The Twelve Traditions of Cocaine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for C.A. membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or C.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the addict who still suffers.
6. A C.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the C.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every C.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Cocaine Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. C.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Cocaine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the C.A. 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, television and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

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The Twelve Steps of Cocaine Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind-altering substances—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

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"We're Here and We're Free"™

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Who is a C.A. Member?

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Who is a C.A. Member?

While the name "Cocaine Anonymous" may sound drug-specific, we wish to assure you that our program is not. Many of our members did a lot of cocaine; others used only a little, and some never even tried coke. We have members who drank only on occasion, those who casually referred to themselves as drunks, and others who were full-blown alcoholics. Lots of us used a wide variety of mind-altering substances. Whether we focused on a specific substance or used whatever we could get our hands on, we had one thing in common: eventually we all reached a point where we could not stop.

According to C.A.'s Third Tradition, the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances. ***Whatever you may have been using, if it led you to this meeting, you're probably in the right place.*** Over time, virtually every single one of us has realized that our real problem is not cocaine or any specific drug; it is the disease of addiction.

It can be tempting to focus on our differences rather than our similarities, but this can blind us to potential sources of support in our recovery. As we hear other members' stories, the most important question to ask ourselves is not, "Would I have partied with these people?" but rather, "Do these people have a solution that can help me stay sober?" We encourage you to stick around and listen with an open mind.

With its all-inclusive Third Tradition and First Step, Cocaine Anonymous welcomes anyone with a drug or alcohol problem and offers a solution. C.A.'s Twelve Steps are not drug-specific, and Cocaine Anonymous is not a drug-specific Fellowship. It doesn't matter to us if you drank or what type of drugs you used; if you have a desire to stop, you are welcome here![1]

Why ". . . And All Other Mind-Altering Substances?"

The Twelve-Step program of Cocaine Anonymous is gratefully borrowed from Alcoholics Anonymous. Many years of experience have demonstrated the value of one addict helping another.[2] *Our Hope, Faith and Courage*[3] describes how the First Step was adapted for C.A.:

> *One evening, sitting in an all-night diner with a good friend (whom my partner ironically Twelfth-Stepped, while working the phones "under the influence"), trying to write a suggested standardized meeting format, I found myself deep in discussion about what I believed to be our most pressing obstacle. As women and men came into C.A. they were able, through our fellowship and example, and guidance from the Steps, to give up the use of cocaine, and begin a new life. Unfortunately, many members refused to stop using other substances, explaining that they weren't alcoholics, that pot was a natural herb, or that they really needed those pills to relax or sleep in such a stressful period as early recovery, etc., etc. These members, who usually relapsed on cocaine or began abusing their new drug of choice, often punctuated their case with the challenge, "Anyway, where does it mention anything other than cocaine?" That evening, over a plate of greasy bacon and eggs, we rewrote the First Step, simply adding after the word cocaine: "and all other mind-altering substances"—five little words that almost overnight put to rest this dangerous, life-threatening debate—five little words that told the demons in my head to surrender.*

As further explained in the C.A. pamphlet *. . . And All Other Mind-Altering Substances*:

> *Many people come to Cocaine Anonymous thinking one of two things: "I rarely (or never) even used cocaine. I don't think I belong here," or "What exactly does the 'and all other mind-altering substances' part mean? I came to Cocaine Anonymous because* cocaine *had become a problem in my life."*
>
> *Those of us who have been C.A. members for a while have heard questions and statements like this before; perhaps the words were even our own. Over time, virtually every single one of us has realized that our real problem is not cocaine or any specific drug, it is the disease of addiction. . . .*
>
> *During those times we attempted to regain control we found that any substitution or new combination inevitably created the same result. It was hard to stop and easy to get started. Experience after experience revealed that substitution was no cure. . . . The point is that addicts like us soon find ourselves unable to stop using the substitute. Whatever drug we use, the problem of not being able to stop resurfaces, often bigger than before.*
>
> *At some point we finally realize that we cannot control our use of any mind-altering substances.*

C.A.'s Third Tradition echoes the language of our First Step: "The only requirement for C.A. membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances." *Who is a C.A. Member?* was added to the Meeting Format in 2008 to help emphasize the inclusive nature of our program.

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[1] Optional reading in the C.A. Meeting Format.
[2] From *What is Cocaine Anonymous?* in C.A.'s *To the Newcomer* pamphlet.
[3] The story of the early days of Cocaine Anonymous as experienced by two of its members, found in both *Hope, Faith and Courage Volume I* and *Volume II.*