

# CoDA RETREAT

--FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER--

JANUARY 13-15, 2012 HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC

SPONSORED BY THE MEANINGFUL MONDAY CoDA MEETING, EMORY UNIVERSITY ATLANTA

# Face Everything and Recover

CoDA Retreat: Hilton Head Island, SC  
January 13-15, 2012

---

GOD, GRANT ME THE SERENITY  
TO ACCEPT THE THINGS I CANNOT CHANGE,  
COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN  
AND WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.

---

Links:

Retreat Website

[www.FaceEverythingAndRecover.com](http://www.FaceEverythingAndRecover.com)

CoDA FSO

[www.CoDA.org](http://www.CoDA.org)

Hosted by the Meaningful Monday CoDA Group,  
Emory University, Atlanta Georgia

# CODA RETREAT

## FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER

RETREAT SCHEDULE OF EVENTS: JANUARY 13-15, 2012  
HILTON OCEANFRONT RESORT, HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC

### Notes to attendees:

- Please be prompt in getting to the sessions on time to avoid interruptions.
- Please **TURN OFF your cell phones**, pagers and all other electronic devices.
- Please **observe the CoDA No-Crosstalk Rule** unless the presenter or chairperson invites feedback.
- As a courtesy to your fellow attendees please hold your restroom or other needs to leave the room until the session breaks.
- Sessions will occur one after the other. There are no separate “breakout sessions.
- Unless otherwise specified, all sessions are 45 minutes long.
- A 10 minute intermission after each session to allow for room re-config, stretch, etc.
- All sessions are designed to provide experience, strength and hope –tools for recovery.
- At each **intermission** a slide presentation will be available in the main conference room that will offer recovery tools, tips and other experience, strength and hope. Watching it may provide tools that you could use in recovery. Write down anything that you find useful and leave the rest.
- The **Bookstore** will only be open at end of the day, Friday and Saturday, and immediately after the CoDA meeting on Sunday afternoon.
  
- **Registration is held in ADMIRAL’S LANDING.**
  
- **Unless otherwise stated, main retreat sessions will be in CAPTAIN’S GALLEY.**
  
- **The Friday Night movie and light refreshments will be held in CAPTAIN’S GALLEY**
  
- **Morning Yoga classes will be held in the PROMENADE 5 room.**
  
- **Saturday Evening Dinner Buffet and Keynote Address will be in the COMMODORE BALLROOM**
  
- **Breakfast is in the H.H. PRIME Dining Room each morning**
  
- **Saturday Lunch is on your own. We encourage you to try out the local island cuisine. Skip will provide local restaurant lists. Many of us are learning to break our fear of others at this retreat. So reach out to other members and go to lunch together.**
  
- **Saturday Evening Sea Island Buffet will include, but not limited to:**
  - Southern low-country boil-style menu
  - Includes fish, fowl, and other meat prepared in a delicious coastal Southern style.
  - Lots of salads
  - Lots of veggies
  - Great desserts

## KEEPING OUR MEETING SAFE: -- NO CROSSTALK --

In CoDA meetings, we speak about our own experience, and we listen without comment to what others share.

We work toward taking responsibility for our own lives, rather than giving advice to others. This is why crosstalk is strongly discouraged during CoDA meetings.

***However, at this retreat, if the speaker, presenter or chairperson invites feedback during their session, then follow that person's instructions. At all other times, please observe the no-crosstalk rule.***

*Crosstalk guidelines help keep our meetings a safe place.* For more information, please refer to the *CoDA Newcomer Handbook* or the *CoDA Crosstalk Handbook*.

Examples of crosstalk may include, but *are not limited to*:

- Giving unsolicited feedback
- Advising
- Answering
- Making "you" and "we" statements
- Interrogating
- Debating
- Criticizing
- Controlling
- Dominating
- Minimizing another person's feeling or experiences
- Physical contact / touch
- Body movements such as nodding one's head or other gestures
- Verbal sounds / noises
- Referring to someone present by name

*When we share, we find that using "I" statements help us to keep the focus on our self.*

If you have questions about the no-crosstalk rule please see one of the meeting chairpersons *after the meeting has ended*.

Thank you for helping to keep this meeting a safe place for everyone who comes here.

