

CO-DEPENDENTS ANONYMOUS



CoDA UK National Service Committee (NSC) Meeting Minutes

Date: Saturday 6th October 2018 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Venue: Waterloo Action Centre, 14 Baylis Road Waterloo, London SE1 7A

NOTE: The UK NSC meeting is open to all members of CoDA.

Present:

Tony: NSC Chair & Inter Group Service Rep CoDA North

Alison: GSR Bournemouth meeting

Teresa: GSR Coventry meeting

Sarah: GSR Hampstead meeting

Karen: GSR Coventry meeting

Bruno: GSR Chiswick meeting

Ray: NSC communications rep

Jonathon: GSR Guildford meeting

Liz: PI and Hinde St meeting

Hilary: Stand-in GSR Kingston meeting

Welcome and Opening

The next NSC meeting is confirmed as Saturday, 1st December in Waterloo Action Centre.

Amendments to 4 August meeting minutes are discussed. Alison suggests including an addition to Ken and Mary workshop within the minutes. Don to update minutes.

The second draft of 4 August meeting minutes were passed in a vote, these will be published on the CoDA website and emailed to contacts via NSC email.

This CoDA NSC email address has been recently created: coda.uk.nsc@gmail.com. Ray will reach out to all meetings to nominate a contact to connect through this email address for regular updates. In London and the SouthEast only 25% of GSRs are registered for the NSC. This new email address will help to create a central contact data base for all regional meetings.

Updates on CoDA UK / feedback from meetings

Karen & Teresa ask if accepting the use of a meeting room free of charge is keeping with tradition 7: 'all CoDA groups must be self-supporting'. Ray suggests if the meeting space is given for free as standard, this is acceptable. Members of the group suggest keeping a prudent reserve in the event rent needs to be paid in future, and to keep the group financially independent/ collecting money for literature etc.

A proposal is passed that if meetings are offered a room for free, the group should collect a minimum donation to keep the meeting self-supporting.

Karen asks if there any guidelines to keep people safe in meetings where an instance of verbal aggression occurs, i.e.: a safeguarding policy. An incident has occurred at the Coventry meeting in which fellows were

made to feel unsafe by a member's behaviour. Liz suggests referring to the CoDA UK website, containing relevant suggestions to the secretary in the 'fellowship manual'.

Alison states her meeting incorporated this statement into the meeting script: 'members are asked to avoid references to racism, sexism and violence within their share', and 'if anyone is triggered by someone's share, please raise your hand and the guidelines for sharing will be read. If there is continued reference to racism, sexism and violence, a group conscience will be held'.

Liz states it's the secretary's responsibility to uphold the safety of the room, and the secretary should feel confident in doing this. Liz suggests the meeting's secretary reads secretary guidelines and service manual for range of tools to help people with these situations, i.e.: calling a time out, immediate group conscience and immediate ejection of meeting from the room. If people feel physically unsafe, people are empowered to call the police. The secretary is able to stop people within their share if a share is offensive.

Bruno suggests creating a workshop on service, incorporating why we do it, guidelines for service, as well as traditions workshop, as these are not frequently discussed in meetings.

Ray suggests creating guidelines on safeguarding to support groups in creating a safe meeting environment.

Jonathan suggests all confrontation with individuals when someone feels unsafe should be supported by the group as a whole, in order to not make the incident about individuals and potentially lead to a further unsafe environment. It is suggested where instances of abuse occur, or members feel threatened and unsafe in meetings, an immediate group conscience should be called, and individuals should not approach the individual causing harm after the meeting.

Ray suggests reading out items discussed at Group conscience at subsequent meetings, so people who haven't attended group conscience hear outcomes.

Teresa asks if it's OK for individuals to use their own affirmations in meetings.

Ray & Hilary state that people are encouraged to make up their own affirmations at their meetings.

Tony states that speaking from the heart and developing your own affirmations is encouraged at his meetings, however bringing in affirmations making direct reference to other fellowships, books or therapy by name, is not encouraged.

Alison gives an update from the Bournemouth group: this has a standard membership, is financially stable, most service positions filled, however the group is struggling with sponsorship.

