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How I Found A Sponsor

I joined COSA at a time in my life when I felt that there was no one around who could possibly know any thread of any pain that I was going through in my life. I had a sex addict husband who had knowingly and willingly lied to me for years, all while being a pastor of our church and a prominent community leader. Who would be safe for me to talk to? There were a few select women that provided confidential love and support, but I knew they really didn't know what it was like to be in my shoes. So I set out to find a COSA group. There was one meeting at the same time as my husband's Twelve Step group for sexual addiction. This was the only COSA group around for many miles, so I gave it a try. I liked that it was 45 minutes away because this seemed to provide an extra layer of confidentiality in my fishbowl world.

At COSA I found stories that echoed my pain; experience that altogether gave me hope and baffled me; and love, support, and a sense of belonging that I needed in my struggle and pain during this time. The readings spoke right to what I needed to hear at the time, other newcomers' stories made me feel not as isolated, and the hope of the seasoned COSAs encouraged me. Ultimately I knew I needed to work a Step study in COSA, and I needed to find someone to walk the journey with me. I sought God as my Higher Power to guide me along this hunt for a sponsor.

It was a daunting task to find a sponsor. My group was small, with only about six people usually attending. The women who had done a Step study were not available at the time to sponsor. I started to think that maybe this wasn't meant for me, and I should just give up. Then I started calling in to a phone meeting to try it out. Still, there was no one that I felt a connection with, so I kept looking.

I decided to try a Zoom meeting. I had seen an email about a Zoom speaker meeting. I was craving wisdom from experienced COSAs, so I knew I had to tune in to this meeting. The speaker was amazing and seemed to speak right through the screen at me. I knew I wanted to have access to such experience in recovery more and more. I had doubts whether it would work, but I messaged her in the chat box to see if she was taking any sponsees. Explaining

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RECURRING DONATIONS

Keeping Updated

Thank you for your donations to the International Service Organization of COSA. Currently, our system is set to automatically update your credit card when it gets a new expiration date. If you need to increase, decrease, or cancel your recurring donations, please contact the ISO of COSA at iso@cosa-recovery.org. Thank you for your support!

How I Found A Sponsor *continued*

that what she shared really spoke to me, I asked her to consider another sponsee. We agreed to meet over the phone at another time to discuss the possibility.

With confidence, experience, and the grace of a firm leader, she walked me through her expectations for her sponsees. We shared a bit of our stories as well. It was odd sharing my story with a complete stranger, but I knew it was going to be okay because I could sense my Higher Power leading me through. It was interesting to note that our lives were not exactly the same story. I was still married; she was divorced. She was older than me, with grown kids. I still had young children. Our perspectives on our Higher Powers were different. I had doubts whether this was really going to work. But I decided to go forward because she had what I wanted, which was a peace and strength from walking the road of recovery.

So I agreed to the “terms” of the relationship in our sponsoring contract. I knew I was in for a ride! I dove into the Step study. Then there were some weeks in which I was not as productive. There was a time when I needed to hear a stern warning that the relationship might end if I didn’t continue with my part of the agreement. This scared me, and I didn’t want that abandoned feeling again. So I owned my lack of Step work, and buckled back down to continue moving forward.

It would have been really easy at any time to quit and to think that I’d never find a sponsor. It was interesting because the meeting that I found her in, was her first and only video Zoom speaker meeting. She was doing a favor for a friend, and that is exactly when I saw her speak. God orchestrated this meeting for me to find a sponsor and answered my prayer! We laughed later when we realized we met on the only Zoom meeting that either of us had been on. I’m glad I didn’t quit when it seemed hopeless that I wouldn’t find a sponsor. What a blessing it has been to walk this journey with her. Now I am sponsoring and I see myself encouraging others as she did for me.

Gratefully,
Aimee



Letter from the Chair

Dear COSA Fellowship,

There are many ways to carry the message of hope that COSA offers. I want to share the story of two COSAs in the United Kingdom who practiced the Twelfth Step by representing COSA at a conference for therapists in London this year.

