

The Lone Star



CoDA Courier



May 2011 Volume 7 Issue 2

CoDA Texas Officers: Chair-Bob M., Vice Chair-Terri S., Treasurer-Calista M., Secretary-Marilyn B.

CoDA Texas 2011 Voting Entity Issues

Texas submitted two voting entity issues to the CoDA World Board for consideration at Conference.

Issue #1

For CoRE to publish as additional literature the latest version of the Co-dependents Anonymous (Blue Book) in a smaller “pocket size” version excluding the personal stories.

Intent: To make basic CoDA Book Information available in a smaller size so it can be discreetly carried around to maintain anonymity. An added benefit could be to generate more literature income for CoRE.

Issue #2

Request CoDA to have CoRE publish Chapter 5 of the latest version of the Co-dependents Anonymous (Blue Book) as a supplemental insert available for sale to the Fellowship.

Intent: For those with older editions of the book to have available the latest content of Chapter 5. This chapter is awesome and will provide more literature for sale, answer important questions for the newcomer and old timer alike, and will help people update their book without having to buy another one--thus potentially reducing illegal copying.

Delegate packets, motions, and other Conference documentation were posted on the CoDA web site at this link: http://www.coda.org/dp/Bylaws-Committee_Reports-VEIs/. Two bylaw amendments were also posted. These items are posted before Conference to allow members of the Fellowship to provide feedback to their delegates. As the power in this organization is with the Fellowship, please let your delegates (Brandi at playful2121@yahoo.com or Robert G. at rgralla423@aol.com) know your opinion about these motions before Conference if you have time and are inclined. There are 35 committee motions, 2 bylaws amendments, and 14 VE motions. You can download each file separately, select DP_Reports_Package1.pdf (this file contains all documents), or e-mail me (kkq1456@yahoo.com) and I will send you whichever document you want.

CoDA Texas 2011 State Assembly in Tyler

The 2011 State Assembly will be in Tyler on October 14-16 at the Holiday Inn Express (Tyler S.). The address is 2421 ESE Loop 323 Tyler, TX 75701. Phone: 903 566-0600. Website: www.hietyler.com. There are 21 rooms blocked under the Group Name of “12 Step CoDA.” A registration form will be in the next newsletter and put on the Texas CoDA website.

Donation to Camp Lone Star

Camp Lone Star has charged us only for the number of people attending retreat in the past rather than the number estimated when the contract is signed a year in advance. This has saved CoDA Texas a lot of



money. In appreciation for their kindness, a motion was made and passed to send \$100 donation to Camp Lone Star. A "Thank You Letter" was received from the Director at Camp Lone Star.

Texas 7th Tradition Donations

According to the 12 Traditions, CoDA is self-supporting through its own contributions. Seventh Tradition donations help CoDA Texas send Delegates to CoDA Service Conference, provide seed money for the annual retreat, pay for the CoDA Texas web site, state PO Box, provide seed money for State Assembly, and pay for postage to mail these newsletters! Suggested donations above prudent reserves are 60% to the city community, 30% to CoDA Texas, and 10% to CoDA World. Send Texas donations to: **CoDA Texas, P.O. Box 300511, Austin, TX 78703-0009. Please provide the meeting number with your donation.**

THANK YOU to all CoDA Meetings and Individuals for the 2011 7th Tradition contributions to CoDA Texas From the CoDA Texas Treasurer, Calista M.

Gracias a todos las reuniones CoDA y los individuos por sus contribuciones de la 7^a traducción del 2011. De la Tesorera CoDA, Calista M.

TX046 – Houston	\$101.50	TX452 – Coppell	\$20.00
TX051 – Kingwood	\$18.00	TX459 – Austin	\$5.00
TX074 – Tyler	\$10.00	TX471 – Tyler	\$20.00
TX089 – Richardson Sun.	\$5.00	TX475 – New Braunfels	\$24.00
TX150 – Oaklawn	\$40.00	2011 Spring Board Meeting	\$40.00
TX341 – Ft. Worth	\$100.00		

Total 2011 Contributions as of 4/19/11	\$383.50
Total 2010 Contributions as of 12/31/10	\$1487.21
Total 2009 Contributions as of 12/13/09	\$826.00

SCHEDULED UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS, AND GATHERINGS FOR CODA TEXAS CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS, CURSOS, Y CONGREGACIONES PARA CODA TEXAS