Karen gives an update on the Coventry meeting: the meeting is financially in a position to pay back the £60 starter loan. All service positions are filled, sponsorship is healthy and plans for a monthly sponsorship workshop underway for January.

Sarah gives an update from the Hampstead meeting: the group is healthy and recently moved to a new Community centre location.

Bruno gives an update from the Chiswick meeting: numbers have increased from 3/ 4 to 10. Financially the meeting is healthy, has a prudent reserve and has made one contribution to NSC.

Hilary gives an update from the Kingston meeting: the group is healthy, numbers are increasing, it's financially stable, most service positions filled however the group needs a chair finder.

Ray gives an update on the Guildford meeting: He has handed in his GSR role for the Guildford meeting, as well as his secretary position for the London SE region. Ray is secretary for the Salisbury mixed retreat group, which will commence organisation shortly for two 2019 retreats: Friday 29th to Sunday 31st March, and Friday 20th to Sunday 22nd September. Information will be posted on the CoDA UK website. People are encouraged to get in touch with Ray via the NSC email if you'd like to undertake service at the retreats.

Jonathan gives an update on the Guildford men's meeting. The group is averaging 20 people, Ray has been overseeing step groups, it's financially healthy and making region and national donations.

Tony gives an update from CoDA North. There are currently 14 groups across England and Scotland, the Bery North Manchester meeting has celebrated a one-year anniversary meeting with a workshop. Across the region, most meetings are centred in the North West: of the 14 meetings 7 are in the North West. 2/3 meetings are currently in Scotland, new meetings in Aberdeen and Inverness are starting out. Northern region meetings take place: the next one is October 27th in Manchester - anyone is welcome to attend these.

NSC Service/Committee Reports

Treasurers report and bank account update

Bruno shares Matt's report (emailed previously):

London South East Region Accounts - 2018

Credit	Debit	Balance	Notes
		5,992.27	Opening Balance on 1 st Jan 2018
3348.26			Donations received (including committee donations)
	535.50		Room rent Hinde St and Waterloo Action Centre.
	239.74		Loan Book to support new meetings (rent paid for 1 month and literature purchase loans) Bournemouth, Welwyn and Luton groups.
60.00			Loan repaid by Chorley group.
	32.50		Sponsorship workshop literature refill
	140.50		Travel costs for NSC members
	16.58		Website costs
		8,435.71	Closing Balance on 30 th Sept 2018

Ray states that Sue, our outgoing treasurer, is willing to make payments if required.

UK Literature and Polwarth review

Ray gives an update: the UK service for CoDA literature is going well. The publisher is in the process of creating a separate, ringfenced company for tradition 7 purposes, so the website is currently unavailable for literature purchase. This will be completed within a few weeks. There is an expected price increase on literature in order to make a profit, as currently this is operated at 0 profit to CoDA and CoDA Inc have asked that some profits are fed back to CoDA Inc for reinvestment as occurs in the USA.

CoDA UK gave a £4k loan to the publisher to help with initial set up costs. This is being paid back at £250 a quarter, and will take 4 years to repay. The publisher is making enough money to cover costs, repay the loan and make contributions to CoDA US.

Alison requests a copy of the literature contract for transparency. Ray states that CoDA UK is not party to

the contract, as this is between CoDA Inc and CoDA Core. Ray will share copy of contract among the NSC only.

Ray states that Ian is currently literature secretary for NSC, however may not be able to continue.

Communications, News and Events update

Ray gives an update: he has set up new email address for NSC communications - coda.uk.nsc@gmail.com.

All GSRs already registered with NSC region are currently added to the distribution list, Tony has added North GSR contacts and Ray has sent an outreach email to all meetings requesting for a contact to be added to the central distribution list for ongoing communication purposes. 15 new emails have recently been added. The distribution list not just for GSRs, but also individuals, and will be used for CoDA communication purposes, events, updates etc.

Ray states that Joel was managing a number of CoDA email accounts however and some will require service. Ray is standing in for a few CoDA contact email addresses, service for which will be discussed at this meeting. These inboxes are currently being inundated by spam. As a whole, the service committee is not being very responsive due to the technology limitations of the emails. The old CoDA email accounts do not have auto-reply or forwarding capability.

Liz volunteers to take on management of the Enquiries email account.