**—FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER—**

Some possible Character Defects / Core Issues / Problems that we may need to FACE as a part of our recovery. <sup>1</sup>	
✓ Denial	✓ Any Active Addictions or Distracting Illnesses
✓ Control	✓ Fear of... (economic insecurity, abandonment, reprisal, shame, the other shoe falling, etc.)
✓ Low Self-Esteem / Shame	✓ Boundaries (internal, external, physical, emotional, sexual, time, energy, etc.) ✓ Enforcing Those Boundaries
✓ Aggressiveness (instead of assertiveness, or not getting our needs met)	✓ Being Real
✓ Unwilling to Use The Fellowship (using the phone, creating a support network)	✓ Unwilling to get a Sponsor
✓ Learned Helplessness	✓ Grieving Un-Grieved Losses
✓ Trust	✓ Triangles (in relationships)
✓ High Tolerance for Inappropriate Behavior	✓ Isolation
✓ PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Can occur in abusive, neglectful, addicted families)	✓ Neglecting Our Needs
✓ All-Or-None Thinking and Behaving (black & white)	✓ Dependence
✓ Over-Responsibility For Others	✓ Anger
✓ Handling Feelings	✓ Difficulty Handling Conflict
✓ Difficulty Giving and Receiving Love or Praise	✓ Responding to Adult Situations As a Child would: With Anger, Fear, Self-Doubt
✓ Age Regression	✓ Giving Up Something That Blocks Recovery (victimhood, Old Ideas, Addictions, etc.)
✓ Projection	✓ No Recovery Plan
✓ Unwilling to Pass Recovery On to Others (Step 12)	✓ Difficulty Identifying Feelings
✓ Enabling	✓ Avoidance Patterns (see <a href="http://www.CoDA.org">www.CoDA.org</a> )
✓ Others you can think of?	✓

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the information presented in this document comes from CoDA approved literature and from the applied experience, strength and hope of the presenters and our retreat staff.

**RETREAT SCHEDULE OF EVENTS JANUARY 13-15, 2012  
HILTON OCEANFRONT RESORT, HILTON HEAD ISLAND, SC**

<b>Friday January 13<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Where</b>
11:00 am – 9:00 pm	<b>Registration – lobby area</b>	<b>Admiral's Landing</b>
12:00 pm	<b>Opening/Welcome</b> Challenge Speech I <i>"It's Our Choice: Face Everything and Recover...or not"</i>	<b>Donald B.</b>
12:30 pm	<b>Session 1</b> CoDA Recovery Basics <i>"The Cost of No Recovery"</i>	<b>John S.</b>
1:15 pm	<b>Session 2</b> <i>Member Personal Recovery Story</i>	<b>Topher M.</b>
2:15 pm	<b>Session 3</b> CoDA Recovery Basics <i>"As A Result of These Steps..."</i>	<b>Michelle E.</b>
3:15 pm <i>(run as long as necessary)</i>	<b>Session 4</b> <i>Day 1 Q&amp;A Panel</i> CoDA Recovery Basics	<b>Q &amp; A Panel</b> Moderator: Donald B.
5:00 pm	<b>Break Until Movie</b>	
8:30 pm	<b>Movie/Light Refreshments</b> <i>Movie:</i> <i>Stuart Saves His Family</i> <b>Bookstore open</b>	<b>Captain's Galley</b>

**Keys to best experience at the retreat:**

- ✓ **Please TURN OFF all cell phones and electronic devices during the retreat sessions.**
- ✓ **Please be on time.** Unless otherwise noted, all retreat sessions are 45 minutes long and occur one after another: There are no separate "breakout" sessions.
- ✓ For questions about the Hotel or accommodations, please visit the front desk.
- ✓ **For the safety and comfort of all who attend this retreat, please observe the following:**
  - The CoDA No-Crosstalk Rule: Please do not speak, interrupt, ask questions or refer to others unless the presenter opens the session to feedback or questions.
  - When you do share, Please only talk about yourself and your story. We find that "I" statements help us to keep the focus on ourselves.
- ✓ To avoid disrupting fellow member's experience, Please plan to use the restroom, get coffee, check messages during the short break between sessions.
- ✓ Bring a pad and pen to take notes. All presenters will share their own recovery and how they apply the CoDA program to their problems of codependence.

—FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER—

<b>Saturday January 14th</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Where</b>
7:30 am – 8:15 am	<b>Morning Yoga</b>	<b>Sharon C.</b>
8:15 am – 9:15 am	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>H.H. PRIME Dining Room</b>
9:30 am	<b>Opening/Welcome Challenge Speech II</b> <i>“Get the Recovery That You Want: Start Something!”</i>	<b>Donald B.</b>
9:45 am	<b>Session 1</b> <i>“Sponsorship! The Benefits &amp; Why You Need to Do it”</i>	<b>Skip Y.</b>
10:45 am	<b>Session 2</b> <i>Female Member Personal Recovery Story</i>	<b>Betty R.</b>
11:45 am	<b>Session 3</b> <i>“The Keys to Meditation”</i>	<b>Sharon C.</b>
12:15 pm - 2:15 pm	<b>LUNCH ON YOUR OWN</b>	
2:30 pm	<b>Session 4</b> <i>“Bridging the Gap Between Our Addiction and CoDA Programs”</i>	<b>John D.</b>
3:30 pm	<b>Session 5</b> <i>“In Touch with Our Inner Child: Learning to Have Fun”</i>	<b>Jackie G.</b>
Break		
6:15 pm – 7:45 pm	Keynote Speech & Low- Country Dinner Buffet	<b>COMMODORE HALL</b>
6:30 pm	<b>KEYNOTE SPEECH:</b> <b>By Michelle E.</b> <i>“The Miracle of Re-Parenting Ourselves”</i>	<b>Michelle E.</b>
Break		
8:15 pm	<i>Optional CoDA Meeting</i> <b>Bookstore Open</b>	<b>PROMENADE 5</b>

**—FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER—**

**More Keys to Recovery:**

- ✓ **One of CoDA's principles of recovery asks us to make use of the Fellowship.** One highly effective and time-tested way of doing that is **to get the phone numbers of as many CoDA members as possible and start calling them**. You can start building healthy relationships with others who are in the program who will understand when you call to talk. It's a great place to practice being safe and supportive. ***Don't miss this opportunity!***

<b>Sunday January 15th</b>	<b>What</b>	<b>Where</b>
7:30 am – 8:15 am	<b>Morning Yoga</b>	<b>Sharon C.</b>
8:15 am – 9:15 am	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>H.H. Prime</b>
9:30 am	<b>Opening/Welcome Challenge Speech III</b> <i>"Must-Haves For Successful Recovery"</i>	<b>Donald B.</b>
9:45 am	<b>Session 1</b> <i>CoDA Member Story</i>	<b>Peyton W.</b>
10:45 am	<b>Session 2</b> <i>Introduction to "Peeling The Onion"</i>	<b>Betty R.</b>
11:45 am	<b>Session 3</b> <i>Day 3 Q&amp;A Panel CoDA Recovery Basics</i>	<b>Q&amp;A Panel Moderator: Donald B.</b>
12:45 pm	<i>Roll into Full Retreat CoDA Meeting &amp; Closing Remarks</i>	<b>Awards/Closing: Donald B. Meeting Chair: Skip Y.</b>
	<b>Bookstore Open</b>	<b>PROMENADE 5</b>
1:45 pm	<b>Retreat Close</b>	

**More Keys to Recovery:**

- ✓ **You need a sponsor.** That's true whether we are new to CoDA or are a CoDA old-timer. From wide and long Twelve-step experience it is known that the best recovery comes when we ask another CoDA member who has worked the CoDA steps, and who is committed to their own CoDA recovery to help us work and apply CoDA's Steps and Traditions for ourselves.

A CoDA sponsor walks alongside us as *fellow travelers on the path of recovery*, not as teachers, gurus, bosses, or parent figures. They don't give us advice nor do they shame us. They share the insights that they gathered during their own step work and provide us with gentle guidance, safety and trust. (continued on next page)

The optimum arrangement is to find a sponsor in our home group. If we can't find one there, two new changes in communication now make it possible to conduct a sponsor-ponsee relationship from nearly anywhere in the world. The first is **using one of several free Internet services like Skype** (all you need is a PC, an Internet connection, a webcam, speakers and a mic. With *Skype* you can see *and talk* together.) A second possibility is through one of the growing number of **phone plans (cellular and landline) that includes unlimited free long-distance.**

Now most anyone can find a sponsor in another town, region or state!

