has both a specific email (commchair@coda.org) that is connected to storage drives and Microsoft Office. The passcode for this is given from one chair to the next.

The chair has a Zoom Account that is used for monthly meetings, AVM meetings, as well as the fellowship forum. Login is commchair@coda.org, passcode is passed from one chair to the next.

NEW MEMBER PROCEDURE

All applicants to various sub-committees fill out the application and it is submitted to the subcommittee liaison. After review, the person is given the directions for the team work by the liaison, and also given access to all files on the OneDrive with the exception of applications. The email address of new people is added to the alias for their subcommittee as well as comm@coda.org by the chair.

CoDA Email Team – CET

Emails that come through info@coda.org are forwarded automatically to commanswer@gmail.com.

Team members generally answer emails one day each week (some volunteers choose to do two days). They are responsible to return emails on their day, using their own answers or some suggested answers in a specific folder in the email.

For specific instructions, see the subcommittee folder in the OneDrive (the chair or coordinator will send the link).

Volunteers are invited to attend the Comm Committee meetings, but not required. They receive both the Agenda and Minutes from meetings.

C-phone

The C-phone sub-committee returns calls from the fellowship to find meetings and get other information about CoDA. All C-Phone volunteers receive the voicemail files. The volunteer scheduled for the day the call is received is responsible for returning the call.. For specific information on C-Phone procedures, see the subcommittee folder.

The recording for the phone line is made by our fellowship service worker (FSW), Joan. She is contacted through meetings@coda.org if there is a change needed to the recording or if there is a problem with the phone line itself.

C-Phone volunteers are invited to attend the Comm Committee meetings, but not required. They receive both the Agenda and Minutes from meetings.

Audio/Visual/Media - AVM

The Audio/Visual/Media subcommittee was created at CSC 2020, to better serve the fellowship in new areas of communication (new to CoDA). In 2021, AVM was folded back into the regular committee meeting as only one member remained. Its work will be continued by the main committee until more people join the subcommittee. AVM is still not active, as of 4/27/2022; one project was planned, but has not yet been turned in.

Volunteers are invited to attend the Comm Committee meetings, but not required. They receive both the Agenda and Minutes from meetings.

Fellowship Forum

The Fellowship Forum falls under the main committee meeting (previously it was part of AVM).

This forum is held the last Saturday of the month, and presents a variety of recovery topics followed by a discussion. This is not a meeting but rather a place to learn, discuss, question. This is recorded and the recordings are posted on the CoDA Website, and YouTube

History of Committee

- A Communications Task Force was created at the 2007 CSC to address the goal of improving communication within CoDA, both up and down the inverted pyramid. The following year was spent in recruiting people to participate in the effort and in gathering specific issues to be addressed. Starting in early 2009, the task force members began to have regular conference calls and work began in earnest on several of the identified issues. As a result of this work, the 2009 CSC voted to make the Communication Task Force a standing committee to continue to address identified communication issues as they surface.
- Right from the beginning, the Committee responded to phone calls coming into CoDA, setting up a system so they could be referred to a CoDA volunteer. Over the years this gradually became a hybrid system in which the association management company would receive calls during office hours and provide routine information, mostly about finding meetings, and redirect calls as needed. Any personal matters during those hours and any calls outside of office hours continued to be received by volunteers. This changed in 2019, when C-phone began receiving emails with the messages left and the volunteers return the calls. This group came to be called c-phone
- The Committee participated in the development of several emails lists; CoDA Announcements, CoNNections; H&I (Hospitals and Institutions), and eventually one devoted to Quarterly Service Reports (QSR)
- Management of the lists was assigned by CoDA, Inc. to a contract worker in about 2009. Content of CoDA Announcements came from World Service committees and the board with the Communications Committee charged with generating original content relating to the operation of World Service and more local CoDA bodies. The committee has been unable to fulfill this mandate for a lack of enough volunteers, although an attempt was made in 2017.
- At the 2011 CSC, a task force was formed to enable the Outreach Committee to focus on the work it is named for while its long-maintained task of responding to emails was enabled to continue. This resulted in the 2012 CSC authorizing that those responding to emails be given the name of the CoDA Email Team (CET) and become a “semi-autonomous” sub-committee of the Communications Committee with no direct responsibility for the administrative functions of a

full committee. (The Outreach Committee was reorganized with new membership and formulated a new mission statement.)

- The model of “semi-autonomy” was extended to C-phone, although C-phone concerns occupied much attention of the full committee until in 2015 the association management company of CoDA, Inc. took over receiving calls during office hours, referring more personal calls to C-phone volunteers. This ended in 2019, the volunteers now return all calls.
- In 2016 and 2017, the Communications Committee revised the outgoing message for the CoDA phone system to enable inquiries about what meetings are like to be directed to a CoDA volunteer. In 2021, the phone message was changed again, to consolidate the information and reduce the number of choices.
- During 2017, Friday Fellowship Items were published weekly on CoDA Announcements with the intention of creating interest in CoDA Announcements generally by focusing on happenings of greater interest than routine organizational matters. To fulfill the need to vet items for such rapid turnaround, a special Friday Fellowship Review Group was formed with that sole responsibility. The effort, however, could only be sustained for ten weeks, succumbing mostly through lack of stories supplied from outside the committee. Review Group members, however, continued their service by consulting with the Email Coordinator in choosing previous materials to recycle on CoDA Announcements and vet new Friday Fellowship Items as they are submitted.
- The Friday Fellowship was disbanded before 2019. In November 2021, the committee was asked to return to contributing to announcements to the fellowship like the Friday Fellowship did.
- The 2021 CSC led to the creation of the Audio/Visual/Media subcommittee. This was created in order to increase communication using YouTube. The use of faces and names are used, as noted in the clarification motion to the public relations committee. During late 2021, the committee disbanded and was folded back into the main committee meeting until such time as there was sufficient members wanting to join AVM.