

*Co-Dependents Anonymous*

*The Twelve-Piece  
Relationship Toolkit*

# The Twelve-Piece Relationship Toolkit

*Co-Dependents Anonymous  
Twelve Traditions*

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Co-Dependents Anonymous, Inc.

Phoenix, Arizona, USA

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Dear CoDA Member,

This booklet has been prepared by the Experience, Strength, and Hope Group of Co-Dependents Anonymous, in Saskatoon, Canada. This purpose of this booklet is to serve as a companion to CoDA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions Workbook in support of our Tradition Three desire for healthy and loving relationships.

As a group, We have tried to explore the ways in which we can use the spiritual principles of the Twelve Traditions in our home, work and family life, as well as within our fellowship.

We hope that this toolkit will be of use to others as they explore the powerful principles underlying our Traditions.

## THE TWELVE-PIECE RELATIONSHIP TOOLKIT:

# CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS TWELVE TRADITIONS

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving higher power as expressed to our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership in CoDA is a desire for healthy and loving relationships.
4. Each group should remain autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or CoDA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to other codependents who still suffer.
6. A CoDA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the CoDA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.
7. A CoDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Co-Dependents Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. CoDA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. CoDA 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; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions; ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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# TRADITION ONE

***“Our common welfare should come first;  
personal recovery depends upon CoDA unity.”***

One couple interprets Tradition One, for use in relationships, as follows: *“Our common welfare should come first; personal growth within our relationship depends on unity.”*

In Tradition One, the underlying spiritual principle is that of unity. In pursuit of healthier relationships, we learn that it is sometimes necessary to set aside our personal desires in favor of what is good for the relationship as a whole. We try to learn to do this willingly and cheerfully—recognizing the importance of unity to our own long-term welfare. If one partner’s desires, opinions or feelings come before the other’s, that is not a relationship between equal partners. This inequity has often led us to feelings of resentment or inadequacy.

Sometimes, it can be easier to determine the meaning of the Traditions by stating what they don’t mean. Tradition One doesn’t mean that we set aside our needs. If our needs—specific to a given relationship—aren’t met, that relationship is always bound to fail. Instead, we learn to differentiate between our needs and our desires. What the relationship needs is almost always more important than what we want, if we want the relationship to succeed.

Tradition One also doesn’t mean that one partner can trump every situation by saying “I feel distanced when you...” or by saying “This drives a wedge between us.” Instead, Tradition One asks us to find the middle ground—to make our decisions based on the good of the relationship.

The key question that we ask ourselves is: “Will this choice promote feelings of unity or disunity—on my partners’ part or on my part?” Once we have answered this question, we are free to make an informed choice.

## OTHER QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER IN OUR STUDY OF TRADITION ONE:

1. Why is our common welfare paramount in a relationship?
2. What does Unity mean to me?
3. What kind of actions do I take that promote unity in my relationships?
4. What sorts of actions do I take that promote disunity in my relationships?
5. Can I tell the difference between my needs and my desires?
6. What is the connection between Tradition One and Step Three (Made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God as we understood God)?
7. Am I conscious of the difference between my long-term best interest and my short term satisfaction?
8. Which of my codependent behaviors get in the way of unity?
9. Why would I set my own desires aside for the good of a relationship? When might this be necessary?
10. What actions do I feel guilty about? Is there a relationship between guilt and feelings of disunity on my part?