

Cut and Paste Format for CoDA Meeting

Links in blue (use control-click) to go back (use alt-left arrow)

(Sample Newcomer's [Mini Meeting](#) at the end)

** Italics indicate examples from various meeting formats which you may use as templates if you wish.*

[Brackets indicate actions for the chair]

[The Foundation Documents](#): *Preamble, Welcome, Twelve Steps, and Twelve Traditions*, however, are required readings

Before the Meeting

[Some meetings may have set up instructions for the room (setting up table and chairs), organization of materials (in the –folder), Format -Script for the meeting]

Opening

[Welcome members and newcomers]

Welcome to the _____ meeting of Co-Dependents Anonymous. My name is _____ and I am codependent. I will be your chairperson today.

[CoDA Opening Prayer or Serenity Prayer](#) may go here

Let's start this meeting with a moment of silence to reflect on why we are here, followed by the _____ Prayer.

Introductions

To get to know each other better, let's take this time to introduce ourselves by first name only". [chairperson starts passing around sign-in sheet if there is one]

Welcome Newcomers

If you choose, please mention if you are new, attending your first, second or third meeting, or if you are a guest, so that we can welcome you and get to know you better at the break. Are there any newcomers today? We would like to welcome you with a Welcome Coin (or Pamphlet / hand-out).

CoDA Birthdays

Some groups provide a medallion or card and may have a celebration birthday snack.

Is there anyone having a CoDA birthday this week or in the near future? Let the Literature person, _____, know so that we can provide you with a medallion.

[Housekeeping and safety]

[Some examples](#)

{Anonymity Statement}

CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the anonymity and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that WHAT YOU SEE HERE, WHAT IS SAID HERE, WHEN YOU LEAVE HERE, LET IT STAY HERE.

Readings

***Required Readings:** Read by the chairperson or passed out to members to read (readings at end of this document).

Would someone please read the _____?

_____ has agreed to read the _____.

[Preamble](#)

[Welcome Long Version](#)

[Welcome Short Version](#)

[Twelve Steps](#)

[Twelve Traditions](#)

[Patterns and Characteristics](#)

Or other CoDA Materials.

Note: Using non-CoDA materials is not recommended.

[CoDA Conference statement must be read **before and after** any non-CoDA material]

The following item is not CoDA approved, but by group conscience, we have agreed to include it in our meeting.

Possible Break

We will now take a break. The washrooms are _____. Please return by _____.

[Announcements](#)
[Seventh Tradition](#)

[Meeting Program Examples](#)
[No Crosstalk Rule](#)

Personal Sharing

{Sharing in one group or break into smaller groups for sharing. Larger groups may use a timer}.

Closing

[Promises](#) [Read here or during Optional Readings if the group chooses. Individuals read one promise each, or the document is read by one individual].

We will now pass around the Promises. If you choose, please read one promise.

[Thank participants for coming and sharing]

I would like to thank everyone for coming and participating.

[Remind participants of the need for anonymity]

CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the anonymity and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that WHAT YOU SEE HERE, WHAT IS SAID HERE, WHEN YOU LEAVE HERE, LET IT STAY HERE.

[Volunteers help stack chairs, put away materials, etc.]

[Social Opportunity at a coffee shop or restaurant, after the meeting]

Some of us get together for coffee and fellowship at _____. You are welcome to join us.

[CoDA Closing Prayer and/or Serenity Prayer](#)

(Optional) Example of Newcomer's Mini Meeting during Sharing

Good Evening, and welcome to the CoDA Newcomers Meeting. My name is _____ and I will chair the newcomer's group today.

So that we can get to know you better, please introduce yourself. If you haven't already got one, we will give you a (Welcome packet / coin / Meeting List-meeting's choice).

This is a CoDA newcomer's informational meeting to help newcomers get started in CoDA. Here, we can talk about our own experiences. Nothing shared is unimportant.

[Explain "CROSSTALK" again]

Would someone read **Step One**?

We admitted we were powerless over others - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Possible Questions:

- *What brings you here?*
- *Are you controlling and if so how?*
- *What are your signs of unmanageability?*
- *Does anyone have questions?*

[Optional - Use if the group does not join other members of the meeting]

As we bring this meeting to a close, I would like to remind you that CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the anonymity and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that what you see here, what is said here, when you leave here, let it stay here.