For more information on CoDA Sponsorship, please see the **CoDA booklets, "Sponsorship: What's in it For Me" "Sponsorship Handbook"**

Helpful guidance on the connection between sponsorship and 12-Step recovery can be found in the AA Big Book, in the chapter on Working with Others and in the ACA Big Book, in the chapter called, Fellow Travelers.

## Our Personal Bill of Rights

By a certain stage in our recovery we begin to discover that we have rights as individual human beings. As children and even as adults we may have been treated by others as though we had few or no rights. We, ourselves, may have come to believe that we had no rights, and we may be living our lives now as though we have few or none. As we recover, however, we can put together our own personal "Bill of Rights" that can confirm for us the rights that we do **in fact** have. We give up those rights only if we decide to. You may wish to consider whether you have any of these rights, and any others that come to mind. Many of us put this list of rights in a conspicuous place where we can read it often.

1. I have numerous choices in my life beyond mere survival.
2. I have a right to discover and know my <i>Child Within</i>
3. I have a right to grieve over what I didn't get that I needed of what I got that I didn't need or want.
4. I have a right to follow my own values and standards.
5. I have a right to recognize and accept my own value system as appropriate.
6. I have a right to say no to anything when I feel I am not ready, it is unsafe or violates my values
7. I have a right to dignity and respect.
8. I have a right to make decisions.
9. I have the right to determine and honor my own priorities
10. I have a right to have my needs and wants respected by others.
11. I have a right to terminate conversations with people who make me feel put down and humiliated.
12. I have the right not to be responsible for others' behavior, actions, feelings or problems.
13. I have a right to make mistakes and not have to be perfect.
14. I have a right to expect honesty from others.
15. I have a right to all of my feelings.
16. I have a right to be angry at someone I love.
17. I have a right to be uniquely me, without feeling I'm not good enough.
18. I have a right to feel scared and to say, "I'm afraid."
19. I have the right to experience and then let go of fear, guilt and shame.
20. I have a right to make decisions based on my feelings, my judgment or any reason that I choose.
21. I have a right to change my mind at any time.
22. I have the right to be happy.
23. I have a right to stability i.e. "roots" and stable healthy relationships of my choice.
24. I have the right to my own personal space and time needs.
25. There is no need to smile when I cry.
26. It is OK to be relaxed, playful and frivolous.
27. I have the right to be flexible and be comfortable with doing so.
28. I have the right to change and grow.
29. I have the right to be open to improve communication skills so that I may be understood.
30. I have a right to make friends and be comfortable around people.
31. I have a right to be in a non- abusive environment.
32. I can be healthier than those around me.
33. I can take care of myself, no matter what.
34. I have the right to grieve over actual or threatened losses.
35. I have the right to trust others who earn my trust.
36. I have the right to forgive others and to forgive myself.
37. I have the right to give and to receive unconditional love.

# MEDITATION, YOGA, AND BREATHWORK

SHARON C.

If you have questions or would like further information about Yoga, Meditation, Breath work or any other topic that Sharon has covered, please contact her at:

**shantiyoga.sharon@gmail.com**

Sharon's expert work provides some possible and practical approaches to relieving stress, and becoming centered. These techniques may also help us to fulfill our **11<sup>th</sup> Step**.

---

***“SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD GOD, PRAYING ONLY FOR THE KNOWLEDGE FOR GOD’S WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY IT OUT.”***

---

## MEDITATION FOR CONSERVING YOUR ENERGY

Sit quietly and bring your attention to your heart center.

Visualize drawing all the energy you have given out today. All the energy that went into talking and interacting with others, the emotions you have felt, all of the distractions that pulled you away from peacefulness.

Let yourself relax, don't feel that this will put up walls to others. In fact, this will let you open more but with strength and boundaries. You will be centered and calm.

Visualize a circle of white energy around you, a white light. See it begin from your heart center and wrap around you, covering you with a soft shield that protects you.