Jane and Joanne brought handouts and their experience, strength, and hope to a gathering held in January by the Association for the Treatment of Sexual Addiction and Compulsivity.

There were 140 people there, 125 of whom either work or study in the field of sex addiction.

The fellowship helped pay for an entry fee to the event, through funds donated to the

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Letter from the Chair
continued

Outreach Committee by COSA intergroups. Thanks to those groups and to all of you for your generosity.

As Joanne is a therapist herself, this was her fourth year of attending the conference. And this is not the first time she's mentioned COSA at the event. Despite that, the most common question she and Jane both received was: "What is COSA?" This underscores the need to keep carrying the message again and again.

Jane's outreach allowed her not only to spread the word about our fellowship. It was also an opportunity to reflect on her own recovery and progress. "I enjoyed doing this kind of service and being able to say without shame or embarrassment to strangers that I was a member of COSA." Jane also shared about her experience at the conference with her local meetings when she returned home.

During her attendance at one of the presentations, Jane encouraged therapists to share the benefits of Twelve Step groups, specifically COSA, with clients who may benefit.

Joanne said there was confusion among some therapists about religious requirements to participate in Twelve Step groups. She described the spiritual nature of the program and explained that participants do not need to be religious to participate.

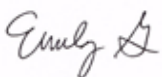
Joanne also found the event to be fertile ground for rich material within herself to process. "The conference also reminded me how far I have come yet that I still need to continue to work on myself and probably always will," Joanne wrote in an email.

During her time at the conference, Joanne was reminded of the benefits of social and emotional connection as opposed to isolating: "...in my mind [it] points clearly to the value of Twelve Step groups and the support and strength they offer as people come out of isolation...and learn to build healthy, trusting and nurturing relationships with others who share their stories."

Joanne expressed that ultimately, it was "a real privilege and humbling to be well enough to represent COSA and try to get the word out for the sake of all those still suffering."

I found Jane and Joanne's willingness to serve in this way inspiring.

I hope you do too.



Emily G.
International Service Organization of COSA Board Chair



**THE ISO OF COSA
WOULD LIKE TO
THANK EMILY FOR
HER THREE YEARS
OF SERVICE AS
THE ISO OF COSA
BOARD CHAIR
AND EXPRESS OUR
GRATITUDE FOR
HER COMMITMENT
TO THE FELLOWSHIP.**

OUR OAKLAND CONVENTION IS ON THE HORIZON!



2018 ISO of COSA International Convention

The Washington Inn
Oakland, California
May 25-28, 2018

ZOOM: A NEW WAY TO SEE AND HEAR CONVENTION SPEAKERS

For the first time this year, our Convention will live-stream on Zoom four speakers! COSAs not able to attend the convention will be able to access live audio and video of speakers for the Friday evening banquet, Saturday luncheon and Sunday night banquet (both COSA and SAA).

This service will be open to the first 99 people requesting it. Details will be shared via an email sent out to the entire COSA Fellowship just prior to the convention. In that email we will explain how to attend via your computer, tablet, smartphone or telephone (with only the sound) from almost any country in the world. If you do not already receive Fellowship emails, you can sign up on <http://www.cosa-recovery.org>.

Terrific workshops, panels, and speakers are in store at COSA's annual Convention on Memorial Day Weekend, May 25-28, at The Washington Inn in downtown Oakland, California. Please join us!

Our Friday night opening COSA speaker will be **Brian T**, of San Jose, California, who plans to touch on the topics of fear and obstacles to recovery. Our COSA speaker for the Saturday luncheon will be **Jennie K** of San Francisco, California. As Jennie worked the Twelve Steps of COSA she found that not only had her heart been broken, but it had been broken open. **Darcy L**, of Madison, Wisconsin, will be the COSA speaker at the Saturday SAA Banquet. She has dealt with the justice system and co-parenting after a divorce with her qualifier. And at COSA's Sunday night banquet, **Jennifer N**, of Marin County, California, will be the COSA speaker and **Paul MJ** will be the guest SAA speaker. Jennifer intends to speak about rage, denial, triggers, and parenting young children.

