

## Saturday Tulsa CoDA Meeting

With excerpts from The Meeting Starter Packet of Co-Dependents Anonymous

### **Section I - Opening**

Good morning and welcome to this meeting of CoDA: Co-Dependents Anonymous. We ask that those with cell phones please turn them off or set them to silent ringing during this meeting.

After a moment of silence, those who wish to are encouraged to join me in the Serenity Prayer:

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change,  
courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.**

CoDA Opening Prayer (read by person leading):

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.

## Preamble:

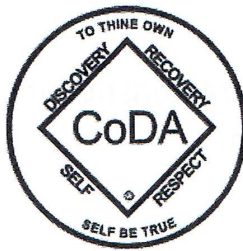
Co-dependents Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women whose common purpose is to develop healthy relationships. The only requirement for membership is a desire for healthy and loving relationships. We gather together to support and share with each other in a journey of self-discovery—learning to love 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 are each learning 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.

Are there any new comers to this meeting?

If so read the Welcome, if not skip to Section II



## 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 family systems. We attempted to use others as our sole source of identity, value, wellbeing, 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 past and present, 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.



## **Sections II - PATTERNS**

Now let's read the Patterns & Characteristics of Codependence one section at a time. Feel Free to pass if you want.

### **Denial Patterns:**

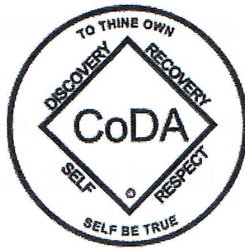
Codependents often...

- Have difficulty identifying what they are feeling.
- Minimize, alter, or deny how they truly feel.
- Perceive themselves as completely unselfish and dedicated to the wellbeing of others.
- Label others with their negative traits.
- Think they can take care of themselves without any help from others.
- Mask pain in various ways such as anger, humor, or isolation.
- Express negativity or aggression in indirect and passive ways.
- Do not recognize the unavailability to those people to whom they are attracted.

### **Low Self Esteem Patterns:**

Codependents often...

- Have difficulty making decisions.
- Judge what they think, say, or do harshly, as never good enough.
- Are embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.
- Value others approval of their thinking, feelings, and behavior over their own.
- Do not perceive themselves as lovable or worthwhile persons.
- Seek recognition and praise to overcome feeling less than.
- Have difficulty admitting a mistake.
- Need to appear to be right in the eyes of others and may even lie to look good.
- Are unable to identify or ask for what they need and want.
- Perceive themselves as superior to others.
- Look to others to provide their sense of safety.
- Have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects.
- Have trouble setting healthy priorities and boundaries.



## **Compliance Patterns:**

Codependents often...

- Are extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
- Compromise their own values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger.
- Put aside their own interest in order to do what others want.
- Are hypervigilant regarding the feelings of others and take on those feelings.
- Are afraid to express their beliefs, opinions, and feelings when they differ from those of others.
- Accept sexual attention when they want love.
- Make decisions without regard to the consequences.
- Give up their truth to gain the approval of others or to avoid change.

## **Control Patterns:**

Codependents often...

- Believe people are incapable of taking care of themselves.
- Attempt to convince others what to think, do, or feel.
- Freely offer advice and direction without being asked.
- Become resentful when others decline their help or reject their advice.
- Lavish gifts and favors on those they want to influence.
- Use sexual attention to gain approval and acceptance.
- Have to feel needed in order to have a relationship with others.
- Demand that their needs be met by others.
- Use charm and charisma to convince others of their capacity to be caring and compassionate.
- Use blame and shame to exploit others emotionally.
- Refuse to cooperate, compromise, or negotiate.

- Adopt an attitude of indifference, helplessness, authority, or rage to manipulate outcomes.
- Use recovery jargon in an attempt to control the behavior of others.
- Pretend to agree with others to get what they want.