Now begin to focus on your breath. Feel it as it moves in and out of you. Feel your heart center relaxing and opening with each breath. Feel your mind and heart soften and become gentle with the breath. Let go of any negative thoughts, let go of any hurts, just let go and Be in the quiet and beautiful space of your heart. Feel the strength of your heart grow with each breath. Feel your energy increase. You realize how strong you are and how much love there is within you. Appreciate the beauty of your kindness and the goodness that dwells in your heart. You are perfect as you are. You are filled with the energetic light that surrounds you.

**PERENNIAL PHILOSOPHY**

<b>Bahai</b>	LAY NOT ON ANY SOUL THAT YOU WOULD NOT WISH TO BE LAID UPON YOU AND DESIRE NOT FOR ANYONE THE THINGS YOU WOULD NOT DESIRE FOR YOURSELF.
<b>Buddhism</b>	HURT NOT OTHERS IN WAYS THAT YOU YOURSELF WOULD FIND HURTFUL.
<b>Christian</b>	DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE OTHERS DO UNTO YOU.
<b>Confucianism</b>	DO NOT DO UNTO OTHERS WHAT YOU DO NOT WANT OTHERS TO DO UNTO YOU.
<b>Hinduism</b>	DO NOT DO TO OTHERS THAT WHICH IF DONE TO YOU WOULD CAUSE YOU PAIN.
<b>Islam</b>	NONE OF YOU TRULY HAVE THE FAITH IF YOU DO NOT DESIRE FOR YOUR BROTHERS THAT WHICH YOU DESIRE FOR YOURSELF.
<b>Jainism</b>	IN HAPPINESS AND SUFFERING, IN JOY AND GRIEF, WE SHOULD REGARD ALL CREATURES AS WE REGARD OUR OWN SELF.
<b>Judaism</b>	WHAT IS HATEFUL TO YOU, DO NOT DO TO YOUR NEIGHBOR. THIS IS THE WHOLE TORAH; ALL THE REST IS COMMENTARY.
<b>Native American</b>	RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE IS THE FOUNDATION.
<b>Sikhism</b>	DON'T CREATE ENMITY WITH ANYONE AS GOD IS WITHIN EVERYONE.
<b>Zoroaster</b>	DO NOT DO UNTO OTHERS THAT WHICH IS NOT WELL FOR ONESELF.
<b>12-Step</b>	"LIVE AND LET LIVE"

An excerpt from *Lovingkindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness* by Sharon Salzberg on equanimity:

“Equanimity has all the warmth and love of compassion and *lovingkindness* but it also has balance, wisdom and the understanding that things are as they are, and that we cannot ultimately control someone else's happiness and unhappiness.

This understanding constitutes the words we recite in the equanimity meditation:

---

**ALL BEINGS ARE THE OWNERS OF THEIR KARMA.  
THEIR HAPPINESS AND UNHAPPINESS DEPEND  
ON THEIR ACTIONS, NOT ON MY WISHES FOR THEM.**

---

This does not mean that we do not care. We do and we should care. We choose to open our hearts and to offer as much love, compassion, rejoicing as we possibly can, and we also let of of results. The example might be given of a friend who is engaged in extremely self-destructive behavior. We wish whole-heartedly, with great intensity, that they be free of suffering, that they be happy. But, in the end, we have to recognize where the boundaries actually are,, what our responsibility really is, and where the source of happiness truly lies. If that friend does not change his behavior, he will suffer no matter how long and ardently we wish otherwise.

Still, we continue to offer them *metta* (*lovingkindness*) and compassion, but we do this with the wisdom and acceptance that they are ultimately responsible for their own actions. In contemporary psychological terms we would call this the release from codependency.”

Could this quote illustrate a practical approach to CoDA's Step 1 and Promises 6, 7 and 10?

## Chair Yoga

*Important: Please remember; never push your body to a point that causes pain. You will still get the benefit of the postures even if you are not very flexible. The best part is, if you do yoga on a regular basis your flexibility and strength will increase. Be sure to check with your doctor before beginning any exercise practice, especially if you have any health issues.*

1. **Forward Bend** – eases tension in upper back and neck.



Breathe in and breathe out as you bend forward. Let your head and arms hang over your knees. Relax into the position and hold for a few seconds and keep breathing. Breathe in as you slowly come back up to seated position.

