

Guidelines for Presenters

We appreciate your volunteering to present a workshop at this conference. Your presentation is an important part of today's program.

As you may know, North California CoDA and the local community service group co-sponsor these conferences to promote and further our individual recoveries, to share the our experiences, strengths and hopes with each other, to promote a sense of fellowship amongst our members throughout northern California and to carry the message to Codependents still suffering and not aware of the help they may receive from our fellowship.

To help you make your presentation more effective and keep it within the purpose of this event, we have prepared this set of guidelines for workshop presenters.

Your workshop is essentially a "theme meeting." You will be presenting your experience, strength and hope about the issue or life-area you have chosen as it relates to your own recovery. This can take many forms: a portion of your own life story, as a more traditional presentation of information, as participatory exercises and or whatever you feel is appropriate.

We ask, however, that as much as possible, you involve the workshop participants. Encourage them to ask questions, or save the second half of the workshop for their sharing. Try not to speak continuously for the full time period.

Also, if you are planning to make use of any particular piece of CoDA literature, please inform the conference's literature co-ordinator, so that enough of that item can be on hand to meet member's requests, especially if it is a new or less well-known item.

We also that you try to stay within the 12 Traditions of Recovery. Especially relevant are Traditions 6, 10, 11 and 12. These state:

6. A CoDA group ought never to endorse any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.
10. Codependents Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the CoDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

As a presenter, this means that you are speaking and presenting information as one CoDA member to other members. The information that you present is drawn from your own experience, strength and hope, and has been used as you work your own recovery in the area on which you are speaking.

This does not mean that you should avoid presenting information that you have obtained from your education or professional experience. This information may be a valuable resource for our recoveries. But you should try to present the information as a tool that we may find useful in our recoveries, but not as essential to that recovery. That is, the information is useful because you (or others you know in the program) have found it useful, not because such-and-such an authority says it is so.

How you relate to this information is an important part of your story. This includes any special credentials or professional practice you may have. Thus you can introduce yourself as "I'm Mary, a Codependent and a practicing therapist/counselor/teacher/nurse/massage therapist/financial advisor/meditation instructor etc." We ask, however, that you refrain from using this workshop as a means of promoting your professional practice by such means as divulging your last name (and thus violating your own anonymity), passing out business cards or literature with your practice's logo or letterhead, or schedules of non-recovery oriented future events in which you are participating.

We ask this not to restrict you, but to keep this event within the spirit of recovery and also to protect you: this event is meant to be a safe place where you may share things that you may not feel safe to share in a more public forum, for instance, when the struggles of your personal recovery may conflict with the needs of clients or the standards of your profession.

We hope that these guidelines are helpful as you plan your presentation at our conference.