

The Lone Star



CoDA Courier



May 2008 Volume 4 Issue 2

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

Experience Our Website: www.texasco.org

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



CoDA Texas 2008 Voting Entity Issues

The officers and delegates met at the E. Waco Library on April 26th, crafting the following Voting Entity issues for submission to the 2008 CoDA Service Conference:

1. Texas requests that individuals be granted permission to verbally substitute the term Higher Power for God, if desired, when reading the Preamble, Welcome, Steps, and Traditions out loud.

Intent: This issue was submitted two years ago and there was a misunderstanding at CSC about what was being requested. We do not request the written documents be changed but the statement that the Foundational documents must be read “as written” be changed. Codependents can be black and white in their thinking; some people interpret “as written” to mean that Higher Power cannot be substituted for God when reading the document. Changing “as written” (e.g., as written except for the substitution of Higher Power for God) allows people the choice of saying Higher Power when the documents are read out loud. Since CoDA is a nondenominational organization, we would like to be congruent with the principles of the organization in using “Higher Power” and the God of our understanding in the reading of Foundational documents.

2. Texas requests that when CoDA World translates the CoDA Book into other languages, only the first 111 pages be translated rather than the entire book. Translation is very expensive and we think the recovery stories will not translate well linguistically or culturally.

Intent: We do not intend to eliminate the personal recovery stories but think the stories would be better if provided in the native language and culture—perhaps as a separate book. Translating the first 111 pages only would save CoDA money and provide important CoDA literature to other countries more quickly.

3. CoDA Texas suggests a change to the third paragraph of the Welcome. It now reads: “We attempted to use others--our mates, friends, and even our children as our sole source of identity.....” We would like to add “and jobs” and change the Welcome to: “We attempted to use others--our mates, friends, and even our children **and jobs**, as our sole source of identity..... “

Intent: Some codependents don't have mates, children, or even friends, but use their job as their sole source of identity. Adding this phrase to the Welcome identifies another area of our addiction. We suggest this change be implemented in the Meeting Starter packet and other web documents and then in the CoDA Book at the next printing.

Texas Business

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

To keep people better informed about CoDA activities, CoDA Texas will create 4 newsletters/year. To keep costs down, two issues will be sent via postal service and e-mail, while the other two issues will be mailed via e-mail only. All four issues will be posted on the Texas web site (www.texascoda.org).

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 2007 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.

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|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 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 \$ | |

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|--|------------------|
| Total 2007 Contributions | \$1054.85 |
| Total 2008 Contributions as of April 30, 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 | 9/9/08 Tues TBA | Chicago | Judi C., 713-854-2710 |
| <u>Nov 2008</u> | TX State Assembly | 11/14-11/16/08 6:00 p.m. Call for hotel reservations, Holiday Inn, 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 March Retreat in La Grange

By Clint T.

I am here at the CoDA retreat. There's been so much honest sharing and I felt so much I cried. I opened up about my fear and hurt. I feel so good. Even with the sadness I'm feeling, I feel a release. By being honest, it's not a dark secret. I don't feel as bad because I make mistakes. I feel proud that I care and that I'm more aware. Reassuring myself and validating myself for my successes in recovery feels good. When others validate me I let it in better. The bonding, the hugs, the love, and being able to share my inner self are what is so rewarding in my recovery at these retreats. I'm Clint. I've been in CoDA 18 years and I've come to about 6 or 7 retreats in a row. Come have fun and feel better about you. We can learn to make even better choices. Thanks Father God, my Higher Power.

Using Non-CoDA Approved (or Outside) Literature

By Karen G.

What is CoDA's opinion on outside (or non-Conference approved) literature? This question is one of the most frequent questions received by the CoDA World Outreach Committee—well actually, it's more like "our meeting is reading 'blank' and I know we're not supposed to use outside literature at the meetings. I've asked for a group conscience and" Sometimes they want us to fix the problem for them. Sometimes they are looking for guidelines. Often they don't feel safe or do not want to attend that meeting because the meeting is breaking the Traditions.

Several years ago, a tougher stance was taken about outside literature. People were told a meeting that read outside literature could be taken off the CoDA meeting list (this rarely happens and is usually reserved for glaringly inappropriate behaviors like not reading the 4 Foundational documents, charging people to attend a meeting, or having a therapist lead a meeting, etc.).