Workshops and discussion panels at the Convention will include these topics:

- Orientation, for Convention newcomers, with Sarah S.
- Couples in Recovery, a couples panel chaired by Alice D.
- Dating in Recovery, a panel chaired by Allison B.
- Healthy Sexual Boundaries: Turning Walls into Walkways, with Amy MJ.
- Working the Steps in a Group: Why and How to Get Started, with Amy MJ and Brian T.
- Steps 2 and 3, with Harper P.
- Steps 6 and 7, with Sarah S.
- Step 11: A Variety of Prayer and Meditation Practices, with Sara L.
- COSA Traditions and Personal Recovery, with Kerry M.
- Trabajando Los Doce Pasos en un Problema (In Spanish), with Maritza.
- Do No Harm: Handling Emotions and Reactions, with Mary H. and Julie B.
- Boundary Brainstorming, with Sandy S.

Updates about Convention speakers, workshops and panels will be posted on the Convention portion of the www.cosa-recovery.org website (<http://cosa-recovery.org/2018/>) and shared in fellowship emails as they become available.

As always, the COSA Convention will include:

- COSA Twelve Step meetings (including meetings with a special focus, such as designated for Spanish speakers, Telemeeting/Zoom meeting attendees, etc.).
- Outer Circle fellowship and fun options such as optional movement classes, arts and crafts, and more.
- Snacks, light meals, beverages, and fellowship in our Hospitality Room.
- A place for quiet contemplation in our Quiet Room.
- Access to some meetings and workshops at the nearby SAA Convention. A list of events open to COSAs or SAA guests will be available on site.

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REGISTER ONLINE UNTIL MAY 14: You can register for our COSA Convention online until May 14. This is the deadline to: pre-register for the full Convention online (\$190 includes Saturday lunch and Sunday dinner); purchase additional Convention meals for guests – Saturday lunch and Sunday dinner (\$60 each); pre-register for one day of the Convention, with a meal included (\$100 for Saturday or Sunday); or request a refund. (If you miss the May 14th deadline, you will still be able to register on a “walk-in” basis, however meals, which must be pre-ordered, will not be included; for on-site registration, see details below.) You can click on the Convention page at cosa-recovery.org or here: <http://cosa-recovery.org/2018/Registration.html>

DELEGATE REGISTRATION: Remember that there is a separate registration for Delegates. You will be guided to it if you identify yourself as a Delegate in the online registration form.

CONVENTION SCHOLARSHIPS: Generous donations from other COSAs provide full and half scholarships on a first-come, first-served basis. Apply on your registration form. Scholarship recipients must volunteer for at least four hours of service work at the convention.

GUARANTEED ROOM RATES END MAY 3: Convention discounted rates of \$129 per room at the The Washington Inn are guaranteed only until May 3. Reach [The Washington Inn](http://www.thewashingtoninn.com) at (510) 452-1776. Note: You must enter our Group Code (ISO18) in the box marked Group/Promotional Code or give the code to staff on the phone in order to reserve a room because our convention has reserved all 40 available hotel rooms. Each room has one queen bed and includes continental breakfast, free wifi, and a discounted parking rate.

After May 3rd, options include: asking The Washington Inn if any rooms are still available, or trying the adjacent Marriott City Center. That hotel’s website, www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/oakdt-oakland-marriott-city-center/, also lists walkable options for dining nearby under its **Dining** drop-down menu, and under **Local Area**, lists nearby attractions, including spas, museums, sports venues, children’s activities, and more.

ON-SITE REGISTRATION: On-site registration for the convention is priced at: \$200 for the full weekend or \$100 for one day, either Saturday or Sunday. No meals are included in on-site registrations.