### **Avoidance Patterns:**

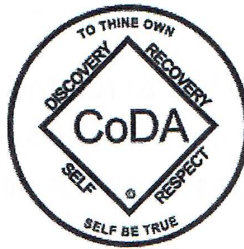
Codependents often...

- Act in ways that invite others to reject, shame, or express anger toward them.
- Judge harshly what others think, say, or do.
- Avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy as a way to maintain distance.
- Allow addictions to people, places, and things to distract them from achieving intimacy in relationships.
- Use indirect or evasive communication to avoid conflict or confrontation.
- Diminish their capacity to have healthy relationships by declining to use the tools of recovery.
- Suppress their feelings or needs to avoid feeling vulnerable.
- Refuse to give up their self will to avoid surrendering to a power greater than themselves.
- Believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.
- Withhold expressions of appreciation.

### **Section III - STEPS**

The guideline for our individual recovery is CoDA's 12 Steps. We'll now take turns reading the steps one at a time. Feel free to "pass" if you'd like.





## 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.

Ask for a volunteer to read the Tradition of the month and the 7<sup>th</sup> tradition.

## **Section IV – Sharing**

As we begin this CoDA meeting, I'd like to remind you that all are encouraged to share but should not feel like they must. In the spirit of this, we should not be afraid of silent pauses in sharing, as some of us need time to gather our thoughts. A few things to remember:

Sharing is done in no particular order. If you share, please start by stating your first name.

Each share should be restricted to 3-5 minutes. Please show consideration for others by being mindful of your time.

No crosstalk. There should be no conversations or talk across the circle of this meeting. Please save those until after both sections of the meeting has concluded. If crosstalk is observed by the group leader, a 30 second of silence will be called to ensure the boundaries and safety of our meeting. As you listen, please resist the urge to chime in and disrupt the meeting by making comments, asking questions, giving judgements or advice, and consoling by fetching Kleenex or reaching out to the person sharing. This disrupts the emotional process the sharer is experiencing in this safe environment and should not be done.

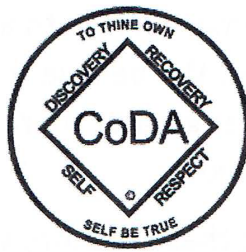
And remember our meetings are held with trust in each other. What you see here, what you hear here, when you leave here, let it stay here.

Our meeting will be focused primarily on the reading we are currently studying in a CoDA Book until 11:00 AM, at which time we will close our study and have open sharing until no later than 11:30. Just a reminder there is no crosstalk until the meeting has concluded.

- Ask for a Volunteer to read the meditation of the day.
- Rotate bi-weekly between “The Language of Letting Go” and “In this Moment” CoDA meditation book.

**Section V – Closing** We will now take turns reading the promises of Co-Dependents Anonymous as reprinted from the “Blue Book.”





I can expect a miraculous change in my life by working the program of Codependents 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 a 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.

Co-Dependents Anonymous is a program free to all who wish to attend, and its cornerstone is trust in one another. We believe that by helping and supporting each other with the help of a power greater than ourselves, we can find more meaningful, loving, and peaceful lives.

Please remember those attending these meetings wish to remain anonymous and what was spoken and shared was done in confidence.

What you saw here, what you heard here, when you leave here, let it stay here.

...and now we will read the CoDA Closing Prayer together.

**We thank our Higher Power**

**For all that we received from this meeting.**

**As we close, may we take with us**

**Wisdom, love, acceptance, and hope of recovery.**

After a moment of silence, those who wish to are encouraged to join me in 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.**

***Thank you for being here! Keep coming back! It works if you work it!***

The second half of our meeting is for open share and has more of a loose ending time. We will start it with noting any newcomers or those who are celebrating a milestone in their recovery journey. Has anyone reached 1, 2, 3, 6, or 9 months of recovery this week? Any annual coins due?

Are there any CoDA related announcements?

Then I'll open it up for "Bitches, Gripes, and Gratitude's."

The floor is open with a reminder there is still no cross talk.