CoDA UK mailboxes service

Ray gives an update: currently there are 8 CoDA (coda-uk.org) service emails; treasurer (Matt) Literature (Ian) Meetings (Briony), Webmaster (Ama) and Public information/ PI / outreach (Liz). These 5 are currently being serviced via the names stated. Not being serviced are: News & events, sponsorship & CoDA shares. The treasurer email is a yahoo.com address. There is no executive function to retrieve email addresses once the password is lost. In absence of service, Ray is stepping in to service and reply to these emails, however due to time constraints these are being responded to infrequently. Ray will outreach for service reps for the 3 un-serviced emails.

Liz states that she believes people need to be familiar with traditions in order to service emails.

Ray confirms the 'CoDA shares' email is for the purposes of shares to be published to the website. Frank has compiled shares with the aim of publishing to the website.

Alison suggests publishing a statement to the website stating that the 4 email addresses are not being serviced, and to contact the coda.uk.nsc@gmail.com email address with any enquiries.

Ray confirms that currently these 4 un-serviced email addresses receive circa 10 emails per month. Ray says there is a need for separate, rather than consolidated email addresses, to enable separate service commitments.

Liz is happy to continue using the PI email address to answer emails, which she is already replying to. The group votes in the proposal for Liz to manage the enquiries email account.

Ray states that when the new CoDA website is published, a new email system will be created.

Bruno suggests creating sponsorship service position to manage a sponsorship email and share best practice advice for sponsorship.

Karen, Jonathan and Liz believe sponsorship is an important topic requiring support and management.

Ray states that a centralised list of sponsors is no longer maintained by Frank.

Bruno suggests that NSC manage a central database of sponsors to put people in touch with. The group discusses the London sponsorship workshop & monthly step group, running to support this topic.

Tony agrees connecting people with sponsors is an important topic, to be raised in 2019 NSC meeting.

Ray asks Karen to share with the committee an update on her region's sponsorship workshop, via the NSC email.

NSC Committee vacancies to be filled

14 positions currently exist at NSC level. An update on service positions is provided by Tony:

- Chair: Tony (until February 2019, when the position is up for review).
- Email responders: part filled (as discussed above). The internal communications role is split between Ray and Liz.
- News and events person required: this involves looking after the news and events email, and managing website updates.
- Sponsorship rep: service required.
- Literature rep: Currently serviced by Ian.
- Public Information (PI): Currently serviced by Liz.
- Regional reps: filled
- Secretary: Currently serviced by Don, who wants to handover. The secretary's role: takes part in committee meetings, takes notes, liaises with committee members to finalise minutes and publish these on the website, finalises the meeting agenda prior to meetings. The position requires a mastery of website content.
- Treasurer: currently filled by Matt. Two signatories are required and currently filled with Matt and Ray. Matt has full access to the LSE bank account, and access to NSC account is pending. Matt shares a monthly report of finances to NSC committee members, Ray suggests to share the financial report with NSC distribution list going forward.
- Website content: This service position needs to be filled. Role involves updating all outstanding content on the CoDA UK website.
- Webmaster: Currently serviced by Bryony, who manages structural changes (not content updates).
- Vice chair: Position needs to be filled.
- Where to find contact: Position needs to be filled.
- Workshops & retreats: Position needs to be filled.

Travel expenses are paid for people serving on the NSC meeting. Anyone considering service on NSC can have attendance at one meeting paid for, prior to committing to service. GSR travel should be funded by their meetings. If a GSR's meeting can't afford sending GSRs to the NSC, the committee will fund one meeting. It's instructed to email the treasurer email or NSC email listed on the CoDA website for travel reimbursement, with receipt.

Public Information (PI) role

Liz gives an update: institutions and hospitals etc have been taking CoDA literature, but are unskilled in carrying the message. To do this effectively, someone must have a working knowledge of the traditions.

The idea for PI was always for the PI volunteers to create their own committee. Liz feels PI should be run through a separate committee to ensure integrity of management of CoDA message.

Tony states that Sue from Darwin (Northern Manchester) has expressed interest in supporting PI.

Liz is happy to help develop the PI/Outreach committee which is accountable to the NSC and reports directly to the NSC. Sue is interested in joining the PI/Outreach sub-committee.