Will someone please read the [12 Promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous](#)?

[Use if the group plans to join the other members of the meeting]

We will join the rest of the meeting for its closing. We also have a variety of CoDA literature and books for sale if you are interested.

(End of Newcomer' part of the meeting)

The Foundation Documents

[Required Reading]

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 behaviors.

We rely upon the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for knowledge and wisdom. These are the principles of our program and guides to developing honest and fulfilling relationships with ourselves and others. In 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.

The *Preamble* may not be reprinted or republished without the express written consent of Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc. This document may be reprinted from the website www.coda.org (CoDA) for use by members of the CoDA Fellowship.

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Welcome to 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 behavior and that it is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional families and other systems. We have each experienced in our own ways the painful trauma of the emptiness of our childhood and relationships throughout our lives.

We attempted to use others – our mates, friends, and even our children, as our sole source of identity, value, and wellbeing, 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.

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Welcome to Co-Dependents Anonymous©

(short 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.

Codependence is a deeply rooted, compulsive behavior. It is born out of our sometimes moderately, sometimes extremely dysfunctional families and other systems. We attempted to use others as our sole source of identity, value, well-being, and as a way of trying to restore our emotional losses. Our histories may include other powerful addictions which we have used to cope with our codependency.

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

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

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The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over others - that our lives had become unmanageable.
1. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
2. Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
3. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
4. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.
5. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
6. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
7. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
8. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
9. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
10. 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.
11. 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 12 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, films, television, and all other forms of public communication.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions; ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The 12 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.

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Recovery Patterns of Codependence — Progress Scale

Denial Patterns

Codependents often...	Rate your level of recovery (Full)					In Recovery...
	1	2	3	4	5	
Have difficulty identifying what they are feeling.						I am aware of my feelings and identify them, often in the moment. I know the difference between my thoughts and feelings.
Minimize, alter, or deny how they truly feel.						I embrace my feelings; they are valid and important.
Perceive themselves as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others.						I know the difference between caring and caretaking. I recognize that caretaking others is often motivated by a need to benefit myself.
Lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others.						I am able to feel compassion for another's feelings and needs.
Label others with their negative traits.						I acknowledge that I may own the negative traits I often perceive in others.
Think they can take care of themselves without any help from others.						I acknowledge that I sometimes need the help of others.
Mask pain in various ways such as anger, humor, or isolation.						I am aware of my painful feelings and express them appropriately.
Express negativity or aggression in indirect and passive ways.						I am able to express my feelings openly, directly, and calmly.
Do not recognize the unavailability of those people to whom they are attracted.						I pursue intimate relationships only with others who want, and are able to engage in, healthy and loving relationships.

Low Self-esteem Patterns Codependents often...

Rate your level of recovery
(None) (Full)

In Recovery ...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Have difficulty making decisions.						I trust my ability to make effective decisions.
Judge what they think, say, or do harshly, as never good enough.						I accept myself as I am. I emphasize progress over perfection.
Are embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.						I feel appropriately worthy of the recognition, praise, or gifts I receive.
Value others' approval of their thinking, feelings, and behavior over their own.						I value the opinions of those I trust, without needing to gain their approval. I have confidence in myself.
Do not perceive themselves as lovable or worthwhile persons.						I recognize myself as being a lovable and valuable person.
Seek recognition and praise to overcome feeling less than.						I seek my own approval first, and examine my motivations carefully when I seek approval from others.
Have difficulty admitting a mistake.						I continue to take my personal inventory, and when I am wrong, promptly admit it.
Need to appear to be right in the eyes of others and may even lie to look good.						I am honest with myself about my behaviors and motivations. I feel secure enough to admit mistakes to myself and others, and to hear their opinions without feeling threatened.
Are unable to identify or ask for what they need and want.						I meet my own needs and wants when possible. I reach out for help when it's necessary and appropriate.
Perceive themselves as superior to others.						I perceive myself as equal to others.
Look to others to provide their sense of safety.						With help of my Higher Power, I create safety in my life.
Have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects for which they are responsible.						I avoid procrastination by meeting my responsibilities in a timely manner.
Do not make time for their own personal projects and pursuits.						I find my personal projects to be worthy of my time and attention and honor my choice to work on them.
Have trouble setting healthy priorities and boundaries.						I am able to establish and uphold healthy priorities and boundaries in my life.

