

The Lone Star



CoDA Courier



August 2008 Volume 4 Issue 3

CoDA Texas Officers: Chair-Cindi S., Vice Chair-Noreen M., Treasurer-Sharon M., Secretary-Karen G.

Experience Our Website: www.texascođa.org

Wanted: Expressions of Experience, Strength and Hope in prose or poetry. The Lone Star Courier will publish selections authored by CoDA members.



A Message from the Outgoing CoDA Texas Chair

By Cindi S.

It has been my pleasure to serve on the board this last two years, and I have to say I was somewhat nervous about accepting the position. There have been challenges, I certainly haven't met all our deadlines or goals, but for the most part I have enjoyed the service work and would encourage everyone to volunteer for some kind of service.

We will be having elections at the State Assembly gathering in Dallas, November 14-16. There are several openings including chair, treasurer, and secretary. The good thing about volunteering at the state level is we do most of our business at only **two** meetings, once in the Spring and once in the Fall. In between, we work by email or phone, so not much commitment or time is needed!

Please consult with your sponsor or Higher Power about volunteering in some capacity whether it is at your local meeting, your community, state, or CoDA Inc. Our local Dallas community has several openings as well.

I have one more concern as your outgoing chair. We have only received donations this year of \$73.57. Texas has always been a leader in sending delegates to Conference, preparing and bringing forth literature and issues for Conference and providing recovery/fellowship opportunities such as the Spring Retreat and State Assembly.

Without your group's donations, we may not be able to continue these important services. Please, please talk with your group and see if you can send a donation of some kind.

I would like to thank our wonderful volunteers and my fellow board members – it has been a pleasure to serve with such a great group of people who are working and living the CoDA program! See you in November in Dallas for the State Assembly and Workshops. Read Rainbow J's article below to see what a newcomer had to say about the last Assembly.

Texas Business

A draft copy of CoDA Texas bylaws is posted at the Texas web site under the Business documents pull down. The bylaws will be voted on at the Texas State Assembly. Bylaws are not the most interesting reading, but we need them. Banks have more **stringent rules** since 911, and it is getting more difficult to change officers or accounts without Bylaws. **Please read through the document and send comments to kkg1456@yahoo.com.**

Anyone wanting to receive the newsletter, event flyers, and business announcements, write to judiann104@yahoo.com.

The Texas voting entity issues were sent to the CoDA Board for inclusion in the CoDA Service Conference (CSC) delegate packets; however, they were sent 3 days late and it is unclear if they will be discussed at Conference or not. My amends to the Texas Fellowship for not getting them out sooner. Karen G.

Have a question about CoDA? The editor will post 1 or 2 of the most common e-mails with a response in the next newsletter. Send articles/questions to kkg1456@yahoo.com.

Texas 7th Tradition Donations

THANK YOU to all CoDA Meetings and Individuals for your 2008 7th Tradition contributions to CoDA Texas From the CoDA Texas Treasurer, Sharon M.

Gracias a todos las reuniones CoDA y los individuos por sus contribuciones de la 7^a tradición del 2007. De la Tesorera CoDA, Sharon M.

TX006 – Austin \$	TX207 – Richardson \$
TX008 – Houston \$21.57	TX341 – Fort Worth \$
TX009 – Houston \$	TX367 – Katy \$
TX051 – Kingwood \$	TX419 – Bryan \$30
TX087 – Irving \$	TX436 – Fort Worth \$
TX089 – Richardson \$	TX443 – Ft. Worth \$
TX149 – Dallas \$	Spring Board Meeting (4-26-08) \$22
TX150 – Dallas \$	

Total 2008 Contributions as of April 28, 2008 **\$73.57**
Total 2008 Contributions as of July 15, 2008 **\$73.57**

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**

SCHEDULED UPCOMING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS AND GATHERINGS. CALENDARIO DE EVENTOS, CURSOS Y CONGREGACIONES

