

Helpful Information about CoDA Meetings

Foundational Documents must be read at all CoDA Meetings in order to be considered a legitimate CoDA Meeting. A CoDA group reads CoDA's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the copyrighted "Welcome" and "Preamble" as they are written. These readings, along with the availability of CoDA Service Conference Endorsed literature at your meeting, help to support a sense of CoDA unity as called for in CoDA's First Tradition. These are our Foundation Documents.

Using CoDA Non-Approved Literature? There is a wide variety of relevant literature now available that has been developed by people in CoDA. Some examples are the Newcomer's Handbook, the Twelve Step Handbook, the CoDA Book, the Twelve Step and Twelve Tradition Workbooks, as well as numerous pamphlets on such issues as Sponsorship, Boundaries, and Communications. Although many people find non-CoDA literature to be personally helpful, CoDA suggests the use of CoDA literature in meetings for the following reasons.

In the CoDA pamphlet, "*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.

Fellowship Services Manual (FSM)

Below are links to the 5 parts of the Fellowship Services Manual (FSM) as well as a link to a file containing all 5 parts. Suggested uses are as follows:

- Part 1 is intended for all members of CoDA, particularly those who intend to do service work
- Part 2 is the Meeting Handbook and is intended for those wanting to start or help run a meeting. It is recommended that all meetings have a copy of this part.
- Part 3 is intended for use by those currently or considering doing service at the levels between meetings and CoDA, Inc. It is intended to be particularly helpful in establishing these service levels.
- Part 4 is intended for use by those currently or considering doing service at the CoDA, Inc. level. It is strongly recommended for all those who will be attending a CoDA Service Conference (CSC).
- Part 5 contains more detailed information related to the various service entities that exist at the CoDA Inc. service level, including the CoDA Board of Trustees, the various committees and other working groups and individual positions.
- The combined version was created for people who frequently search for information in the FSM to make it easier so they only need to search 1 file rather than 5
 - Links:
 - [FSM Part 1 - Structure and General Information Summary](#)
 - [FSM Part 2 - Meeting Handbook](#)
 - [FSM Part 3 - Guidelines for Other Service Levels](#)
 - [FSM Part 4 - Service Conference \(CSC\) Procedures](#)
 - [FSM Part 5 - World Level Service Details](#)
 - [FSM Combined File](#)

About Meetings

- **What Happens at a CoDA Meeting?**

Meeting Opening. CoDA meetings usually start with a moment of silence followed by a prayer of the group's choice. Following the opening prayer, almost all CoDA meetings read a selection of the foundation documents listed in the Conference guidelines. There is usually a short time allowed for announcements or group conscience.

- **What Are The Different Types Of Meetings?**

Newcomers meetings

These meetings have a special format to allow newcomers to have their questions answered by Old Timers. Special efforts are made at regular meetings to provide for the needs of newcomers. Attached are some documents that can be emailed to newcomers or people calling or emailing asking about the meeting.

Speaker or Step meetings

A speaker shares his/her story for 20-30 minutes or shares on a designated topic.

Step Study Meeting

These meetings are designed to work the Steps together as a group of recovering codependents.

Step Four Writing Meetings

These are designed to allow time for individual reflection and writing, followed by an opportunity for each person to share some of what they have written during the session.

Closed Meetings

Meetings attended only by people who are codependent or think they may be codependent. Newcomers who think they may be codependent can attend a closed meeting.

Announcing Meetings

Let people know about the meeting. Visit other meetings with the necessary information (e.g., date, time, directions and/or a map). Always maintain anonymity, first name & last initial only! Place announcements in counseling centers and hospitals. Some local newspapers publish meeting notices at no charge. Just remember the Eleventh Tradition: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion....." As people see the announcements and hear about the meeting, they will come.