

BALANCE

Issue #12

DECEMBER 1994

TOPIC

STEP TWELVE:

"Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to codependents, and to practice these principles in all our day to day living."

The perfect time of year to be giving a gift back. We received the gift of recovery. Step 12 tells us to give it away.

The saying, "You Can't Keep It If You Don't Give It Away", applies to step 12.

Step 12.... We received the gift. Now we give it away. Each time we do, we receive so much. Our recovery will grow.

This season is a special time to give someone the gift of recovery.

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COME HOME TO YOURSELF

When gone so far,

My journey came clear

I was walking to run



YOUR

COSA

NEWSLETTER

In subconscious fear
 My state of mind
 filled with confusion
 To come home to my self
 In total union.
 Mind, body and spirit
 Divided in time
 Giving over my power
 devastated my mind
 No feeling was truth
 Touch became fear
 Hands to push away

Those that became dear.
 Shattered and broken
 Movable in time
 My spirit, how it beckoned
 To be my guide.
 My mind wants to wander
 It won't keep still
 Feeling emotions breaking,
 My body standing nil
 In coming home to myself
 In union on one
 Mind, body and spirit
 My headings' begun
 Free, loving and joyful
 Playful and fun
 Barriers have broken
 No reason to run.
 "Come Home to Yourself"
 speak softly and clear
 "Come Home to Yourself"
 face your fear
 Now walk your journey
 be safe as you play
 Trust your spirit
 along the way.

Kris A.

2. THOU SHALT NOT VALUE THE GIFTS BY THE COST.

3. THOU SHALT GIVE THYSELF WITH THY GIFTS.

4. THOU SHALT NOT LET SANTA CLAUS TAKE THE PLACE OF CHRIST.

Transform the Holidays

1. Give gifts of gratitude. In addition to or in place of material gifts, write a note describing all the things you appreciate about someone.

2. Give away something you treasure. Instead of buying gifts, give something you already own. Include a note of how it is precious and why you chose to pass it on to this person.

3. Give verbal gifts. Invite a small group of people together and invite each person to receive feedback from everyone else in the form of "What I love about you is..." or "The beauty I see in you is..." Or invite everyone to share their brightest moment from the past year.

4. Give yourself time alone. Every evening for several nights, light a candle, take time to reflect and journal. On the first evening, notice all the love in your life. On the second night, spend the time in gratitude for all you have received and accomplished this year. On the third night, feel excitement and anticipation for all the good things you want to create, experience and receive in the coming year.

5. Skip a party or two if your heart isn't in it.

6. Skip a family event if it feels stifling. Instead, reach out to family members in a different way, perhaps one-on-one or through creating an event of your own.

by Lynn
from a 12-step supplement
&&*&*&*&*&*&*&*&*

journal notes.....
"not exactly prince charming, but a charming husband, who's a prince of a guy.

If ever there was a Cinderella in search of Prince Charming, it was me.

I was full of fantasies and fairy tales until I found out that life is real and many experiences don't have happy endings.

Divorce was harder to deal with than losing my dear father to cancer.

As a codependent who still loves my ex-husband, I didn't have the opportunity to experience group support. I encourage all "unhealthy" marriages in the process of divorce to consider the consequences.

I've been apart from my spouse for almost two years. It hurts not to have him in my life any more. It really hurts.

The conference in Ann Arbor, MI which I will unfortunately attend alone, can save your marriage. I'm told there is "hope"

you just have to keep the faith. God's gift.

Try not to make my mistake. To assume your partner's problem is not one you are similarly involved in yourself. (An equal struggle).

From someone who is living unhappily and regrets my decision to have divorced...

"Keep the faith."

Lisa
&&*&*&*&*&*&*&*&*

Top ten holiday gifts
Hugs to someone who is lonely.

Love to someone who has nothing to give in return.

Patience to someone who is struggling with life.

Freedom to someone who needs to find his own destiny.

Guidance to someone drifting in a sea of anxiety.

Understanding to someone who is confused.

Tolerance to someone who doesn't see things as we do.

Kindness to someone in pain.

Forgiveness to someone we feel has harmed us.

Softness to someone who has not yet removed their hard shell.

from The
Saginaw News.

5. THOU SHALT NOT BURDEN THY SERVANTS OR THE SHOP GIRL, THE MAIL CARRIER OR THE MERCHANT.

6. THOU SHALT NOT NEGLECT THY CHURCH.

Literature Committee Report

The primary goal of the Literature Committee this year is the production of a COSA welcome packet. Presently the committee is sifting through materials sent by COSA groups across the country, eliminating pieces and writing a little a well. (Thanks to all groups that responded to our request!) We are still searching for the origin of some pieces to assure we don't use another's work as part of our own. The COSA welcome packet will be available for approval by the COSA delegation at the 1995 NSO convention.

The Minnesota Intergroup is preparing literature on the 12 Traditions and service work. These pieces are expected to be complete in time for the 1995 convention in Ann Arbor this May. The literary work of the Minnesota Intergroup, both past and present, is greatly appreciated.