Month	Event	When	Where	Contact
Mes	Evento	Cuando	Donde	Contacto
<u>Sept 2008</u>	Service Conference	9/8/08-9/12/08	Chicago	Judi C., 713-854-2710
	Speaker Meeting	9/13/08 7 to 9 p.m.	Dallas	Nate F. 972-623-7423
<u>Nov 2008</u>	TX State Assembly	11/14/08-11/16/08 Fri. 6:00 p.m. Call for hotel reservations, Holiday Inn Express, 214-350-4011 (Mention CoDA for group rate)	Dallas	Cindi S., 972-977-4550
<u>Mar 2009</u>	Retreat	3/09 Fri 7:00 p.m.	La Grange	Judi C., 713-854-2710

(Submit your event to the editor in the same format as you see above and like magic you will see it listed)

2008 June CoDA Campout

By Bob M.

I've got a sponsor in the Metroplex now so I will be working the full CoDA program. Our program has four parts: I.) Attending meetings; II.) Sharing & Fellowship; III.) Working the Steps; and IV.) Sponsorship. I'm refocused now, and the Fellowship at the second Camp Out was the catalyst. I need more Fellowship outside meetings. I've also

got the camping bug and will be filling this need too. :) I'm ready for another dose of camping and fellowship. On the Path.....

2007 CoDA Texas State Assembly

By Rainbow J.

I just returned home after attending the 2007 CoDA State Assembly held in Austin, TX in November.

I am a relatively new CoDA member, and I had never attended a Texas State Assembly before! I was totally blown away by the love, the honesty, the fellowship, and dedication!

I was particularly impressed by the three workshops presented on Saturday afternoon.

The first one was entitled "Communication and Recovery" and was presented by Karen G. She presented to the group a magnificent pamphlet published by Co-Dependents Anonymous entitled "Communication and Recovery." We had a powerful discussion about the importance of being clear, concise, honest, and kind in our communications. We talked about weasel words, i.e., "I'm not sure," "Maybe," "I'm Sorry," and "I think" when we are sure. Karen told us that some of the reasons we use weasel words and phrases are: fear of commitment, shame, fear of abandonment, and negative self esteem. She told us that we dishonor ourselves if we're not honest. Furthermore, we water down our opinions and feelings by ending our statements with "*I think*," if we actually *know* how we feel and don't say! She explained to us that sometimes our pre-historic Reptilian brain kicks in and is triggered with that old pattern of "There's not enough," and "They're out to get me." This was a fascinating workshop, which gave me healthy tools for communication, as well as making me aware of unhealthy communication patterns, which I now can correct!

The second workshop was presented by David L and was entitled "The 12 Steps in 30 Minutes." He handed each of us an amazing template containing the 12 Steps, two powerful questions about each step, and a prayer for each step. The following are the questions connected with each step:

1. We admitted we were powerless over others and that our lives have become unmanageable.
 - a. **I am powerless over (fill in the blank)**
 - b. **How does this make my life unmanageable**
2. Came to believe that a Power Greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
 - a. **What are the qualities of my Higher Power?**
 - b. **How would my life be if I believed my Higher Power could do for me what I cannot do for myself?**
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
 - a. **What can I do today to turn this over to the care of God?**
 - b. **What more can I do every day to turn my whole life over to the care of God?**
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves
 - a. **Resentment/fear associated with (fill in the blank)**
 - b. **What happened?**
 - c. **What did it affect? (Self-esteem, security, personal relationships)**
 - d. **What is my part? Have I been (Selfish, envious, manipulative, drama queen/king, controlling defensive)**
 - e. **What is my negative core belief attached to this resentment/fear?**
(What underlies the reaction you had in 4c?)
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
 - a. **Reviewing step four, was I completely honest?**
 - b. **About my core belief, when was the first time I felt like this?**
 - c. **What is the higher truth about me on this subject?**
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
 - a. **Why do I want to hold on to my character defects?**
 - b. **Why would I want to hold on to my core beliefs?**
 - c. **How would my life be different if I did not have this core belief?**
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
 - a. **Write a prayer for the list on 4d.**
 - b. **Write a prayer for the list on 4c.**
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
 - a. **List from 4a**
 - b. **Are you willing to make amends? If not, why not?**
 - c. **How does your life feel when you don't make amends?**
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.
 - a. **Write out how you will make amends.**