The group votes in a proposal for Sue to join the PI effort, for Liz to continue the PI and outreach rep, and work towards developing a committee. Ray will connect Sue with Liz.

Liz takes action to create a separate PI committee, reach out to meetings asking for volunteers and share a 12-month plan with the NSC committee at December meeting, outlining plan to progress of PI.

Jonathan states that the PI role is important for carrying the message, Liz's expertise and historical knowledge in this area will be important in this process.

Ray suggests it's healthy to have multiple people servicing this type of role. Ray confirmed Liz is already a committee member (as she was part of the LSE region meeting). Sue has been interviewed via WhatsApp, and Ray believes this is adequate for electing members to the NSC. Ray doesn't believe NSC face-to-face meeting attendance is required for elections.

World Service

Tony confirms the NSC will not be sending anyone to the world service committee meeting in San Diego this year. Next year the NSC will look to send someone to this meeting, however this year our aim is to strengthen the UK service structure.

London & SE and NSC

Tony re-confirms to the group that it was decided in June 2018 the NSC will oversee the London SE region, due to lack of service. Liz and Ray believe the merging of two groups supports us in our aim to carry the message.

Website Update

Bruno gives an update: the committee has paid ~~£16.58, which covers the URL registration~~ ~~£15~~ to continue licensing the CoDA website on its current platform, ~~and ensure web presence until a new platform is secured.~~

The previous NSC committee had produced a new CoDA website specification, Bruno is working on this to add the information architecture/ content layout for the new site, and create and confirm a clear brief for the website development. It's been decided to pay a web developer to create the website, as impartiality, professionalism and a lack of conflict of interest in using an external provider will enable swift completion of the project. Two quotes have been procured for new web platforms costings, one to migrate using the AA platform, the second on WordPress.

Ray takes an action to reach out to CoDA fellowship via NSC email distribution list asking for volunteers with expertise within the field of website set up, who can help to draft and review the website design briefing document, for the committee to put to tender. We are looking for a minimum of 3 members to act as the CoDA 'customer'.

~~Tony asks Bruno to take the lead on developing the website briefing document, with the assistance of the~~

~~CoDA website volunteers who will gather requirements, and Bruno will take the lead on website management. This involves developing a roadmap by December Committee meeting outlining what is needed, a draft timeline, and specification requirements (briefing document), as well as a list of questions to ask the developer when meeting.~~

Teresa takes an action to outreach to fellow involved in web development at her meeting, for potential support.

Bruno asks if we need a unique website, or just need a page on the US website.

Liz takes an action to outreach to US CoDA for advice and guidance, and to ask if we can host page on their platform.

Liz states the importance of having someone very professional to create the new website, someone fluent in GDPR requirements etc.

Alison states the quote for the AA website was £25,000, which was too expensive.

Tony states that clarity is required on the website briefing requirements prior to reaching out to prospective web producers.

The group provide input to some web requirements, this includes: Mobile friendly, Q&A blog, location tracking capability for nearest meeting, event booking plug in system, needs to be hosted on easy to update content management system that fellows can manage, each meeting to have its own individual webpage, section dedicated to public information storage and document download documents etc.

Ray states that the current webmaster, Amma is happy to do service on new web platform, but not to project manage the new page or regularly update content.

Making decisions on behalf of committee (online communications)

Ray believes we are in such need for NSC service positions that the group needs to establish a digital / online mechanism to recruit new members on behalf of the committee. Examples include making decisions in between meetings. This won't be a business as usual process.

Bruno and Liz believe recruitment of service positions on the NSC out of physical committee meetings isn't appropriate.

Alison agrees we need an online process (WhatsApp, email, calls etc) for making decisions between meetings, however agrees with Bruno and Liz that recruiting people to service position outside the physical committee meetings isn't appropriate.

Teresa agrees with Alison, Bruno and Alison's position re: an individual's physical presence at committee meetings is essential.

Jonathan states that referring to the traditions, you don't need to be part of the NSC committee to help the committee, as long as each service position is physically represented at the committee meeting.

Ray states that if people are not physically present at NSC meetings, they can still do service, however they are not a voting member of the group.

