

## **I don't mean to crosstalk, but ...**

A summary of the Co-Dependents Anonymous booklet "Experiences with Crosstalk"

Groups that support the no-crosstalk policy are healthier, their meetings are better attended and they have a longer lifespan than groups that don't.

### **What is crosstalk?**

1. A boundary violation
2. Communication to or about someone else during a meeting
3. interrupting another's sharing
4. Distractions
5. "You" and "We" statements

Examples:

Any sharing that is not just sharing honestly about oneself

Turning into a therapist, mother, advisor, critic, teacher, expert, higher power, commentator, preacher, or fixer by telling another person what to do

Getting into a conversation about what the other person is sharing about

Expressing a judgment about what someone else has said, such as, "Shirley, I really like what you said about ..."

### **Why expand a crosstalk policy?**

Members must be free to open up to others without fear of being interrupted, judged or misinterpreted. Crosstalk can cause members to feel controlled, anxious, angry, sad, ashamed, jealous, edgy, uncomfortable, isolated, distracted, startled, self-righteous and resentful.

Members are powerless to solve other people's issues for them and can learn to sit quietly through the compulsion to fix.

Each member has a higher power to turn to who will restore her or him to sanity. No one needs to attempt to be another's higher power.

Allowing crosstalk nurtures codependency, strengthens the disease and leads to an unhealthy meeting.

### **How can crosstalk be addressed during meetings?**

A member can speak up in the moment saying, "That is crosstalk, and we don't do that here."

The member can reiterate the meeting guidelines a second time.

A crosstalk graphic can signal — without verbally interrupting — that crosstalk is happening.