CONVENTION SUPPORT: You can help our Convention be a success – whether you attend or not – when you:

- Help others attend with a donation to the Convention Scholarship Fund; all donations to COSA are tax deductible: <https://cosa-convention-registration.myshopify.com/products/scholarship-donation>
- Volunteer for a service position – on your registration form or by e-mailing: conventionvolunteers@cosa-recovery.org.
- Donate items to the Silent Auction, which raises seed money for the following year’s Convention. The 2019 Convention will be in Houston, Texas. We are looking for items such as recovery books, CDs, DVDs, original artwork, jewelry, clothes, items for the home; services such as photography or life coaching; restaurant coupons; or even timeshare or other vacation home stays. Regifting is OK. Items should be reasonably sized and of good quality. You can bring your donation with you or mail it to ensure arrival by May 23. For the mailing address or questions, contact: silentauction@cosa-recovery.org.

TRANSPORTATION: Information about ground transportation from both Oakland (<http://www.oaklandairport.com>) and San Francisco international airports (<https://www.flysfo.com/>) can be found on the airport websites, or on the **Hotel/Travel Information** drop-down menu on the Convention website. This includes BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit), limos, taxis, Uber, Lyft, car rentals, etc. The website <https://511.org/> also has information about transportation options in the Bay Area.





Can you donate a gift certificate, item, or basket for our upcoming COSA convention silent auction?

Any donations of time, talent, or treasure are welcome!

Popular items from past years include

Artwork • Recovery baskets • Electronics

Personal talents • Books • Handmade items

Experiences • Restaurant gift certificates • Jewelry

Donations can be dropped off during the convention as early as possible at the Serenity Store or contact us for a shipping address. Please provide a description of items and estimated value by Wednesday May 23. Contact us with item information, questions, or for shipping at silentauction@cosa-recovery.org.

All proceeds benefit the ISO of COSA.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!



*Admitted to God, to ourselves,
and to another human being
the exact nature of our
wrongs.*

When I first began the program, I thought that in order for my life to get better, my partner had to change. After a few weeks I came to understand that in order for my life to get better, I had to change. But saying it was much easier than actually doing it. Healing and recovery in the program required working the program and completing the Twelve Steps, and so impatient me decided from Step One that I was going to breeze through the program, save my marriage, and somehow change my husband so that he was no longer an addict. I was motivated to progress as quickly as I could, gain the tools necessary to change my partner, and then live happily ever after. While I would have to admit that I am living quite happily ever after, the process of getting there and the end result are not at all like what I had envisioned. My journey was emotional and challenging, and required much humility and patience. I remember that it wasn't until Steps Four and Five that I was able to realize how little power I had to change anyone else, and how much power I had to change myself.



Steps Four and Five kind of go hand-in-hand. Step Four requires us to make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Everything I had learned in Steps One through Three was the foundation for Step Four. Had I not admitted I was powerless over the compulsive sexual behavior and that my life had become unmanageable, had I not come to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, and had I not finally made the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God, I would not have been able to move on to Steps Four and Five.

The hurt and pain from the betrayal and the events that brought me to the program were still fresh, so I found it difficult to focus on myself and what role I had in all of this mess. I believed that even if I did have some sort of responsibility for where I was in my life at this point, it had to be minimal compared to the damage my partner had caused, and thus my inventory should only be a few paragraphs.

Of course this isn't what actually ended up happening. My sponsor gave me a tool to help reflect on the assignment, which was more of an electronic spreadsheet whose columns directed me to list all the resentments and fears I had, the conflicts I had been in, the feelings and beliefs I had about my own sexuality and sexual history, and my beliefs about certain people. These weren't reflections only on my marriage but on my entire life. Could I even remember that far back? Answering those questions with honesty, I found, required several drafts. My sponsor had me revisit my responses to a few items that came out as shifting the blame until I could finally clarify what my role in all of this was, and how I was deceptive, blaming, codependent, and acting in ways that were immoral or against my beliefs or values. Step Four had no wiggle room for hiding. On the surface, it seemed that Step Four was just pouring more guilt, shame, and insecurity over myself.

I had to really sit and reflect and write out my thoughts about why I did what I did. There were several items on my list for which I was tempted to deny, leave out, or downplay what was really going on in my mind. Facing this was essential to my moving forward. I was reminded that I could not heal that which I refused to see, and that this Step really was a fearless moral inventory. While it takes courage to be honest with someone else, I found

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that it took more courage to be honest with myself. It took tremendous strength to pull myself out of my denial. Denial was a tempting place to be, but it was also the root cause of my clinging so tightly to, and reinforcing, my cherished victim identity. I realized that If I were not willing to let go of my victim identity, I would forever play the victim in a life in which I actually had so much power all along, to make it great. So what was holding me back from giving myself that freedom and healing? I was afraid.