The Literature Committee has a subcommittee focusing on the creation of a COSA service manual. Anyone familiar with the Al-anon service manual would be of great benefit to this sub-committee.

I would like to thank the enthusiastic members and volunteers of the committee. }

Jennie N., Gail, Mary Jean B., Jayne B., Steve P., Ruth B.

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7. THOU SHALT NOT NEGLECT THE NEEDY.

## The Eight Principles in relationship to the TWELVE STEPS

1. Honest overcomes dishonesty
  1. We admitted we were powerless over \_\_\_\_\_ that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Hope overcomes despair
  2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Faith overcomes fear
  3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Courage overcomes cowardice
  4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
  5. Admitted to God, ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
  6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
5. Humility overcomes arrogance
  7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
6. Responsibility overcomes irresponsibility
  8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
  9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
  10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
7. Patience overcomes impatience
  11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us the power to carry that out.
8. Charity overcomes selfishness and self-centeredness
  12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This is an adaptation of the TWELVE STEPS; The originals are found on pages 59 and 60 of the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

author unknown

8. THOU SHALT BECOME AS A LITTLE CHILD.

9. THOU SHALT PREPARE THY SOUL FOR CHRISTMAS.

**TO ORDER LITERATURE:**

Write: MINNESOTA COSA

P O BOX 1453, MINNEAPOLIS, MN. 55414

PH: 612 537 8904

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

Orders totaling \$.20 to \$2.00 postage due...\$ .75

Orders totaling \$2.01 to \$9.00 postage due...\$2.00

Orders totaling \$9.01 to \$30.00 postage due...\$3.00

Orders over \$30.00 postage due...\$5.50

Present items available from the above address:

COSA brochure.....\$ .20 each

How To Start A Group...\$2.00

Starting A New Grp. Audio Tape.....#3.50

COSA Stories Vol. I.....\$3.50

COSA Stories Vol. II.....\$3.50

COSA Medallions.....\$3.00 ea. (blank thru 10 years)

COSA Welcome brochure...\$ .20

COSA Laminated cards w/ Serenity Prayer & steps.\$1.

Send contributions to support your NSO-COSA to:

NSO-COSA

9337-B KATY FREEWAY #142

HOUSTON TX 77024

(reference the group your contribution represents)

To subscribe to "BALANCE" send \$12.00 for a one year subscription to:

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**NOTE: THIS IS AN ADDRESS CHANGE FOR SUBSCRIBING FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER. MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO NSO-COSA NOTING THAT IT IS FOR A SUBSCRIPTION FOR "BALANCE".**

**REMEMBER:** It is your newsletter!! "BALANCE" is in need of more stories and other submissions to continue its planned publication schedule. **SEND EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE AND SUBMISSIONS TO: BALANCE**

P O BOX 502, MT MORRIS MI 48458

**SERVICE WORK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Long distance sponsors needed for those in areas where no meetings are available. Only requirement for sponsoring is:

1. Willing to listen
2. Realize the pain & aloneness
3. Maybe some letter writing

Send your name to Communications Committee

P O BOX 14537

Minneapolis, Mn. 55414

Thank you to those who have volunteered to sponsor. More sponsors are needed.

**REMINDER:** NSO needs bids submitted by groups for the 1996 conference. Discuss the idea with your group and submit now for the 1996 conference in your area.

You will find a presenter's form attached to this newsletter. Please detach, copy and distribute throughout your group.

**WE STILL NEED PRESENTER'S FOR THE 1995 CONFERENCE. SHARE YOUR STORY, A TOOL OF RECOVERY THAT WORKS FOR YOU, AN AREA OF YOUR RECOVERY THAT IS SIGNIFICANT TO YOU. OTHERS DO WANT TO HEAR YOUR RECOVERY PROCESS. YOU ARE IMPORTANT. TAKE A MOMENT TO FILL OUT THE ATTACHED PRESENTER'S FORM. PARTICIPATING IN THE CONFERENCE IS A POSITIVE 12TH STEP IN YOUR RECOVERY. YOU WILL RECEIVE MORE THAN YOU GIVE.**

**ALSO ATTACHED FOR THE FIRST TIME IS YOUR REGISTRATION FORM. TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO REGISTER FOR THE 1995 CONFERENCE.**

**GIVE YOURSELF A GIFT THIS YEAR. GIVE YOURSELF THE GIFT OF REGISTERING FOR THE 1995 CONFERENCE. YOUR INNER CHILD DESERVES TO BE #1 ON YOUR GIFT GIVING LIST.**

10. THOU SHALT GIVE THY HEART TO CHRIST AS THE FIRST GIFT.

# GLIMPSES FROM PAST CONFERENCES

## 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

1st Annual National Convention

I would like to thank the Phoenix area SAA and COSA groups for showing me a fellowship and community that filled me with envy and hope.

Up until this conference, my husband (sex addict) and myself (codependent) had very distinct and separate recovery agendas. We longed to feel like a couple, but we didn't feel any intimacy. We did, however, feel like healthy individuals, which was very new and powerful.