Month Mes	Event Evento	When Cuando	Where Donde	Contact Contacto
<u>Jun</u>	Camping	Jun 17-19	Quintana Beach Park, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446 Bomo54@yahoo.com
<u>July</u>	World Conference World Convention	July 5-8 July 8-10	Denver, CO Denver, CO	www.coda.org www.coda.org
<u>Aug</u>	Camping	Aug. 12-14	Palmetto State Park, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446 Bomo54@yahoo.com
<u>Sept</u>	Camping	Sept. 9-11	Krause Springs, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446 Bomo54@yahoo.com
<u>Oct</u>	State Assembly	Oct. 14-16	Tyler, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446 Bomo54@yahoo.com
<u>Nov</u>	Camping	Nov. 4-5	New Braunfels, TX	Bob M. 903-262-7446 Bomo54@yahoo.com

Twelve Service Concepts

By Karen G.

The Twelve Service Concepts are guidelines to performing service work in CoDA and may be found in the Fellowship Service Manual of Co-Dependents Anonymous© as well as on the CoDA Website at <http://www.coda.org/tools4recovery/twelve-service-concepts.htm>. Five of the 12 Service Concepts directly mention the CoDA Service Conference. I've rarely heard them read at business meetings let alone at sharing meetings. They could be a good meeting discussion topic. They seem to be an under utilized resource, but they speak to issues that may arise in service work such as:

- Each person has the right to voice (#12),
- Members listen respectfully to all opinions expressed (#12),
- Each CoDA member is guaranteed the right to respectfully dissent during the group conscience decision process (#6),
- Our purpose is to advance our individual recovery, continue our groups, & carry the message (#1),
- Be humble in service work rather than seeking prestige and honor (#7),
- Provide adequate funding and support for the service work authorized (#2),
- Use a spiritual democratic process to make decisions (#3),
- Trusted Servants are not authority figures (#4),
- Unanimity is desired, but a majority vote is a group conscience (#3), and
- Trusted Servants are directly responsible to those they serve and are bound to honor the Group Conscience, and when a Group Conscience violates an individual's own truth and makes participation impossible, the individual may relinquish the service position (#5).

Boundaries

A request was received to include this poem in the Texas newsletter. The poem is by Jennifer T. and was published in the January 2009 issue of *Co-NNections*.

Boundaries are borders
 We draw to preserve,
 The distance between
 What's mine and what's yours
 They keep pain out
 and peace within,
 And are a necessary tool
 If you desire to win
 This game of life
 So complicated it seems,
 As if heaven could only exist in a dream
 These boundaries help us
 create peace on Earth
 And remind us of our
 Natural rights from birth
 In recovery we're reminded of
 this awesome truth,
 So we own our power
 with no excuse!

Self-Care

By Kate R.

When I came into CODA I was in a quagmire and I couldn't get out. I had lost my "self" in my relationships with my parents, my children, my spouse(s), my siblings, my boyfriend, my co-workers, and my job.

In my family of origin I had learned that I was unlovable, unlovely, and unloving. I had learned that I was not good enough, that I was not smart enough, not thin enough, not rich enough, not enough, period. In my early childhood, I learned the way I could overcome these messages was by trying harder. I could try harder to be good enough, smart enough, thin enough, rich enough - - enough, period. And on some rare occasions, perhaps I was. I carried this futile behavior with me into adult life. When I perceived (in my co-dependent wisdom) that my spouse was unhappy with me (for some imagined offense) I would try harder. When I perceived that my boss was unhappy, I tried harder. When I thought my children, my parents, my friends, my boyfriend, my co-workers (are you seeing a pattern here?) were unhappy, I tried harder.

What I now know was inevitable; I crashed and burned on the eve of my 40th birthday. My life was in shambles. I was broken and my “trier” was broken. I had tried so hard I had nothing left. Another marriage ended, more lost relationships. What was wrong with me? Well, the answer was obvious, I thought. I was unlovable, unlovely, and unloving. I didn’t deserve love because I wasn’t “enough.”

At this point I entered CODA. I didn’t expect much. I thought I was beyond help. How in the world, could anything make sense of the tangled spaghetti bowl that my life had become? As you can see from the above, I had a really messed-up concept of what “love” was.

As I attended meetings, I listened and I learned. My story wasn’t so unique after all! I wasn’t a freak of nature! I was one, of a very large group of people called the human race. My issues were shared across a large spectrum of people. I learned that whatever problems I had, there were those in the meeting rooms who had them too. I began to understand several different things, and I began to learn them all at the same time.