Compliance Patterns

Codependents often...

(None) (Full)

In Recovery...

	1	2	3	4	5	
	Rate your level of recovery					
Are extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.						I am committed to my safety and leave situations that feel unsafe or are inconsistent with my goals.
Compromise their own values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger.						I am rooted in my own values, even if others don't agree or become angry.
Put aside their own interests in order to do what others want.						I consider my interests and feelings when asked to participate in another's plans.
Are hypervigilant regarding the feelings of others and take on those feelings.						I can separate my feelings from the feelings of others. I allow myself to experience my feelings and others to be responsible for their feelings.
Are afraid to express their beliefs, opinions, and feelings when they differ from those of others.						I respect my own opinions and feelings and express them appropriately.
Accept sexual attention when they want love.						My sexuality is grounded in genuine intimacy and connection. When I need to feel loved, I express my heart's desires. I do not settle for sex without love.
Make decisions without regard to the consequences.						I ask my Higher Power for guidance, and consider possible consequences before I make decisions.
Give up their truth to gain the approval of others or to avoid change.						I stand in my truth and maintain my integrity, whether others approve or not, even if it means making difficult changes in my life.

Control Patterns

Codependents often...

Rate your level of recovery
(None) (Full)

In Recovery...

	1	2	3	4	5	
Believe people are incapable of taking care of themselves.						I realize that, with rare exceptions, other adults are capable of managing their own lives.
Attempt to convince others what to think, do, or feel.						I accept the thoughts, choices, and feelings of others, even though I may not be comfortable with them.
Freely offer advice and direction without being asked.						I give advice only when asked.
Become resentful when others decline their help or reject their advice.						I am content to see others take care of themselves.
Lavish gifts and favors on those they want to influence.						I carefully and honestly contemplate my motivations when preparing to give a gift.
Use sexual attention to gain approval and acceptance.						I embrace and celebrate my sexuality as evidence of my health and wholeness. I do not use it to gain the approval of others.
Have to feel needed in order to have a relationship with others.						I develop relationships with others based on equality, intimacy, and balance.
Demand that their needs be met by others.						I find and use resources that meet my needs without making demands on others. I ask for help when I need it, without expectation.
Use charm and charisma to convince others of their capacity to be caring and compassionate.						I behave authentically with others, allowing my caring and compassionate qualities to emerge.
Use blame and shame to exploit others emotionally.						I ask directly for what I want and need and trust the outcome to my Higher Power. I do not try to manipulate outcomes with blame or shame.
Refuse to cooperate, compromise, or negotiate.						I cooperate, compromise, and negotiate with others in a way that honors my integrity.
Adopt an attitude of indifference, helplessness, authority, or rage to manipulate outcomes.						I treat others with respect and consideration, and trust my Higher Power to meet my needs and desires.
Use recovery jargon in an attempt to control the behavior of others.						I use my recovery for my own growth and not to manipulate or control others.
Pretend to agree with others to get what they want.						My communication with others is authentic and truthful.

Avoidance Patterns

Codependents often...	Rate your level of recovery (None) (Full)					In Recovery ...
	1	2	3	4	5	
Act in ways that invite others to reject, shame, or express anger toward them.						I act in ways that encourage loving and healthy responses from others.
Judge harshly what others think, say, or do.						I keep an open mind and accept others as they are.
Avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy as a way to maintain distance.						I engage in emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy when it is healthy and appropriate for me.
Allow addictions to people, places, and things to distract them from achieving intimacy in relationships.						I practice my recovery to develop healthy and fulfilling relationships.
Use indirect or evasive communication to avoid conflict or confrontation.						I use direct and straightforward communication to resolve conflicts and deal appropriately with confrontations.
Diminish their capacity to have healthy relationships by declining to use the tools of recovery.						When I use the tools of recovery, I am able to develop and maintain healthy relationships of my choosing.
Suppress their feelings or needs to avoid feeling vulnerable.						I embrace my own vulnerability by trusting and honoring my feelings and needs.
Pull people toward them, but when others get close, push them away.						I welcome close relationships while maintaining healthy boundaries.
Refuse to give up their self-will to avoid surrendering to a power greater than themselves.						I believe in and trust a power greater than myself. I willingly surrender my self-will to my Higher Power.
Believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.						I honor my authentic emotions and share them when appropriate.
Withhold expressions of appreciation.						I freely engage in expressions of appreciation toward others.

