

Sample Online Meeting Format

Opening Section:

1. Good evening (**morning/afternoon**) and welcome to the _____ (**insert meeting name**) meeting of Co-Dependents Anonymous. My name is _____ and I am a recovering codependent and the Chairperson for today

CoDA asks those with cell phones to please turn off your notifications for the duration of the meeting, so we can keep our focus on the meeting without interruptions. For the purpose of this virtual meeting, please ensure to mute your device when not speaking to cut down on background noise.

Will someone please read the **CoDA Opening Prayer** ©?

**In the spirit of love and truth
we ask our Higher Power to guide us
as we share our experience, strength and hope.
We open our hearts to the light of wisdom,
the warmth of love, and the joy of acceptance.**

Please help open this meeting with a moment of silence, to remember why we are here, followed by **The Serenity Prayer**. We will take that moment now.

**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**

2. **The Preamble of Co-Dependents Anonymous** ©:

Co-Dependents Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is to develop healthy relationships. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and loving relationships. We gather together to support and share with each other in a journey of self-discovery – learning to love the self. Living the program allows each of us to become increasingly honest with ourselves about our personal histories and our own codependent behaviours.

We rely upon The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for knowledge and wisdom. These are the principles of our program and guide to developing honest and fulfilling relationships with ourselves and others. In CoDA, we each learn to build a bridge to a Higher Power of our own understanding, and we allow others the same privilege.

This renewal process is a gift of healing for us. By actively working the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous, we can each realize a new joy, acceptance and serenity in our lives.

3. Are there any **Newcomers** present at the meeting?

Note: If YES, read the following. If NO, go to the next item:

If this is your first time here, just sit back and relax. You will not be asked to do any more than you already have. We are just glad that you are here and extend a warm welcome to you. There are **Newcomer Packages** available which can be sent to you electronically. At the end of this meeting, please provide the chairperson with your email address to receive one. We recommend that you attend at least 6 meetings before deciding if CoDA is for you since every meeting is different and you may not hear what you need to hear at the first meeting.

4. Will someone please read **The Welcome of Co-Dependents Anonymous?**

**The Welcome of Co-Dependents Anonymous ©
(long version)**

We welcome you to Co-Dependents Anonymous, a program of recovery from codependence, where each of us may share our experience, strength, and hope in our efforts to find freedom where there has been bondage and peace where there has been turmoil in our relationships with others and ourselves.

Most of us have been searching for ways to overcome the dilemmas of the conflicts in our relationships and our childhoods. Many of us were raised in families where addictions existed - some of us were not. In either case, we have found in each of our lives that codependence is a most deeply rooted compulsive behaviour and that it is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional families and other systems.

We have each experienced in our own ways the painful trauma of the emptiness of our childhood and relationships throughout our lives. We attempted to use others - our mates, friends, and even our children, as our sole source of identity, value and well-being, and as a way of trying to restore within us the emotional losses from our childhoods. Our histories may include other powerful addictions which at times we have used to cope with our codependence. We have all learned to survive life, but in CoDA we are learning to live life.

Through applying the Twelve Steps and principles found in CoDA to our daily life and relationships, both present and past, we can experience a new freedom from our self-defeating lifestyles. It is an individual growth process. Each of us is growing at our own pace and will continue to do so as we remain open to God's will for us on a daily basis. Our sharing is our way of identification and helps us to free the emotional bonds of our past and the compulsive control of our present.

No matter how traumatic your past or despairing your present may seem, there is hope for a new day in the program of Co-Dependents Anonymous. No longer do you need to rely on others as a power greater than yourself. May you instead find here a new strength within to be that which God intended - Precious and Free

5. **CoDA's Twelve Steps** are the spiritual guidelines for our individual recovery. Will someone please read The Twelve Steps?

The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous ©

1. We admitted we were powerless over others - that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other codependents and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

6. **CoDA's Twelve Traditions** are the guiding spiritual principles of our meetings. Will someone please read The Twelve Traditions?

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. A CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, 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, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions; ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

7. CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the **Anonymity** and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that:

**Whom you see here,
What is said here,
When you leave here,
Let it stay here**

8. **Seventh Tradition:**

Our Seventh Tradition reminds us that we are self-supporting through our own contributions. We ask that you donate as you can. Seventh Tradition donations are used to support meeting expenses, such as rent and literature, and to support CoDA at the community and national levels.

Since this is a virtual meeting, we ask that you please consider one of the following options:

1. E-transfer money to the group Treasurer or GSR to be added to the groups' funds.
2. Set some money aside each week that you would normally contribute at the face to face meeting and donate it to the group when meetings resume.
3. Make your donation directly to CoDA Canada by visiting codacanada.ca and clicking on the "**Donations**" tab.

Program Section:

9. CoDA Guide to Sharing:

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 very difficult task. We encourage people to begin slowly and carefully. It is the intention of every CoDA member and group not to ridicule or embarrass anyone. Nothing that is shared is unimportant. The sharing of our experiences is best done with "I" statements. Crosstalk and feedback are discouraged.

10. What is Crosstalk? :

Crosstalk can be: giving unsolicited feedback, advice-giving, answering, making "you" and "we" statements, interrogating, debating, criticizing, controlling or dominating. It may also include: minimizing another person's feelings or experiences, physical contact or touch, body movements, such as nodding one's head, calling another person present by name, referring directly to what another person has shared on, or verbal sounds and noises. In our meetings, we speak about our own experiences and we listen without comment to what others share. We work toward taking responsibility in our own lives, rather than giving advice to others.

Please also try to limit your sharing to **3 - 5 minutes** (*group conscience can decide the length of time*) to ensure that all members have an opportunity to share.

11. Today's topic is _____, and we will be reading from _____.

Note: Chairperson chooses a reading from any of our CoDA Service Conference Approved Literature

*** SHARING SECTION ***

Announcements Section:

12. Next week's meeting:

The topic for next week is _____. Would someone like to volunteer to chair next week's meeting?

13. Literature:

If you would like to purchase CoDA literature please visit our website at codacanada.ca and click on the "**Literature**" tab.

14. Our **Group Service Representative is _____. Do you have any announcements?**

15. Are there any other **CoDA Announcements from any member?**

Closing Section:

16. This is a reminder that:

**Whom you see here,
What is said here,
When you leave here,
Let it stay here**

We suggest that you take what you need and leave the rest.

17. Will someone please read **The Twelve Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous?**

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 present. I am aware enough not to repeat it.
5. I know a new love and acceptance of myself and others. I feel genuinely lovable, loving and loved.
6. I learn to see myself as equal to others. My new and renewed relationships are all with equal partners.
7. I am capable of developing and maintaining healthy and loving relationships. The need to control and manipulate others will disappear as I learn to trust those who are trustworthy.
8. I learn that it is possible to mend - to become more loving, intimate and supportive. I have the choice of communicating with my family in a way which is safe for me and respectful of them.
9. I acknowledge that I am a unique and precious creation.
10. I no longer need to rely solely on others to provide my sense of worth.
11. I trust the guidance I receive from my higher power and come to believe in my own capabilities.
12. I gradually experience serenity, strength, and spiritual growth in my daily life.

18. Will someone please read **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**

19. Thank you to those who read and who do service for this meeting. It is time to close the meeting now. Please feel free to stay connected for fellowship afterwards if you would like to.

20. We will now close the meeting with **The Serenity Prayer:**

**God, grant me the Serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
Courage to change the things I can,
and Wisdom to know the difference**

**KEEP COMING BACK,
IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT,
AND I'M WORTH IT!**