



BALANCE

Your COSA Newsletter

To you our subscribers;

We continue to appreciate your support and patience as we experiment with changes necessary for the continuation of our newsletter. You better be keeping these issues. You most certainly have a collector's item in your hands. There will never be another issue printed that looks just like this one. I'm not that familiar with this monster yet to attain any such feat as printing any part of this the same two months in a row!! WHAT A KEEPSAKE YOU HAVE HERE. Okay back to business, we again want to thank each of you who have sent us submissions to print in your newsletter. If your article has not already appeared, it will. We have received many items and we are GRATEFUL! Please continue sharing your recovery.



Strength & Hope from a COSA in relationship with a Sex Addict

When I first got into this program in January, 1993, I was in a lot of pain after finding out about my husband's relapse. "This wasn't supposed to happen-we are both in recovery." After I got through my denial and woke up to the fact that we were both in trouble, I got help. I went to **COSA** meetings and found a safe place to share what I was feeling and what was going on.

Previously I had worked another 12-Step program for 4 years and had shied away from **COSA**, even when I began dating and eventually married a recovering Sex Addict. "**COSA** is for other people-not me." What I learned about myself from going to **COSA** meetings was that even though not everything I heard applied to me, I still heard a lot I could identify with. It helped me break through my denial about my controlling behaviors and my co-dependency. I realized I didn't have a lot of detachment in my life or my marriage- and I couldn't change overnight.

It took time and a lot of meetings and sharing and praying and just feeling my pain of abandonment [family of origin stuff]. It wasn't easy giving up my expectations for perfect recovery in our marriage. "We'll just process this, go to meetings, and put it all back together." Needless to say, my timetable didn't match up to God's. There was a lot for me to let go of and most of it hurt really badly. But I didn't want to live the way I had before-I wanted to 'get the lesson' and move on.

Fears were difficult, too. "Could I ever trust him again?" and "Will our marriage ever be the same?" and "Is it even possible to stay in a marriage with a sex addict, even if both of us are in recovery?" So often in **COSA** meetings, I would hear about divorces and couples breaking up that it seemed sometimes impossible to stay together. All I knew to do was to take it "one day at a time." Yes, I wanted to run away, give up, go crazy and for very short periods of time I would let myself do those things. When the pain and fear were too great, I got short-term therapy.

I committed myself to taking care of me, to nurturing myself and my inner child, to learning about my disease, to practicing balanced behaviors, especially when communicating with my spouse. Slowly my serenity returned. Our marriage turned a big corner. It was like we had both gone through a total upheaval. He had to find himself again and I did, too. And then when he had a slip, I noticed I still had my serenity. I realized that the promises were coming true for me, too. We began to power struggle less and come together more.

We celebrated 6 months of abstinence with a return to our honeymoon spot. We enjoyed a deeper companionship and harmony that had little to do with sex and more to do with how we each felt about ourselves.

I had prayed in the beginning that some good come from all this, and at that time, it was very hard to believe anything would. But looking back over this past year, I see many gifts I received-strength, detachment, hope, love and acceptance for myself and others-the list goes on. I hope that you, too, experience the tremendous benefits of working this program. It can save and restore lives, and I am filled with gratitude for this.

WAVERLY
Houston, Tx.



MEETING FORMATS

I have had the opportunity to attend **COSA** meetings in several different parts of the country. I have been surprised at the various meeting formats, materials read & distributed and the sharing patterns. I'd like to share something about the Houston meetings.

Most of the meetings are one hour long, women only and the discussion topic is selected by the leader. We read a statement about "no crosstalk" and limiting the sharing to 3-5 minutes each to allow everyone a chance to share. Attendance varies from 4 or 5 to 25 women.

Two meetings utilize meditation books to determine the topic of the day. We use "Each Day a New Beginning and "Answers in the Heart". The leader reads the meditation & relates what the reading meant to her and/or how it fits her life "today". Other members then share their feelings and ideas about the reading.

One meeting uses "The Twelve Traditions as a Guide to Healthy Relationships". These were "borrowed" from another 12-Step Program [Al-Non] and can be applied to friendships, co-workers, family of origin, and/or committed relationships. Each week we read a different tradition and use it as a basis for our discussion. Once a month [or sometimes for 12 consecutive weeks] we use the Twelve Promises as the focus of the meeting.

Two meetings focus on discussing the Twelve Steps one at a time. Newcomers [and old timers] find these extremely helpful to hear how others work the steps and apply them to their lives.

I would like to hear about other meeting formats that work for you. Perhaps **NSO-COSA** could develop guides for various formats that could be distributed to those interested in forming new meetings.

JAN W.
HOUSTON TX.
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Friendship

A smile, a connection
A tear, a reflection
Common ground
We are bound.

Stories unfold
Life is told]
Pain we bare
A friend to care.

Honest exchange
Feelings full range
Judgement melts.
Acceptance felt.

Ourselves revealed
We are healed
God enters in
Thru you my friend.

Love is conection
Love is reflection
On spiritual ground
We are bound.

SEE
ENCLOSED
FLYER!!

START
PLANNING

NOW!!

MAY 27-30th
1994

IdeaLink

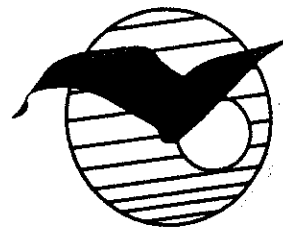
RECYCLING IDEA!!

Some of the Minneapolis area groups have started "recirculating" their medallions within the groups.

Recirculating saves the group money and it feels good to "pass on" your medallion to someone else when you receive a new one.

Other people have incorporated their medallions into jewelry. Pins, bracelets necklaces and key chains have been fashioned from medallions.

Jean Marie Minneapolis MN



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WHAT COMING TO GROUP MEANS TO ME.....to be accepted.....a safe place to talk.....no shoulds.....no shouldn'ts.....It's like green eggs & ham--I thought I would hate it until I tried it. Now I love coming to group!! (would you, could, in a group? or on a train? While eating soup) Candy Mn.

COSA Literature Available

To order literature, send an order noting the quantity and cost of each requested item to: Minnesota COSA, P O Box 14537, Minneapolis, MN. 55414. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Please include postage and handling, according to the following order totals.

Postage and Handling: .75 for an order of .20 to \$2.00; \$2.00 for orders totalling \$2.01 to \$9.00; \$3.00 for orders from \$9.01 to \$30.00; and \$5.50 for orders over \$30.01.

- COSA brochures--20 each
- COSA Welcome brochure--20 each
- How to start a group--\$2.00 ea.
- Starting New Groups Audio Tape--\$5.00
- COSA Stories Vol. I--\$3.50
- COSA Stories Vol. II--\$3.50
- COSA Medallions--\$3.00 ea. (6 mo., years 1-10)
- National List of Meetings--\$3.00
- Laminated COSA cards with Serenity Prayer, 12 steps & 12 traditions/our logo-\$1.00

**Remember:
It's Your
Newsletter!**
BALANCE is in need of more stories and other submissions to continue its planned publication schedule.

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Send editorial correspondence to:

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For those who wish to have a copy of the COSA by-laws, write to "Balance" P.O. Box Mt Morris, Mi. 48458 and request a copy. With that request, the by laws, mentioned in Vol. 2, Number 5 Newsletter will be sent to you.

*Thought For The Month*  
*Promise yourself to give so much time to the improvement of yourself that you have no time to criticize others.*