- b. **When you will make amends.**
 - c. **Write your own prayer to ask God to give you the courage to do so.**
10. Continued to take personal inventory and, when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
 - a. **List the time you commit to doing a daily personal inventory.**
 - b. **Explain why you cannot do it, or write the benefits from your daily inventory.**
 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 for the power to carry that out.
 - a. **Commit to praying and meditating every day (when?)**
 - b. **Explain why you can't do it every day (go back to step 1 and restart on this one)**
 - c. **Express gratitude for what you have learned about yourself so far.**
 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.
 - a. **Commit to sharing your experience, strength and hope using the step process in recovery/when-where**
 - b. **Commit to one action of service this includes self-care**
 - c. **Describe why you cannot commit (return to step one and begin again on this subject).**

The last workshop was entitled "The CoDA Promises & Me" and was presented by Della B. She passed around a box containing small pieces of paper the shape of fortune cookies with the CoDA 12 promises on them. Each of us picked one of them and then shared with group how this promise affected our lives right now. I picked the first one: "I know a new sense of belonging. The feelings of emptiness and loneliness will disappear." Since the item over which I felt powerless was "food," I felt this promise was giving me a new insight as to what might be motivating me to overeat.

This Assembly was extremely valuable, providing inspiration, information, and motivation to all attendees! I strongly recommend that you attend the next one. Your life will be changed at depth!

Is Codependency an Addiction or an Affliction?

By Karen G.

I think there are arguments that can be made for either side of this discussion. I don't think codependency is an addiction (i.e., it's not a substance) in the same terms as alcohol or drugs although there is overlap in terms of how the brain and maybe body deal with it. I do believe it is a deeply entrenched learned behavior that affects me physically, emotionally, and spiritually. I felt unsafe and unloved in my childhood. I know my parents did the best they could. I think codependency for me is one of my coping mechanisms to avoid pain and fear. The fear can be so great that I want to sooth it by changing who I am to "fit in" and "make" other people happy so they won't be mad or upset with me. I learned the world was not safe at an early age, and there is a part of my brain that still reacts to that experience. I recently got to revisit this fear with a doctor. Why did I take his stuff on instead of holding on to the idea that his actions were about him? I think part of the reason it was harder is that I was feeling physical pain and I was already in fear before I started talking to him. On top of that we had difficult communication, which frustrated us both. If I had been in a better place maybe I would have been able to let it go better. Isn't that true for substance abuse too? I have pain and fear and I want to fix those emotions. In a crunch, I go back to those old old behaviors and it happens so fast I don't know what hit me. Awareness is the first step to change. My therapist told me that when an event (A) happens, I think certain thoughts (B), and go to an emotional response (C). That pathway is so engrained in my brain that I don't even realize I'm thinking B. A happens and I'm at C in a flash. She said when I get to C, I need to think about what messages I told myself and ask myself the question "Is this true?" That helps to break the cycle so I can create new pathways in my brain. Sounds like it's all about chemistry. Maybe it is an addiction since it is based on chemistry but one that I learned and was not born with, assuming substance abuse is genetic. Does it matter where it came from? Sometimes I think it doesn't and sometimes I think it does. I tend to be less blaming or anxious when I understand the source. Ultimately, I need to deal with it no matter the source. Thanks for "listening."

Next Newsletter and Board Meeting Minutes

The next newsletter will be sent out in sometime in Nov/Dec (electronic copy only). The final 2007 Spring Board Meeting and State Assembly minutes as well as draft 2008 Spring Board meeting minutes have been posted on the CoDA Texas web page.