



# BALANCE

## THE COSA NEWSLETTER

February, the valentine month. The month to talk about love. Some of us don't want to think about love or talk about love. We have been hurt. We are feeling pain. Let's connect it with Step 2 and generate love for ourselves. Let us take care of ourselves in February. Love ourselves. Step 2 says restore us to sanity. It does not say restore those who are insane. That means, I'm not the only one insane that needs to be restored. There seems to be no exception written in this step. Let us stop beating up on ourselves and believing we are the only one unlovable, the only one insane. Show yourself love this month by really coming to believe that you can be restored. There is hope.

**step two:** *"Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."*

Admitting our powerlessness and recognizing the unmanageability of our lives was one matter. But "coming to believe" and putting our trust in some other "Higher Power"-that was a different matter that would take many of us weeks and months and years of growing and yearning to discover who our Higher Power was and what His/Her presence would mean for us. For many of us, Step Two may present a constant uphill battle of overcoming old ideas about God. Some may have been brought up to fear a punishing, harsh God. Others of us were taught that there was no hope beyond our own ability to care for ourselves. Some received mixed messages or learned to see God through the roles played by our parents and other significant adults. All that is required in Step Two is the first step on the journey. We must let go and allow ourselves to believe in something, someone who has power to restore us to sanity. This step means acknowledging that we are no longer alone, but that there is a force, a power in the universe, that is a loving, caring, capable, trustworthy power able to put things in order and give us what we need to begin the journey of recovery

We may be expecting instant results. In recovery, sudden change is the exception. Recovery requires patience with ourselves, love for ourselves. There's that word *love* again. Be your own Valentine. Be patient with yourself. Changes are occurring and will continue to occur as you focus on your recovery and on you.

## THE COURAGE TO BE MYSELF

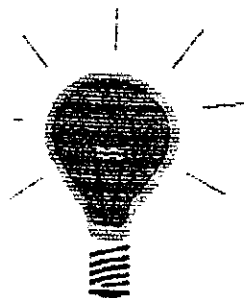
I have the courage to...

- Embrace my strengths--
- Get excited about life--
- Enjoy giving and receiving love--
- Face and transform my fears--
- Ask for help and support when I need it--
- Spring free of the Superwoman Trap--
- Trust myself--
- Make my own decisions and choices--
- Befriend myself--
- Complete unfinished business--
- Realize that I have emotional and practical rights--
- Talk as nicely to myself as I do to my plants--
- Communicate lovingly with understanding as my goal--
- Honor my own needs--
- Give myself credit for my accomplishments--
- Love the little girl within me--
- Overcome my addiction to approval--
- Grant myself permission to play--
- Quit being a Responsibility Sponge--
- Feel all of my feelings and act on them appropriately--
- Nurture others because I want to, not because I have to--
- Choose what is right for me--
- Insist on being paid fairly for what I do--
- Set limits and boundaries and stick by them--
- Say "yes" only when I really mean it--
- Have realistic expectations--
- Take risks and accept change--
- Grow through challenges--
- Be totally honest with myself--
- Correct erroneous beliefs and assumptions--
- Respect my vulnerabilities--
- Heal old and current wounds--
- Savor the mystery of Spirit--
- Wave good-bye to guilt--
- Plant "flower" not "weed" thoughts in my mind--
- Treat myself with respect and teach others to do the same--
- Fill my own cup first, then nourish others with the overflow--
- Own my own excellence--
- Plan for the future but live in the present--
- Value my intuition and wisdom--
- Know that I am lovable--
- Celebrate the differences between men and women--
- Develop healthy, supportive relationships--
- Make forgiveness a priority--
- Accept myself just as I am now.

I WILL BREATHE,  
I WILL FEEL,  
I WILL RELAX.