Early on in recovery, I really couldn’t understand the concept of being lovable. How could anyone love me? How could anything love me? I couldn’t show love to myself. I could only express shame, guilt, loathing, and self-hatred to myself. Sure, sure, some of my achievements and actions were noteworthy. I graduated college; I was supporting myself, was a contributing member of society, a marathon-runner, etc. But, I was convinced that the person I was on the inside was not loveable.

In my pre-recovery life, I could easily understand how God could love anyone and everyone else, other than me. I could give extra mercy, extra grace, extra patience, extra forgiveness, to anyone, other than myself. After all, everyone else was worth so much more than I was. Everyone else was “enough.” Everyone else was loveable.

Through the tools and traditions, I began to have a dynamic shift in my concept of being loveable. I began to have a spiritual awakening. My Higher Power, whom I choose to call God/Jesus/Holy Spirit, believes that I am a precious and unique creation. After all, He made me, and He doesn’t make junk. I learned this when I studied the nature and the promises of God, by reading his Word, the Bible. I chose to believe His promises and what He said about me, rather than what my family of origin told me. In my life in recovery, I must make the choice every day to love myself. This is my recovery. In AA, or NA a person might choose, every day, not to drink or to drug. My CODA recovery looks like this: I consciously choose every day, to love myself.

What does “loving myself” look like? It looks like self-care. “Self-care” seems like such a clean, pristine, dainty word. It’s not. It’s down and dirty. It is where the rubber of recovery meets the road of my life. It plays out in choices. Will I choose to compromise my beliefs, give away my power, just so my spouse/parent/child/lover/boss/friend will like me? Just to keep the peace? Or will I choose to set a boundary and say “this far and no farther”? Will I choose to let myself be abused and belittled, just to get along? Or will I choose to clearly say what I want and what I need? Will I choose to lie to my spouse/parent/child/lover/boss/friend because I think that is what they want to hear? Or will I be honest and direct with what I think, what I need, and what I feel?

Oh, friend, don’t think that these choices are ever easy. My codependency is subtle and it is strong. It is so much more “comfortable, safe and easy,” to go with what I know: my old codependent behavior. Even if that “comfort, safe and ease” has me lying on a figurative bed of nails every night. In my recovery, occasionally, I still fall back to what I knew before: Try harder. Do more. Give just a little more! Push down my feelings. I can fix this! I can figure this out! Deny my needs! Withdraw and avoid! I can solve this! Don’t feel it! Don’t feel it! Don’t feel it! When the codependent crazies come along in my daily life, I can choose to quash things in my old tried and (un)true methods. Then, prior to recovery, when none of that worked, and I realized my powerlessness, I completely took my hands off and gave up. It’s then, when I gave up that I tried to ignore and deny what was going on inside me. How very helpless I

felt because I couldn't change or control anything around me. Then, I would eat to it/sex to it/shop to it/work to it/exercise to it/procrastinate to it. You might have chosen to drink to it/drug to it/fantasize to it. Rather than see what was inside me, I would focus on things outside myself.

Guess what? Through recovery I learned that my High Power has something better for me—working Steps 1, 2 & 3. Working the Steps is when I realized the insanity I had created, when I realized only my Higher Power could restore me to sanity, when I chose every day, every hour, every minute to turn my will and my life over to the care of my loving Higher Power. Instead of surviving life, living my life on a daily basis. When I feel all of the above codependent crazies, I have learned to use several tools. I ask myself, where is God in all of this? I wonder which step this is. I call my sponsor. I go to meetings. I read literature. I journal. I meditate on the character and attributes of my Higher Power. I feel my feelings and let them go. I give myself extra grace, extra mercy, extra patience.

In short, I practice self-care. And guess what has happened? Every time I choose self-care over codependency, I begin to know a new love and acceptance of myself. By my choosing self-care, I prove to myself, that I am genuinely loveable, loving, and loved.

Praise God for His wisdom that He so lovingly bestowed upon me!

CoDA Texas Newsletter

By Karen G.

I received comments from a Texas member who was unhappy with some of the articles in the December 2010 newsletter when I sent it out for review (I'm not required to do this but find it useful). About 5 more people agreed with the comments and 5 thought the articles were interesting and appropriate for the newsletter. A result of the discussion was an agenda for the Texas Spring Board meeting to discuss newsletter guidelines, which ended up being tabled. A request was made to add the topic to the October Assembly meeting agenda in Tyler. If you have an opinion about the newsletter please share it with your Group Rep (especially if they are attending the State Assembly), Texas Board members, or the newsletter editor (kkg1456@yahoo.com).

