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Notes



Patterns of Codependence

Denial Patterns:

- ◆ I have difficulty identifying what I am feeling.
- ◆ I minimize, alter or deny how I truly feel.
- ◆ I perceive myself as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others.

Low Self Esteem Patterns:

- ◆ I have difficulty making decisions.
- ◆ I judge everything I think, say or do harshly, as never "good enough."
- ◆ I am embarrassed to receive recognition and praise or gifts.
- ◆ I do not ask others to meet my needs or desires.
- ◆ I value others' approval of my thinking, feelings and behavior over my own.
- ◆ I do not perceive myself as a lovable or worthwhile person.

Compliance Patterns:

- ◆ I compromise my own values and integrity to avoid rejection or others' anger.
- ◆ I am very sensitive to how others are feeling and feel the same.
- ◆ I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
- ◆ I value others' opinions and feelings more than my own and am afraid to express differing opinions and feelings of my own.
- ◆ I put aside my own interests and hobbies in order to do what others want.
- ◆ I accept sex when I want love.

Control Patterns:

- ◆ I believe most other people are incapable of taking care of themselves.
- ◆ I attempt to convince others of what they "should" think and how they "truly" feel.
- ◆ I become resentful when others will not let me help them.
- ◆ I freely offer others advice and directions without being asked.
- ◆ I lavish gifts and favors on those I care about.
- ◆ I use sex to gain approval and acceptance.
- ◆ I have to be "needed" in order to have a relationship with others.

Affirmations

I am enough.
 I am a precious child of God.
 I have the courage and ability to change.
 I am beautiful inside and out.
 I have the courage to feel my fears.
 I will survive.
 I am my own loving parent.
 I am lovable.
 My Higher Power and I can handle it.
 I am willing to surrender and trust my Higher Power.
 Whoever touches me touches the apple of God's eye.
 I have the right to set my own boundaries.
 I like myself for what is in my heart, not for the way I do things.
 I am now attracting healthy, loving relationships into my life.
 The light and love of God are now working in and through me.
 I live one day at a time with God's help.
 "No" is a complete sentence.
 I can dare to take a risk.
 I am capable of feeling.
 I am capable of being taught.
 I forgive myself for all my past mistakes.
 God is with me - whatever I'm doing.
 I am forgiven for all my past mistakes.
 I accept, own, and experience all my feelings.
 Everything that happens is for the highest good.
 I can give and receive love freely.
 Just for today, I let go of all my barriers, fears and doubts.
 Just for today, I am following the will of my Higher Power to the best of my ability.
 I am still me in any relationship.
 I accept myself as I am.
 I feel healthy and I love myself.
 My life is a wondrous creation.
 Feelings just are, and they will pass.
 I appreciate, love and respect my body.
 I give myself permission to make mistakes.
 I take action to set my boundaries and improve my self-esteem in all my relationships.



The Welcome Statement of CoDA

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 family 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 lives 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*.

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.

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 this meeting. As we close, may we take with us the wisdom, love, acceptance, and hope of recovery.

CoDA Third Step Prayer ©

God, I give to You all that I am and all that I will be for Your healing and direction. Make new this day as I release all my worries and fears, knowing that You are by my side. Please help me to open myself to Your love, to allow Your love to heal my wounds, and to allow Your love to flow through me and from me to those around me. May Your will be done this day and always. Amen

CoDA Seventh Step Prayer ©

In this moment, I ask my Higher Power to remove all of my shortcomings, relieving me of the burden of my past. In this moment, I place my hand in God's, trusting that the void I experience is being filled with my Higher Power's unconditional love for me and those in my life.

Sponsorship – Sponsorship is an important part of the CoDA program. The sponsor's principle function is to help their sponsees work the Steps. It provides for the sponsee's needs for guidance, safely, and trust.

Service – Service is an integral part of recovery in CoDA. As a self-governing fellowship, CoDA relies on member service for its existence. Having gained recovery in CoDA, we feel the need to express our gratitude by giving back to the fellowship. Service can be as simple as participating in Seventh Tradition, i.e. donating money which is used to pay for rent, information materials, telephone hotline, Website hosting, worldwide services, etc. Service may be setting up and cleaning up meeting rooms before or after a meeting. We may offer to lead meetings. We may volunteer to serve as meeting secretary, treasurer, literature person, representative, etc. We may sponsor newcomers. We may start new meetings. We may speak at other meetings or teach workshops. We may organize events. We may work for CoDA World Fellowship, etc. The nature and intensity of service depends on our individual desire, creativity, and circumstances (commitments, finances, health, length of recovery, etc.). Although service is essential for spiritual growth, we must ask ourselves and our sponsors the following questions:

- ◆ Am I doing service out of codependence?
- ◆ Am I avoiding my recovery by hiding behind service?
- ◆ Do I have enough recovery to know the answers to the above questions?

The Twelve Traditions of CoDA

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.

What Is a CoDA Meeting?

Attending meetings is necessary for recovery in CoDA. A codependent attends meetings for his/her own personal recovery, and this attendance benefits everyone. We share our experience, strength, and hope of recovery. Meetings are typically 1 hour and 30 minutes long. Per our Second Tradition, our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern. The meeting secretary is a volunteer who sets up the room and selects a volunteer to lead the meeting each week.

What Happens at a CoDA Meeting?

Opening –The leader opens the meeting with a prayer. Members introduce themselves by first name only. Some foundational documents are read. Some announcements are made. CoDA birthdays are celebrated (usually with chips). Donations are collected.

Sharing – The leader shares (usually longer than other members). All members are invited to share if they choose. Individual shares are usually timed so as many people as possible can share. Crosstalk is strongly discouraged during our meetings.

Closing – The leader reads the closing statements, followed by the reading of the Twelve Promises of CoDA. Affirmations are usually passed around for those who choose to read one. Finally, the meeting is concluded by a moment of silence followed by the closing prayer.

What IS Crosstalk?

In our meetings, we speak about our own experience, strength, and hope. We listen without comment while others share. We work toward taking responsibility for our own lives, rather than giving advice to others. Crosstalk guidelines help keep our meetings a safe place.

Different Types of CoDA Meetings

The meeting format varies from group to group and is based on the group conscience. Here are some common meeting types:

Newcomer Meeting – These meetings have a special format to allow newcomers to have their questions answered by Old Timers.

Open Share –This type of meeting often has no topic or speaker, giving members an opportunity to share their experience, strength, and hope on their recovery as they wish.

Speaker Meeting – A speaker shares his/her story or shares on a designated topic for an extended length (usually 20-30 minutes). Open sharing typically follows the speaker portion of the meeting.

Step Study Meeting – These meeting are designed to work the steps together as a group of recovering codependents.

Closed Meeting – Open to specific attendees, e.g. teens or members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender community.

Open Meeting – This means that anyone can attend. “Anyone” means codependents, non-codependents, students, or representatives of other organizations (including the media), etc. (It is expected, and may be specifically asked, that all such visitors agree to respect our need for anonymity and confidentiality.)

How Do I Get a Meeting List?

CoDA Orange County	(714) 573-0174 www.occoda.com
Southern California Regional CoDA	www.socalcoda.org
CoDA World Fellowship	www.coda.org www.codependents.org