2. **Spinal Twist** – increases circulation and flexibility in the spine.



Sit facing forward place your left hand on the outside of your right knee. Place your right arm over the back of the chair. Breathe in and breathe out as you twist to the right. Turn your head as well. Push against your right knee. Breathe normally and hold that position. Release slowly and come back to facing forward and repeat on the opposite side.

3. **Side Stretch** – increases flexibility of the spinal column, improves respiration, and reduces waistline.



Sit facing forward with feet slightly apart, breathe in, and raise your arms out to the sides. Breathe out and bend to the left, reaching toward the floor with your left hand and your right hand pointing toward the ceiling. Breathe in come back to starting position. Repeat with your right side.

4. **Knee Squeeze** – relaxes lower back, improves digestion and respiration.



Breathe out and breathe in and put both hands around the front of your knee pull your left knee to your chest, while holding the in breath. Lower your head to your knee hold for a few seconds and release slowly while breathing out. Repeat on your right side.



5. *Leg Lifts* – strengthen legs and lower back, and improves circulation to your legs and feet.

Sit and hold each side of the chair for balance. Breathe out and breathe in as you lift your straightened left leg and flex your foot. Hold for a few seconds and then slowly breathe out while lowering your leg. Repeat the same with your right leg.



6. *Sun Pose* – improves circulation to your head, massages internal organs, and limbers your spine and hips.

Sit back in the chair with legs apart and arms by your side. Breathe out completely then breathe in and with a sweeping motion bring your arms up over



your head. Look up and stretch. Breathe out while bending forward between your legs and if you can put your palms on the floor. Slowly breathe in while raising back up with arms over head again, then lower your arms to the side.

I hope you enjoy these simple yoga stretches and experience improvement in flexibility and strength. Doing these yoga stretches once a day or even three times a week will be of benefit to your body, mind, and spirit. Namaste!

ALTERNATE NOSTRIL BREATHING—*NADI SHODANA*  
(*NAH-DEE SHOH-DAH-NAH*)

This breathing exercise is calming and balances the hemispheres of the brain. At any given time, without being aware of it, you breathe mostly through one nostril, and it is usual for one side to be more open than the other. The dominance switches every two to two and a half hours and is controlled by your pituitary gland, which is considered to be the master gland of your body.

Learning the Alternate Nostril Breathing can be a little challenging, but don't let that stop you from trying it. The key to mastering it is to remember that whichever side you exhale from is the same side you inhale on. You will use finger placement to alternately block or unblock your nostrils, switching finger placement after each inhalation.

The finger position for Alternate Nostril Breathing:

*Hand Position for Alternate Nostril Breathing*



Hand Position for Alternate Nostril Breathing

Make a loose fist with your right hand.

Extend your thumb and your fourth and fifth fingers (*ring finger and pinky*). Your other two fingers are curled against your palm.

This may feel awkward at first, but it is the traditional hand position used for this breathing exercise.

Take a deep breath in to completely fill your lungs.

YOGA FOR ALL OF US

*Thumb to Nostril*

Begin the pattern of alternation as follows:

Cover your right nostril with your right thumb.  
Exhale slowly through your left nostril.  
Inhale slowly through that same side.

*Ring Finger to Nostril*

Close your left nostril with your ring finger as you release your thumb.

Exhale slowly through your right nostril.  
Inhale slowly through your right nostril.

Repeat by covering your right nostril with your right thumb and exhale through your left nostril. Inhale through that same side. Switch sides.

Continue by alternating the closing of each nostril. Consider one breath an exhalation followed by an inhalation on the same side.

Practice for at least 2 minutes, but as much as 5 minutes if you are comfortable.

Then sit or lie quietly for a minute to appreciate the mental clarity and quiet created by this breathing exercise.



Thumb to Nostril



Ring Finger to Nostril

BREATHING

Beginning students often ask for instructions on the "right" way to breathe. Alas, there's no single answer to that question, since the optimal breathing pattern at any given moment depends on the type of practice. Restorative yoga focuses solely on relaxation, though, and emphasizes breathing that creates calm and serene states of being. When you settle into restorative poses, try the following techniques for cultivating breathing patterns that are hallmarks of relaxation and well-being.

