



coda-tulsa.org
(Wednesday Group)

Meeting Starter Packet of Co-Dependents Anonymous

Open (Leader for the week)

> Good evening and welcome to this meeting of CoDA: Co-Dependents Anonymous. Please turn your cell phone off for the duration of this meeting.

After a moment of silence, please join me in the Serenity Prayer.

God, (slight pause)

**Grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change,
The courage to change the things I can,
And the wisdom to know the difference.**

OPEN

> 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 real desire for better and more fulfilling 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 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 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.

New Comer(s)? Take turns reading paragraphs of CoDA Welcome (page 6 - last page)

> Now, on the next page, let's take turns reading *the Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence* one section at a time. Feel free to pass if you wish.



Patterns and Characteristics 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 other's approval of my thinking, feelings, and behaviors 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 often 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.



The **Twelve Steps of Codependence Anonymous** are the guidelines for our individual recovery. Now we'll take turns reading the steps one at a time.

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.



Sharing Guidelines

> A few things to remember about sharing:

Each person should feel free to read and share, but not compelled to.

When you begin to share, start with your first name.

Keep each sharing to no more than 3-5 minutes.

Try to keep what you share in first person+with references to *me* and *mine*+instead of *you*, *us* and *ours*+

No crosstalk. There should be no conversations or talk across the circle of this meeting. Save those until after the meeting has concluded.

As you listen to another share, feel free to offer nods or other forms of reinforcement that don't distract or interrupt. However, resist the urge to chime in and disrupt the meeting by giving judgment, comments or advice to the person sharing.

Indicate you are done simply by thanking the group.

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

> Volunteer to read today's entry in *The Language of Letting Go*+

> This meeting is focused primarily on studying the 12 steps. We use Melody Beattie's *Codependents Guide to the 12 Steps*+as our guide and are currently on Step (##) (read step) guide. As we go around the table each person is encouraged to read one or two paragraphs, but not compelled to. After you've read you're welcome to share your thoughts and feelings or you can simply *pass*+. Who would like to read first?

Closing:

> And now just before we conclude this CoDA meeting let's read the **Twelve Promises of Codependents Anonymous**. Feel free to pass if you wish.

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.

> 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.

> After a moment of silence, those who wish to are encouraged to join me in the Serenity Prayer. God, (slight pause) grant me the serenity to accept the things I can not change, The courage to change the things I can, And the Wisdom to know the difference.

Thank you for being here! Keep coming back!



CoDA Welcome for new comers

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 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 life 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. 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.