

## Applying to your personal life

The stages and principles expressed in this pamphlet will also work when dealing with a disagreement in your life.

### Take a personal inventory

- Either Step 10 or Step 4
- Determine what your part is in the disagreement
- Step 11 connect with HP

### Try to Solve with the person directly

- Be aware of Boundaries
- Listen
- Be open
- Be clear, concise and honest
- Use I statements
- Take responsibility for your actions and words
- Make amends if necessary

### If no resolution, ask a person you both trust to assist

- Sponsor
- Family member
- Spiritual Advisor
- Mutual Friend
- Another CoDA Member

The use of the behavioral rules found in this pamphlet will be helpful as you work to resolve disagreements.

## IMC Mission

The IMC facilitates dispute mediation for Voting Entities, Intergroups, and other CoDA entities as needed. Decisions at all levels of CoDA are made with the guidance of our Higher Power as expressed through the group conscience. As stated in Tradition One: "Our common welfare should come first. Personal recovery depends upon CoDA Unity." And 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." Thus as with all our recovery, group conscience is about putting aside the "self" and looking to Higher Power for guidance.

## ***Dealing with Disagreements***

*"Disagreements in CoDA are opportunities for growth since healthy resolution requires us to act with courage, humility and honesty.*

*Winning should not be the goal."*

*CoDA's Issues  
Mediation  
Committee (IMC)*

[imc@codas.org](mailto:imc@codas.org)

**CoDA's Process for  
Dealing with Disagreements  
From the Local Level  
To World Service Level**

Fellowship Service Manual (FSM), Section 2

FSM Section Two provides guidance that can be used for the resolution of disagreements at all levels of our fellowship. The following summarizes and supplements it.

**Step 1: PERSON-TO-PERSON:**

Resolve the issue between the individuals involved. If one party refuses to address the issue or the other party feels unsafe, GO TO...

**Step 2: RECRUITING SOME HELP:**

Recruit a neutral third party trusted by both to witness and support resolution. If resolution does not result from this and the issue is a personal one, limiting contact with that person may be best. If the issue involves CoDA principles in a CoDA group, GO TO...

**Step 3: SEEKING HELP FROM  
LOCAL MEETING:**

Go to a local meeting group; present the issue focusing on CoDA principles. Ask for a Group Conscience, (see FSM Sec. 2). If group does not seem to be

acting according to CoDA principles  
GO TO....

**Step 4: SEEKING HELP FROM  
INTERGROUP:**

Present the issue to the local Intergroup (if you have one) for a Group Conscience decision (see FSM Sec. 2). If the Intergroup does not seem to be acting according to CoDA principles, GO TO...

**Step 5: SEEKING HELP FROM  
REGIONAL GROUP/VOTING  
ENTITY:**

Seek additional support from your Regional group (if you have one); continue to present the issue(s). If this group does not seem to be acting according to CoDA principles, GO TO...

**Step 6: SEEKING HELP FROM IMC:**  
Seek help from Issues Mediation  
Committee of CoDA World Service  
(imc@coda.org)

IMC will begin their process by asking if these 6 steps have been taken.

**IN GENERAL:**

- Take responsibility for one's own words and actions
- Keep the focus on CoDA principles rather than on beliefs about personalities
- Respect boundaries - CoDA unity is violated when third parties take sides in personal disagreements
- Use behavioral rules such as:
  - ✓ Agree to study FSM Sec. 2 before meeting together
  - ✓ State issues in writing
  - ✓ Start by agreeing on the goal being sought from the discussion
  - ✓ Provide equal opportunities to speak, using timer if needed
  - ✓ Agree on thirty second rule in groups (see FSM, Sec 2)