**MOVE THE BELLY WITH THE BREATH.** When we are at ease, the diaphragm is the primary engine of the breath. As we inhale, this domelike muscle descends toward the abdomen, displacing the abdominal muscles and gently swelling the belly. As we exhale, the diaphragm releases back toward the heart, enabling the belly to release toward the spine.

**KEEP THE UPPER BODY QUIET.** During high-stress times, it's common to heave the upper chest and grip the muscles in the shoulders and throat. When we're at rest, the muscles of the upper chest remain soft and relaxed as we breathe, and the real work occurs in the lower rib cage. To promote this type of breathing pattern, consciously relax the jaw, throat, neck, and shoulders, and envision the breath sweeping into the deepest parts of the lungs as you breathe in and out.

**BREATHE EASY.** Although some breaths may be deeper or faster than others, when we're relaxed, the alternating rhythm of the inhalations and exhalations feels like a lullaby—smooth, soft, and uninterrupted by jerks and jags. Consciously relaxing into this wavelike, oceanic quality of the breath deepens our sense of peace and ease.

**LENGTHEN THE EXHALATIONS.** When we feel stressed, our exhalations tend to grow short and choppy. When we're relaxed, though, the exhalations extend so completely that they are often longer than the inhalations. Some teachers even instruct that if we're deeply relaxed, each exhalation will be twice as long as the inhalation. To facilitate this, try gently extending each exhalation by one or two seconds.

**PAUSE AFTER EACH EXHALATION.** In our most relaxed state, the end of each exhalation is punctuated by a short pause. Lingering in this sweet spot can be deeply satisfying and can evoke feelings of profound quiet and stillness.

**LET THE WHOLE BODY BREATHE.** When we are at ease, the whole body participates in the breathing process. Imagine a sleeping baby: When he breathes in and out, the belly swells and releases, the hips rock to and fro, the shoulders bob, and the spine gently undulates. This offers a mini-massage for the muscles and organs of the whole body, and turns each breath into a soothing melody that further calms and quiets every cell within.

## Meditation on Loving-Kindness

May I be happy, peaceful and light in body and spirit.

May I be free and safe from accident and injury.

May I be free from anger, fear, anxiety and other unwholesome mental states of mind.

May I learn to look at myself more deeply with the eyes of understanding and love.

May I learn to identify and touch the seeds of joy and happiness within myself.

May I learn to identify and see the sources of suffering within myself.

May I know how to nourish the seeds of joy and happiness within myself everyday.

May I be able to live with freshness, solidarity, and freedom.

**Are we living in our ego or are we living from our recovering, True Self?**

<b>Some Ego Traits</b>	<b>Some Child Within or True Self Traits</b>
Flatters	Informs
Commands	Suggests
Demands	Guides
Tests	Nudges
Chooses for you	Leaves Choice to you
Imprisons	Empowers
Promotes dependence	Promotes independence
Intrudes	Respects
Pushes	Supports
Excludes	Includes
Instills fear	Promotes well-being
Becomes bored easily	Realizes peace when doing nothing
Is status-oriented	Is free and open
Judges	Accepts individuality
Demands obedience	Encourages growth and development
Implies having ultimate authority	Recognizes Higher Power
Offers shortcuts	Offers integration
Seeks personal gratification	Extends unconditional love
Self-righteous	Humility

### Stages of Recovery

AA, NA, OA, S., and Other Addiction-Based Recovery is "Stage 1"  
CoDA, ACA, Al-Anon Are Considered "Stage 2"

Recovery Stage	Condition	Focus of Recovery	Approximate Duration
3	Human/ Spiritual	Spiritual	Ongoing
2	Past Trauma	Trauma- Specific	3 to 5+ years
1	Stage 0 Disorder	Basic illness full recovery program	6 months to 3 + years
0	Active illness	Usually none	Indefinite