The primary issue was World Outreach committee information being in the newsletter, but there were other complaints from this person. I was told I used the newsletter to further my own interests because I am on the Outreach committee, that World news should not be in the Texas newsletter, that the newsletter does not promote people to do service work because of negative articles, I wrote too much, I didn't tell the whole story, I was airing dirty laundry, etc. I received another e-mail in April from a fellow former National (now World) Board member who said I was revising history in the *Gossip* article (Feb. 2011 issue), that in fact I was told to resign or be removed from the National Board and that in the name of rigorous honesty I should put this in the newsletter. He also stated the other three people who were on the National Board agreed with him.

I have prayed for Higher Power's guidance about these comments the past few weeks. People have been respectful in their language, but there has been anger too. Dealing with conflict is not easy. I understand today the only way to get to peace and serenity is to go **through** the feelings. While running from a conflict removes the immediate feelings of being unsafe, I still have to process the feelings. I know Higher Power will continue to give me the opportunity to learn the lesson; I can choose to learn it the first time or keep doing the same thing until I become teachable.

The 12th CoDA Service Concept states:

The Fellowship strives to practice and encourage spiritual principles in all its material, financial, and business affairs, including fairness, equality, and respect for individual rights. Every member within CoDA has a voice and is encouraged to use it. Every member has the right to know what is happening within our organization. To honor this right, and in the spirit of CoDA unity, our

CoDA organization publishes and distributes group conscience decisions, such as minutes of our service boards and motions from our CoDA Service Conferences, in the most inclusive and timely manner possible.

“Every member has a right to know what is happening within our organization.” It doesn’t say within the State or World or what vehicle is used to present that information. It says within our organization.

“Every member in CoDA has a voice and is encouraged to use it.” Wow, I love this sentence! I have a right to speak and I am **encouraged** to speak. I can respectfully talk about the “pink elephant” in the middle of the room and others will listen (also respectfully). So when someone says to me I’m “airing dirty laundry” I think well isn’t that what I’m supposed to do? Isn’t that how I get better—to break the “don’t talk” rule? Awareness is the first step to change. Sometimes (which I believe ultimately is for the short term), things seem worse because of the emotions that surface in others and myself (thank goodness we have the 30 Second Time Out [see the Fellowship Service manual] as a tool of recovery). My character defects and baggage present challenges when handling conflict—progress not perfection.

I have experienced two big conflicts in my service work in CoDA—one when I was on the National Board and one last year while on Outreach—where I respectfully spoke my truth and disagreed with another person. I’ve been surprised at the reactions of the people with whom I disagreed. As the 12th Service Concept states, I have a right to state my opinion as long as I do so respectfully. I keep hearing in this program that I am responsible for my feelings and no one else’s, so I get to work my program, do a 10th Step, process my feelings, do my part, and practice faith in Higher Power’s will and guidance.

As to the issue about my service on the National Board, I stand by my statement. I have not spoken with them so I’m not sure why they believe what they believe. I wasn’t aware there were different perspectives so I’ve learned something. I am powerless over others; people will believe what they want to believe, and it’s none of my business what others think of me. A friend in this program told me she was taught if she is explaining herself then she is in her disease, which is food for thought. There is no purpose to gossip about things that happened over 7 years ago unless there is an agenda. I know of no 12 Step programs where it is acceptable to gossip, as it does not reflect good service work or recovery.

The positive from this is that I have processed through the emotions around the National Board event in a different place on the spiral. I was able to say, “How you decided to handle a complaint about me was biased.” I didn’t have enough strength and recovery to say this then and that is growth.

CoDA Texas Website

CoDA Texas website URL is www.texascoda.org. E-mail Della at dewmypart@yahoo.com to post information/events.

Online Store for CoDA Literature—Spanish Literature

Now available from CoRe - *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Workbook* in Spanish! The CoRe E-store URL is <http://www.coda.org/estore/>.

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter will be mail and electronic versions sent out around Sept.

Texas E-Mail and Mailing Lists

Anyone who wants to be added to or opt out of the Texas e-mail list may write to codatexasemailmessenger@gmail.com. To correct or change an address for the postal mailings or opt out of the mailing, send an e-mail to danw1212@gmail.com or a letter to Dan W., 813 Rock Creek, Irving, TX 76039.