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One of our COSA members gave gift subscriptions of "Balance" this past Christmas. She suggested we think about the idea of Gift subscriptions of "Balance" for various "occasions" including completion of 1st. step, or any of the thousand other times there is a "significant" decision in a member's program. Yes, even a Valentine gift to yourself or a friend. There are so many ways to be good to ourselves!! GOOD IDEA HUH?!!



Retreats: Another good valentine gift to give yourself: *Jan W. from Houston*

*shares with us....*The seventh annual Houston area Fall/Winter COSA/SAA retreat was held at Camp Cho-Yeh, December 10-12, 1993. The camp, located 90 miles north-east of Houston, provides motel like accommodations, meeting rooms, cafeteria style meals and acres of woods, lakes, trails and animals. Approximately forty women and men participated. Activities ranged from fire side singing (nightly campfire with marshmallows) to "serious" groups dealing with feelings. Meditations, closed 12 step meetings, and groups, focused on steps 4 & 5, were led by volunteers.

We had the opportunity to learn to "foxwalk" and use wide-angle vision (like Indians). Design a life sized statue of ourselves to be placed in our hometown city park, talk with our Higher Power and deal with anger. One evening we hiked to an open area, found a star, claimed it and named it (after an E.T.) That star came to us to ask us to help it's inhabitants with our "special qualities". A fairy godmother, storyteller related the "Ugly Duckling" story reflecting the 12 steps. We listened for "flashes" from God to receive "desire" flash cards and affirmations from the group that these desires were possible. A crafts room was available 24 hours a day with a wide variety of supplies to stimulate creativity and playfulness.

The eighth annual Fall/Winter SAA/COSA Retreat (we reverse the order every year) will be the second weekend in December, 1994. Come and Join Us.

## THE CONVENTION

It's been nine months and yet it feels not long ago. I was scared, being in a huge hotel with a bunch of addicts. Those of whom reminded me of the pain I've been through and yet the joy I've been through as well-- [being in recovery].

There, I found out more about myself. I found out more about them. I found out that we are very similar in many ways. Green dots. Red dots. That seemed to almost be a hidden agenda, if you were a green dot[codependent] or a red dot[addict].

I saw that my co-addiction and some of my past behavior walked a fine line with addictions.

The weekend was great. Workshops, crying, laughing, hugging, seeing past recovery friends, sharing, grieving, eating, exercising, walking, first-stepping and recovering.

It's very difficult to acknowledge what this convention was and did for me. I feel so much older, in a recovery sense, yet only as wise as I "work my recovery." I met some beautiful people, some struggling, some climbing, and some glowing.

Words cannot describe what the SAA/COSA convention was but enriching and empowering.

I can't wait until Phoenix. Until then, I have my meetings, recovery friends, my books and my higher power.

CANDY M.  
MPLS. MN

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Yes, I'm preparing to attend another conference. I find it hard to wait. Then as I board the plane, I already start feeling the sadness, because I realize that soon I will arrive, but oh so soon it will all be over. How can I tell you how much I love and enjoy being around recovery people? It is wonderful. I attended my first conference in 1990 in Minneapolis, Mn. Things were not going well at that time. As we were flying to Minneasota, I was feeling fear, a great deal of fear. Would I be accepted? Acceptance was always so very important to me. My marriage was not good at that time. It looked pretty much like as soon as we arrive back home from the conference, we may very likely be discussing divorce. We had been separated for approximately three years at that time. It really looked like divorce was our answer. That conference changed things for us. After the sharings at the Saturday eveing, we went to our room and talked, then spent time in the meditation room. Four months later, we did make the committment to go back together and work to have a healthy relationship together. We have attended every conference since that one in 1990. It was truly the turning point in our recovery. Yes, we work hard. We work hard, but the results have been a pleasant and healthy relationship. We worked very hard before trying to make the dysfunction look "normal". This is my personal experience with the conference. I share to let you know there is hope. It is worth your time, your energy, your money. Commit yourself to recovery for you. You deserve a better life. Ila

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Thank you, thank you, thank you. I have no idea how much work must go into a conference like the one I just attended. My life will never be the same. It can only be better. I love all of you.                      anonymous

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MY HAPPINESS DEPENDS ON ME.