It was one thing to write down all my wrongs (and struggle with keeping it honest), but to admit all of this stuff to another person? I was afraid to vocalize that I had done these horribly embarrassing and shameful acts. What if someone else found it? There were so many things that, if anyone were to find out, I thought no one could ever possibly love me. I was positive that if these things were found out, I would be rejected, shamed, ridiculed, judged, hated, and laughed at.

Determined to “squeeze all the juice from the fruit” of my effort, I prayed to my Higher Power for willingness to look carefully at all aspects of my life, to be brutally honest with myself, and to share it with another person. I listed everything possible. As I wrote of my choices and behaviors and the reasons behind them, it dawned on me that if I were struggling so much with admitting the exact nature of my wrongs, then there were probably so many others like me who either ended their recovery program at Step Four or Five for the same reasons, or ended up not being able to heal and recover because of the temptation to continue “hiding.” The desire to break that pattern and to finally be free pushed me forward.

Once I completed my list I made an appointment with my “trusted person.” Before meeting (still tempted to leave things out or downplay my actions), I prayed for the courage to be as honest as possible about those things that had been hidden inside my mind and heart for so long.

There’s a quote I had to repeat to myself over and over: “The only way out is through.” This was the reminder that being able to take that inventory of myself and share it with another person was the key to my healing and freedom. This reminded me that no one but me had the key to my freedom and healing. It was empowering.

I had anticipated that, after what felt like a long and heavy one-sided conversation with my “trusted person,” she would comment about all those things that I had confessed to, and I would leave feeling even more embarrassed and humiliated. What actually happened was quite different. My “trusted person” spoke of her admiration for my strength, my honesty, and my courage, and said how grateful she was that I trusted her to share my story. The last thing she told me was “I did all of those things too....”

I didn’t feel any shame at all. I actually felt relief, connection, and pride in that courageous step I had taken. But more than anything I felt free for the first time in decades.

Gratefully,
Tamiko E.



ISO of COSA Diversity Statement

- COSA Diversity is consistent with the Third Tradition of COSA, which states that the only requirement for COSA membership is that our lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior.
- The COSA Fellowship welcomes all genders, all varieties of relationship to the addict, all religious and spiritual preferences, all employment statuses, all marital statuses, all ethnicities, cultures, and languages. COSA does not discriminate on the basis of class, sexual orientation or gender identification, physical or mental challenges, race, financial status, or national origins.
- In COSA, we find hope whether or not there is a sexually addicted person currently in our lives.
- COSA Diversity is consistent with the First Tradition of COSA, which states that our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on COSA unity.



*Were entirely ready to have
God remove all these defects of
character.*

Step Six is a Step of preparation and transition. It allows me to focus on being ready before I take action. After the difficult self-examination of Steps Four and Five, I was happy for the Step Six cleansing. It's like the shower they make you take before you jump into the pool. I'm making a commitment and setting an intention.

Entirely Ready

Being entirely ready is a tall order! I'm not sure I can ever be entirely anything; that requires perfection. The best I can do is try to be entirely ready. And I can ask my Higher Power to help me with this.

Step Six Obstacles

My first question is: Do I even want these defects of character removed? Of course I do, right? Why would I want to hold onto my defects? Maybe because they've served a purpose for me.

For example, for much of my life, I've used denial to protect me from emotional harm that I was unable to deal with. Now that I'm living a more spiritual life in recovery, I seek honesty. With my Higher Power by my side, I am able to open my eyes, which in turn allows me to live a fuller, more complete life. I admit, though, that there are times when I want to hold my old friend denial a little closer. Then my connection with my Higher Power is weakened and I find myself in a place of fear and isolation.