Adapted from C. Whitfield

# Chart: From Victim-to-Survivor-to-Thriver And Codependence-to-Recovery Possible progression during recovery

**DO YOU IDENTIFY WITH ANY OF THE TRAITS IN THE LEFT COLUMN?**

<b>Victim</b>	<b>Survivor</b>	<b>Thriver</b>
"Depression"	Movement of feelings	Aliveness
Doesn't deserve to enjoy life	Struggling to Heal	Gratitude for everything in life
Low self-esteem/shame/unworthy	Sees self as wounded & healing	Sees self as an overflowing miracle
Hyper-vigilant	learn to relax	Gratitude for new life
Confusion and Numbness	Learning to grieve, grieving past un-grieved trauma	Grieving at current losses
Hopeless	Hopeful	Faith in self & life
Hides personal story	Not afraid to tell their story to safe people	Transforms to Hero's Journey
Feels Defective	Compassion for others and eventually self	Open heart for self & others
Often Wounded by Unsafe Others	Learning how to protect self by "share-check-share"	Protects self from unsafe others
Places Own Needs Last	Learning healthy needs	Places self first
Creates One Drama After Another	Sees patterns	Creates peace
Believes Suffering is the Human Condition	Feeling some relief,	Finds joy and peace
Serious All the Time	Beginning to laugh	Seeing humor in life
Inappropriate Humor, Teasing	Feels associated painful feelings	Uses healthy humor
Numb, or Angry Around Toxic People	Increased awareness of pain and dynamics	Healthy boundaries with all people
Lives in the Past	Aware of patterns	Lives in the Now
Angry At Religion	Understanding the difference between religion & spirituality	Enjoys personal relationship with a Higher Power

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO MOVE TO THE MIDDLE AND RIGHT COLUMN?**

**—FACE EVERYTHING AND RECOVER—**

	<b>Codependence</b>	<b>Recovery</b>
<b>Denial Patterns</b>	I have difficulty identifying what I am feeling.	I am aware of my feelings and identify them, often in the moment.
	I minimize, alter, or deny how I truly feel.	I embrace my feelings as being valid and important. I am truthful with myself.
	I perceive myself as being completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others.	I keep the focus on my own well-being. I know the difference between caring and caretaking.
<b>Low Self-Esteem Patterns</b>	I have difficulty making decisions.	I trust my ability to make effective decisions.
	I judge everything I think, say, or do harshly, as never “good enough.”	I accept myself as I am. I emphasize progress over perfection.
	I am embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.	I feel appropriately worthy of the recognition, praise, or gifts I receive
	I do not ask others to meet my needs or desires.	I meet my own needs and wants when possible. I reach out for help when it’s necessary and appropriate.
	I value others’ approval of my thinking, feelings, and behavior over my own.	I have confidence in myself. I no longer seek others’ approval of my thoughts, feelings, and behavior.
	I do not perceive myself as a lovable or worthwhile person.	I recognize myself as being a lovable and valuable person.
<b>Compliance Patterns</b>	I compromise my own values and integrity to avoid rejection or others’ anger.	I am rooted in my own values, even if others don’t agree or become angry.
	I am very sensitive to how others are feeling and feel the same.	I can separate my feelings from the feelings of others.
	I am extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.	I am committed to my safety and recovery work. I leave situations that feel unsafe or are inconsistent with my goals.
	I value others’ opinions and feelings more than my own and am afraid to express differing opinions and feelings of my own.	I respect my own opinions and feelings and express them appropriately.
	I put aside my own interests and hobbies in order to do what others want.	I consider my own interests first when asked to participate in another’s plans.
	I accept sex when I want love.	My sexuality is grounded in genuine intimacy and connection. I know the difference between lust and love.
<b>Control Patterns</b>	I believe most other people are incapable of taking care of themselves.	I realize that, with rare exceptions, other adults are capable of managing their own lives. My job is to let them.
	I attempt to convince others of what they “should” think and how they “truly” feel.	I accept and value the differing thoughts, feelings, and opinions of others.
	I become resentful when others will not let me help them.	I feel comfortable when I see others take care of themselves.
	I freely offer others advice and directions without being asked.	I am a compassionate and empathic listener, giving advice only if directly asked.
	I lavish gifts and favors on those I care about.	I carefully and honestly contemplate my motivations when preparing to give a gift.
	I use sex to gain approval and acceptance.	I feel loved and accepted for myself, just the way I am.
	I have to be “needed” in order to have a relationship with others.	I develop relationships with others based on equality, intimacy, and balance.