To order literature, write : MINNESOTA COSA

P O BOX 14537

MINNEAPOLIS MN 55414 Phone:612 537 6904

send orders noting quantity and cost of each requested item. Please allow 4-6 weeks for delivery. Please include postage and handling according to the following order totals:

Orders totalling\$ .20	to	\$2.00	include:	\$ .75
" "	\$2.01	to	\$9.00	" \$2.00
" "	\$9.01	to	\$30.00	" \$3.00
" over	\$30.00			" \$5.50

Present items available from the above address:

COSA brochures....\$.20 each	COSA Welcome brochure....\$.20 each
How to start a group:..\$2.00	Starting New Groups Audio Tape...\$5.00
COSA Stories Vol.I.----\$3.50 each	COSA Stories Vol II.----\$3.50
COSA Medallions..\$3.00 each(6 mo., years 1 -10, also blanks)	
Laminated COSA cards with Serenity Prayer, 12 & 12, COSA logo..\$1.00 each	

**Send contributions to support your NSO-COSA to: NSO-COSA**  
**9337-B KATY FREEWAY #142**  
**HOUSTON TX 77024**

To learn more about the formation of NSO, refer to your VOL 2#4 issue of "Balance".

**TO SUBSCRIBE**

Send \$12.00 for a one year subscription to BALANCE P O BOX 502 MT MORRIS MI 48458

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**\*REMEMBER:** It's your newsletter!!! "Balance"  
 \* is in need of more stories and other submissions  
 \* to continue its planned publication schedule.  
 \* **Send editorial correspondence and submissions to:**  
 \* P O BOX 14654, LOUISVILLE, KY. 40214  
 \*\*\*\*\*

Make checks payable to:

Ila Davis

Please Lord teach us to laugh again but,

don't ever let us forget we cried...

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NOTE THE ENCLOSURES FOR THE FIRST ANNUAL NSO COSA CONFERENCE:

WE WANT TO SEE YOU THERE. This issue has articles and comments from others who have attended past conferences. Be good to yourself. Start planning now to attend the 1994 conference. On top of all the positive recovery, you will experience beautiful sunny Phoenix. Hope to meet you there. Ila

I LOVE MYSELF AND I DESERVE RECOVERY.



Quest for Serenity  
Reclaiming our True Selves

# 1st Annual COSA National Convention

Phoenix, Arizona May 27 - 30, 1993

**P**erfect accommodations at the newly remodeled Holiday Inn Corporate Center. 2532 W. Peoria Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85029. There is also a special room rate of \$42 per night for up to four persons per room. For reservations call 602/943- 2341, ask for the "Out of the Ashes" group rate.

**H**osted by the Phoenix Metro COSA Intergroup and held at the same time and place as the 7th Annual SAA National Convention.

**O**pen to all looking for fun, sun and recovery. Enjoy Workshops, Speakers and Fellowship. National Service Organization Delegates and Alternates are encouraged to attend.

**E**xpenses included in the registration fee are indicated below (register early to receive the "early bird" discount!) Scholarships are available based on need, see the other side for details.

**N**eed Registration Form returned by April 1, 1994 to get the "Early Bird" rates. You will receive transportation details with your confirmation of registration.

**I**nterested Speakers or Workshop Presenters please complete and return a "Request for Speakers and Presenters" form before February 1, 1994. Contact your local intergroup for a copy of the "Request for Speakers and Presenters" form.

**X**ceptional weekend for all.

Your registration fee includes a Pot Luck Dinner on Friday night; the Saturday Buffet Lunch, Saturday Night Banquet, Dance and/or Movies; the Sunday Skit and Ice Cream Social and the Monday Brunch. You are also welcome to attend all General Sessions, Workshops, Speaker Meetings, Meditations, the Newcomers Orientation, the Midnight Candlelight Meetings and all Recreational Activities.