When I consider what is getting in my way when working Step Six, it's mostly fear: fear of change and fear of the unknown. I need my Higher Power's help to be ready to move into a different way of being. Trust in my Higher Power is essential for my willingness to be absolutely ready to let go of my old destructive patterns and behaviors.

Change is difficult for me. Instead of embracing it, I usually try to avoid it, thinking that things can always get worse. And although I suppose that's true, things can also get better. I see now that when I resist change, I stand in the way of allowing my Higher Power to enter into my life. In recovery, I am learning to trust my Higher Power. When I'm open to change, I've seen miracles grow in my life.

The Spirituality of Step Six

I've heard that Step Six is not really a Step of action; it's a spiritual Step. It's a time to contemplate where I've been, and where I'd like to go. Working Step Six gives me the space to do some great self-reflection but now in a very spiritual way, where I make deliberate connections with my Higher Power.

continued



The Nuts and Bolts of Working Step Six

I'm a person who likes procedures and guidelines. I found these suggested components helpful as a concrete way to work this Step.

1. Review my defects of character that I identified when working Step Four.
2. For each defect, identify the desired behavior, thinking, or feeling that I want to take the place of my current defect.
3. After I've established a substitute for each defect, write two positive affirmations about living differently.

So for example, I struggle a lot with the defect of jealousy. The behaviors and thoughts I'd like to substitute for jealousy are kindness and love. My affirmations to let go of jealousy are:

- I am a valuable, lovable child of God.

- I have enough, I am enough.

Step Six requires continued honesty, humility, and surrender, all of which prepares the road for the gifts yet to come.

Liz G

Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to those who still suffer. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps ourselves.



As a mission statement, this is truly a powerful and empowering one. Our one reason to exist – to carry its message to others who still suffer. I still remember my first day attending COSA. Newly married and a few months pregnant, I was a mess. I went in hoping that someone would tell me exactly what to do and how to do it, and that in a few months all my problems would be solved. What I got instead was a loving, supportive network of people that pointed me toward a Twelve-Step program and encouraged me to put my faith in a Higher Power. Having been betrayed over and over again, I was not interested in revisiting faith and trust; I just wanted answers. However, at the end of my rope and with what little faith I could muster, I started the process.

As I began learning and, in the beginning, quite half-heartedly applying the Steps and seeing how they worked for others, it was tempting to insist that my partner (and even others around me) do the Steps at the same rate I was. “I made it to Step Three! Why haven’t you started Step One yet?” I secretly judged. Little did I realize that focusing on the progress and struggles of others would not only take away from my own recovery but pull me back.

What I found was that in order to carry our message to those who still suffer, we don’t “pull them along” in our own struggles, but we must live that message. We have learned only through our commitment to the program

continued

and experiencing the program, how the Twelve Steps work. We carry that message by living it: by serving as an example of how it has transformed our own lives. We can do this through rigorous honesty in our sharing, through outreach, and by working with a Sponsor. I believe it is not we who share the message; the message shares itself as it comes out in our daily actions and attitude.

The Steps are a very intimate process that somehow unfolds itself uniquely in each individual, which is why it requires rigorous honesty, intention, and personal effort and commitment. We recover not through the advice of others, and not by doing things the way others do them, but by working the Steps. This is why, as a member of a Twelve-Step program, or even as a partner of an addict, we do not have the ability to “teach” people how to live. We do not have divine knowledge of what is the best path for them to take, and we do not have the right to insist that one way is better than another. We rely on the Twelve Steps and on our personal relationship with a Higher Power. We never attempt to be another person’s Higher Power. All we know, by walking our talk, is that it worked for us, and this is evident to others not through an intense advising session but through our actions, thoughts, and behaviors. It would be truly arrogant of me to try to teach something about which I have no experience or knowledge. That lack of experience or knowledge is not of the Twelve Steps, but of someone else’s personal life. What I learned through my unfortunate failed marriage with a sex addict, is that the more I tried “teaching” the Twelve Steps to him, as opposed to just living them for myself, the more I enabled the addict and the more distance I put between me and my husband.