Tony makes a proposal, which is voted in by the group: You don't have to be an NSC member to carry out service, however in order to be a voting member of the NSC you need to attend meetings. ~~Meetings are open for NSC members and GSRs, and we all gain one vote each. The NSC meeting is open to all members of the fellowship, not just GSR's and members of the NSC. It's a new committee that is developing and if anyone wants to get involved to see how the fellowship is being served as well as have input on how money is spent, they are most welcome and asked to contact coda.uk.nsc@gmail.com for information about the next meeting. Therefore, Sue can support Liz in the PI committee role, and email contacts/managers/website managers can continue supporting the NSC without attending meetings.~~

Field Code Changed

The group agrees that the committee can continue to use online forums such as WhatsApp to debate and make decisions, ~~Sue can support Liz in the PI committee role, and email contacts/managers/website managers can continue supporting the NSC without attending meetings.~~

Bruno and Teresa would like clear guidance on the service responsibilities for NSC membership.

It's agreed by the group to leave the voting status as is, i.e.: requirement to physically make NSC meetings in order to be a voting member, however to serve for the NSC you don't need to attend NSC meetings. Sue can therefore continue to serve, supporting Liz in PI, and if she wants to take on one of the committee service roles, she must attend physically.

Tony asks us to continue the discussion re: online decision-making processes at the December meeting, particularly whether it's safe for the NSC to be making decisions without direct consultation from GSRs, as the group believes any substantial decisions should require GSRs to be present.

AGM

Tony confirms there will be no NSC AGM in 2018. In December we will discuss whether the 2019 AGM will be held.

Ken and Mary Workshop

Tony gives an update. There will be 2 workshops, in Edinburgh and London, in March 2019. These will both be 2-day events, each held on the weekend.

The NSC has allocated £5930 total for both events, this incorporates all costs, including Ken and Mary's travel and per diem, and the event venue hire, etc.

The Northern region would need to offer concession ticketing, this will not be offered in London.

The London event will charge ~~a TBC amount f£ ??~~ for the 2-day workshop, ~~with option to attend half days at a reduced cost.~~ There will be 4 sessions over the weekend. The London venue can accommodate 100 people. The London event will cost £4080 in total.

The Northern region estimates that a quarter of those attending will be on a concession rate. 100 people can attend the venue. £2620 is the total cost for the Northern event.

Tony gives an update on the content for the North region workshop. A unique selling point for the event is walking people through the power of the steps, hearing the strength and hope of others, and how they recovered through the steps. Northern groups have directly expressed a desire to see CoDA funds be used for a workshop of this kind.

Hilary suggests it might be good to include a fresh perspective/speaker at the conference, in addition to

Ken and Mary.

Ray states that after the previous workshop's group conscience, people clearly enjoyed having Ken and Mary attend. It was generally agreed they were good speakers, however clear guidelines on the content of future workshops should be presented to Ken and Mary in advance.

Ray states that the workshop is designed to break even, and does not impact national CoDA funds. Ray believes as long as we are confident the event will at least break even financially, it's OK to pay the price for Ken and Mary to attend (travel, per diem).

The group conscience and feedback after the previous event showed the LSE region and North really enjoyed having Ken and Mary present, however feedback indicates making it more directly CoDA relevant, with less emphasis on counselling. It's suggested that by making CoDA literature available at the event, and a focus on the steps, the workshops will be focussed more directly on CoDA.

Jonathan states that the workshop is momentum building for the Northern region, as it's the first workshop there. This isn't an either-or project, starting with Ken and Mary will building momentum, attract new members and new workshops / initiatives will develop from the event.

Liz states that some people are unhappy with the amount spent on the Ken and Mary workshop, and believes there could be better use of CoDA resources. Other fellowship conferences don't pay for accommodation, travel etc.

Alison would like to arrange to video or record the workshops for the CoDA website. It's discussed how this impacts anonymity. This is to be discussed at the December meeting.

The group passed the proposal for Ken and Mary to deliver workshops in London and the Northern region in March 2019 for a total cost of £5930 for 2 workshops, with estimated return £5840 / £6700. The events will pay for themselves.

Tony states he will share content not covered today with the NSC group, for discussion at the December meeting.

The meeting is closed.