## REGISTRATION FORM

(Please detach and return with your Convention Registration Fee - Thanks)

Name (Please Print) _____	<b>Conference Fees</b>	<b>Before April 1</b>	<b>April 1 May 1</b>	<b>After May 1</b>	<b>Amount Due</b>
Name (As you want it on your NAME TAG) _____	Full Conference	\$65	\$75	\$85	_____
Address _____	Saturday Only	30	35	45	_____
City/State/Zip _____	Sunday Only	30	35	45	_____
I want to participate: <input type="checkbox"/> As a speaker (Complete Speaker Request Form)	Monday Only	15	15	15	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mini First Step (Complete Speaker Request Form) <input type="checkbox"/> Regional Caucus	Scholarship Donation				\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Newcomer Orientation <input type="checkbox"/> Meditation Leader AM/PM (Send Info)	Total Amount Enclosed				\$ _____
Please check affiliation <input type="checkbox"/> COSA <input type="checkbox"/> SAA					

Please mail one form per person - xeroxed copies are acceptable. Make checks payable to "COSA Convention" and mail your check and this Registration Form to:

COSA Convention - % Pam T  
4257 North 17th Avenue  
Phoenix, AZ 85015

# Tentative Agenda

## FRIDAY, MAY 27

Registration is the first order of a day filled with Delegate Meetings, A General Session, A Meditative Interlude\* and a host of recreational activities. Lunch is on your own in the hotel or in Metro Center, a nearby Mega Shopping Center. Dinner is a Pot-luck, hosted by the Metro Phoenix COSA and SAA Intergroups in the hospitality suite. After-dinner activities include a speaker Meeting for non-delegates followed by Story Time.

## SATURDAY, MAY 28

Open Registration will coincide with a Daily Meditation\* and a Newcomer Orientation. Workshops, Regional Caucuses, the General Session, Recreation Time, a Buffet Lunch, the Banquet, Speakers, Dancing, Movies, and a Midnight Candlelight Meeting fill-out the Agenda for the day... WHEW!

## SUNDAY, MAY 29

Morning Meditation\* will start the day, followed by more recreation time. Multiple workshops will be conducted throughout the day concluding with dinner (on your own.) In the evening you can enjoy a skit, "The Shame Of It All," followed by process groups to debrief the presentation. Other activities include an Ice Cream Social, a Talent Show and the traditional Candlelight Meeting.

## MONDAY, MAY 30

We will begin with our Morning Meditation\* and move to the "Quest for Serenity... Reclaiming Our True Selves" re-entry workshop followed by a Brunch with speakers. A Closing Ceremony will end this incredible weekend.

\*Bring your favorite Meditation Book.

*Out of the Ashes*



*Into the Light!*

SAA will hold their 7th Annual Convention concurrently with the COSA Convention. Many of the general activities including meals, General Sessions, Meditations, etc will be joint activities. For more information on the SAA Convention, call Mike O'D. at 602/863-3006.

Delta Airlines is offering discounted fares to Phoenix for the Convention. For information and to make reservations, call Delta at 1-800-241-6760, and ask for File Number XV0390. Delta's office is open between 7:30 AM and 11:00 PM - Monday through Friday; and between 8:30 AM and 11:00 PM on Saturday and Sunday. Happy Trails to you.

### SCHOLARSHIP INFORMATION

Scholarship assistance will be given on a first come- first served basis with preference given to group delegates. The Scholarships are available to help cover the costs of the conference fee only, not for hotel or transportation costs.

- I need financial assistance to attend this convention.
- I have asked my local group for assistance.
- My local group will be able to help me with \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- My unmet needs are \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_ Registration \_\_\_\_\_

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Amt of Check \_\_\_\_\_ Scholarship Amount \_\_\_\_\_

Deposit # \_\_\_\_\_ Awarded \_\_\_\_\_