All I know is that I have found the Twelve Steps transformative, healing, and a vital part of my recovery. Through working the Twelve Steps, I have met others who have experienced the same recovery and healing. While our stories were very different, and in some ways very similar, our core commonality was in our commitment to the program and witnessing how it transformed and healed us. What really helped about this Tradition was that because we had all come from different paths and walks of life, and we had all experienced the benefits of the Twelve Steps, including recovery, in our own unique and personal way, we had all connected at some level, serving not as “teachers” but as a support to and for each other. No matter where we came from or what our background, we had been supported and encouraged to continue working through the Twelve Steps, and this was all we could do. This was ultimately the most effective and influential for everyone involved.

We only carry the message because it carried us. It has now become us, as we live the Steps. And through this, we are able to carry it in return.

Gratefully,
Tamiko E.



Every COSA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

When sending donations to the ISO of COSA, please include your meeting number so we can record it properly and post it in the Balance. We thank you for all your donations!

To find your meeting number:

- Go to <http://www.cosa-recovery.org>, click on the Meetings and Events tab, and then on Find a Local Meeting.
- Search for your meeting and note the meeting number in parentheses next to your meeting name.

Seventh Tradition: Financial Report: January/February 2018 Donations

Walnut Creek (CA-02)	\$ 85.00
Long Beach (CA-23).....	\$ 100.00
Santa Rosa (CA-27)	\$ 89.89
South Bend/Mishawaka (IN-06).....	\$ 50.00
St. Louis (MO-01)	\$ 100.00
Cincinnati (OH-01).....	\$ 50.00
Central Houston (TX-22)	\$ 66.00
Madison, East (WI-08).....	\$ 100.00
Individual Donations via website	\$ 2834.00
Individual Donations via mail	\$ 316.00
Total	\$ 3,790.89



TRADITION SIX

A COSA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the COSA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

When we find something good, it's tempting to want to share it with the world and to insist that we have found the cure-all. This is what I have found in the COSA program. I might be biased, but I have yet to find any situation in which the Steps do not work. To me, the program is flawless. In my home group, at the end of our meeting we close with "Keep coming back! It works if you work it!" But therein lies the key to the program: we have to want to work it. It's only as good as the intentions and desire we put into it. What we get out of it is equivalent to the work we put in. And this is why a COSA group never endorses, finances, or lends the COSA name to any related facility or outside enterprise: because we know that the Traditions serve us in so many ways as a whole, and that without them, the essence that makes it so effective is lost. We know that financial conflicts of interest can easily distort the Traditions that have been carefully built in order to develop a program that actually works.

We all come to COSA at the perfect time. While we may have wished we had come earlier, we also recognize that even if we had known about COSA, we may not have been ready to work the program. We realize we have different stories, experiences, backgrounds, and professional status yet we learn through the Steps and this Tradition that our overarching goal is to carry the message of recovery by working the Steps. With that, we learn that we are equals in COSA and we do not look to another's prestige or background for guidance or influence. We look only at other members' experience, strength, and hope to aid us with our own decisions and work of recovery. By preventing financial gains or privatizing the Program to non-member interests, we are able to keep it about recovery and healing. In Tradition Six, we remember that we never lend the COSA name to any cause except our own.

Gratefully,
Tamiko E.



BY THE FELLOWSHIP FOR THE FELLOWSHIP

We encourage every group, intergroup and member to submit articles that share your ESH (experience, strength, and hope). Also, articles and announcements that share up-coming COSA events in your area; such as retreats, workshops, speakers, etc. We also would love to hear your ideas for what you would like to see in future articles. The *Balance* is a newsletter for the membership, by the membership.

Guidelines for Submitting Literature: http://cosa-recovery.org/PDF/lit_guidelines.pdf

Please send your articles to COSACopy@yahoo.com
or by mail to: ISO of COSA, Central Office, 9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 212, Houston, TX 77024 U.S.A.

Phone: 866-899-2672 E-mail: info@cosa-recovery.org

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International Diversity in Writing Statement

As the *Balance* receives more articles from our members from around the world, you may notice different spelling and word usage. We want to maintain the original voice of each author, so that we can benefit from COSA's beautiful diversity.