Over time, this stance has softened and the Outreach Committee response to this question has been the following: *CoDA strongly urges meetings to use CoDA literature, but ultimately it is up to the group conscience (GC) of each meeting to decide.*

This change occurred in part because of another concept—autonomy. Each meeting is autonomous except in matters affecting CoDA as a whole. I have yet to see a clear outcome around this issue. I guess Higher Power wants us to work on it more.

CoDA has a pamphlet entitled, "Why is CoDA Conference Endorsed Literature Vital?" (CoDA, 1998). It states,

"Conference Endorsed literature benefits the Fellowship by making our collective experience, strength, and hope available to our members. By using endorsed literature, our recovery is not diverted by any particular perspective, personality, or plan. We can rely on the fact that what we are reading is the experience, strength, and hope of recovering members like ourselves. Even when we attend meetings distant from our home, we can feel at home, because the literature and message are the same at CoDA meetings all over. Hence, we have CoDA unity.

There are many of us who have found a variety of non-CoDA literature out there that has touched our lives and enhanced our recovery, and each of us is free to choose and read as much of it as we want to on our own. If there is something that really touches us that we would like to share at the meeting, we can share our experience of what we read as it has become part of our own recovery. Each of us finds our own personal path to recovery, but what we share in common at CoDA meetings is the CoDA program. We have time and freedom to explore and share many different facets of our recovery before and after meetings, but our time in a CoDA meeting is our time to focus on the principles of CoDA" (from the CoDA web site FAQ).

When the CoDA program was started and for several years after that, there was very little CoDA literature. The CoDA book wasn't published until 1995, therefore, outside literature was used extensively. Over the 22 years CoDA has been around, more and more CoDA literature has been published, and yet some meetings still use

outside literature extensively. CoDA literature exists because meetings support a state or voting entity group, which sends Delegates to the CoDA Service Conference. Delegates select one or more committees they would like to participate in during the Conference. The Literature Committee is one of the largest committees in CoDA, and I personally think they do an absolutely outstanding job revising old, and creating new, literature. The Literature Committee provides a vital service because, sadly, CoDA World is not self-supporting through 7th Tradition contributions from meetings. Literature income pays a large portion of CoDA World's expenses to conduct business. The Trusted Servants of CoDA work hard to spend money prudently and carefully.

Two new publications that came out last year are the *CoDA Meditation* book and *Peeling the Onion*. *Peeling the Onion* discusses codependent characteristics in greater detail than previous literature. It's an awesome piece. Old timers and newcomers alike can get much out of this booklet.

I digress. Let's get back to the outside literature discussion. I like the fact that a meeting can decide for itself whether they want to read an outside book. Before we had some of the new pieces, I got a little tired of reading the same thing all of the time and having other options was nice as long as all attendees agreed. I was exposed to another side of this issue recently; Outreach received an e-mail from a woman in Germany who attends a meeting where all they read is outside literature. She asked the meeting for a GC on reading CoDA literature and the meeting voted it down--no CoDA literature for them. To me, this is the flip side of the pendulum of only reading CoDA literature and never allowing anything else in. I was shocked that a meeting would call itself a CoDA meeting and not read CoDA literature. Granted, there isn't a lot of CoDA literature translated into German yet, and that may play a big role in this situation, but I've been told the CoDA book has been translated into German. I do not attend this meeting and I do not know the whole story, but I was concerned. I think the important thing to remember is there needs to be balance between CoDA unity and a meeting or individual autonomy. This is not always easy to establish or maintain, but the attempt to strive for balance always provide a lesson for me in my recovery journey. Each meeting's goal is to carry the message to the codependent who still suffers and to avoid getting sidetracked by outside issues, money, property, or prestige. This goal and the experience of those who came before us is why meetings have a prudent reserve and pass any money above the prudent reserve to the city, state, and World levels.

If anyone would like to express a different opinion or continue this discussion, please send an e-mail to kkg1456@yahoo.com.

CoDA Texas Bylaws

A draft copy of CoDA Texas bylaws will be posted to the Texas website in June as well. 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.

Next Newsletter and Board Meeting Minutes

The next newsletter will be sent out in August (hard and electronic copies). The final 2007 Spring Board Meeting and State Assembly, as well as draft 2008 Spring Board meeting minutes, should be posted on the Texas website in June.