Housekeeping Instructions

Special restrictions (Turn off telephone, restrict scent, food, etc.):

This is a scent-free meeting. We ask those with cell phones to please turn them off or silence them for the duration of the meeting, so we can keep our focus on the meeting without interruptions.

*Also, please note this is an adults-only meeting but **teenagers are welcome**. Thank you for respecting these boundaries.*

Washrooms are located _____.

Safety Examples

Group Boundary Emergency Guideline

*If an individual, or the group, feels that their safety is jeopardized, or group boundaries have been violated, the individual, or the group leader, may call for **30 seconds or one minute of silence**—for the group followed by the Serenity Prayer*

Emergency Guideline

*If an individual seems **they will harm themselves or others**, a member will call **911**.*

Religious and Political Issues

Tradition Ten reminds us that "CoDA has no opinion on outside issues". CoDA is a spiritual program that is based on no particular form of religion. In addition, CoDA is not allied with any political party or type of government. For our safety, we do not promote specific religious or political affiliation when sharing at CoDA meetings. "The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships." (Tradition Three)

These guidelines were established to ensure that CoDA is a safe place.

Prayers - Coda Opening, Closing, or Serenity Prayer

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.

CoDA Closing Prayer

We thank our Higher Power for all that we have received from the meeting. As we close, may we take with us the wisdom, love, acceptance, and love of recovery.

OR

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.

A publication with CoDA Prayers is available on www.codacanada.ca

Anonymity Statement

CoDA is an anonymous program. We ask that you respect the anonymity and confidentiality of each person in this meeting. We ask that... WHAT YOU SEE HERE, WHAT IS SAID HERE, WHEN YOU LEAVE HERE, LET IT STAY HERE.

Crosstalk Definition (Here or before sharing)

In our meetings, we speak about our own experience using 'I' statements, and we listen without comment to what others share. We work toward taking responsibility in our own lives, rather than giving advice to others. Crosstalk guidelines keep CoDA meetings safe and free of non-professional opinions.

For Safety Sake

- *I use "I" statements when sharing. (I feel; I believe.)*
- *I share my own experience, strength, and hope—no one else's.*
- *I refrain from commenting on what others share.*
- *I share for three to five minutes, keeping the focus on myself.*
- *I help myself and others by being emotionally present and honest.*
- *I let others experience their own feelings; I keep my advice to myself.*

["For Safety Sake" Tent Template](#)

Announcements Mid-Meeting

Literature information

"Literature is available on the table. Prices are marked. Please give the money to the literature person, _____, for the items you purchase. 'Meeting Lists', 'Newcomers Packages', and 'Event Announcements' are free."

CoDA Announcements

Examples are business meetings times, service volunteers and service needs, call for sponsors, retreats and other events, chair for next week, etc., [Here or during Housekeeping]

Seventh Tradition Donation

"Our Seventh Tradition reminds us that we are a self-supporting meeting through our own contributions. Donations cover expenses such as (rent, literature, and anniversary gift coins). The (basket) is being passed now and for newcomers, know that your first meeting is on us. We welcome you. We are glad you're here!"

Meeting Program Examples

Discussion of readings from CoDA Blue Book, CoDA booklets, or pamphlets, using In This Moment Daily Meditation book index.

A Tool from Tools of Recovery. _____ *has agreed to present a Tool and share how he/she has used the Tool in his/her life.*

*Can have a different focus on different weeks (i.e. Week 1-Step, Week 2-Tradition, Week 3-Topic from _____, etc.)

*Some meetings have both:

1. Personal reflection on the topic readings as well as

2. Personal share (timed or not timed)

- Any topic introduced by the chair
- CoDA Steps and Traditions
- Speaker, audio recordings of the speaker
- Personal share by the chair
- Share by the person having a CoDA birthday and other speakers