The couples workshop, led by Sheri T. and Phil T. of Phoenix is symbolic of a turning point for us. At the onset of this workshop, I had to say, "Hi, I'm Gail, half of this recovering couple." I felt so uncomfortable saying that because I didn't feel like part of a recovering couple at all. Just going through the motions brought me to tears.

During the actual sharing exercise, we were very moved while listening to the other couples in our group. For us, the dam broke ~~less~~ that Saturday afternoon. With our two chairs facing each other, we allowed ourselves to grieve over our loss of connection. We shared the tears and the pain together.

It is very difficult to express in words the gratitude I feel that I was able to be part of this experience. It was hard to leave the safety of that wonderful group of 300 men and women.

It was the first time I felt that gender was irrelevant. I was not a woman feeling uncomfortable to be a woman, any I felt no fear of men. I was just me; an individual with lots of emotions, knowing I had found a safe place to express my feelings.

Thank you Phoenix for sharing your gifts. You have touched me deeply.  
Gail K. Torrance, Ca.

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

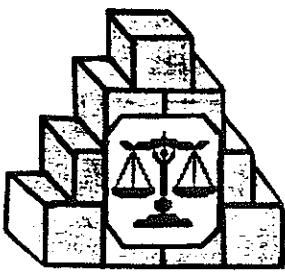
## REGARDING CONVENTION

Thank You so much for doing a workshop on Recovering Couples' Group. I enjoyed doing a small couples' group at the Phoenix Convention. Words can't describe how special it was to be able to face my spouse (addict) and express how I felt and what I was thinking before other couples.

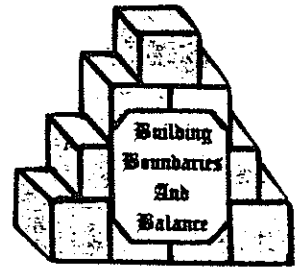
Upon returning to Minneapolis, three other couples and myself & my husband started a couples group in the area.

I am grateful for this past convention. It has unfolded another layer of my recovery through our co-fellowship.

Candy, Mpls.



**2nd Annual COSA National Convention**  
**Ann Arbor, Michigan May 26 - 29, 1995**



Ann Arbor, Michigan is preparing to host the 2nd Annual COSA National Convention, Friday through Monday, May 26, 27, 28 and 29, 1995. The Clarion Hotel, 2900 Jackson Road, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48103, will provide comfortable, modern and reasonably priced accommodations. The "special room rate" is \$45 per night (maximum 4 people per room). Ask for "Willing to Grow" group rate, file number 1083. Reservations should be made by April 23, 1995 for hotel "special room rate". AFTER APRIL 23rd ROOM RATES WILL BE HIGHER. For reservations call 313-665-4444. See OTHER SIDE for NORTHWEST AIRLINES DISCOUNT. More transportation info will be mailed after registration form is received. Scholarships are available based on need (see other side).

**COME JOIN US** in a **RECOVERY** atmosphere, where **WARMTH** abounds and recovery friends come from all over to **SHARE, LEARN and GROW**. Meetings, speakers, workshops, prizes, a meal each day provided, the meditation room, and other **FUN and SAFE** activities will be on the agenda along with NSO meetings to make a memorable event. **COSA literature** will be available.

SAA will hold their 8th Annual Convention at the same time and place and a few activities will be joint. Information about joint activities will be easily obtained. For info on the SAA Convention call Jerry B. - 713-869-4902.

**REGISTRATION FORM**

| Conference fees       | Before April 1 | April 1 - May 1 | After May 1 | Amount Due |
|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|
| Full Conference       | \$60           | \$70            | \$85        | \$ _____   |
| Saturday Only         | \$40           | \$45            | \$50        | _____      |
| Sunday Only           | \$40           | \$45            | \$50        | _____      |
| Monday only           | \$40           | \$40            | \$40        | _____      |
| Scholarship Donation  |                |                 |             | _____      |
| Total Amount Enclosed |                |                 |             | \$ _____   |

**MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO:**  
**"95 CONFERENCE NSO"**

**MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO:**  
**DANA T.**  
**P.O. BOX 502**  
**MT. MORRIS, MICHIGAN**  
**48458**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name (On Name Tag) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Please check affiliation  COSA  SAA  Both  
 Do you want to receive info on future conferences?  Yes  No  
 Are you a Delegate?  What group do you represent as a Delegate? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Are you driving?  Are you arriving by air?

## NORTHWEST AIRLINES Info

We have negotiated discounted air fare with NORTHWEST AIRLINES. To take advantage of these savings call or have your travel agent call the meeting/convention desk at 1-800-328-1111 between 7 A.M. and 7 P.M. Central time, Monday through Friday. Please refer to worldfile code - NC25S when calling, in order to receive this discount.

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## Convention Scholarship Policy

Convention scholarship funds will be dispersed in the following order.

1. Delegates who have not received a scholarship before.
2. Delegates who have received a scholarship before.
3. Out-of-state attendees who have not had a scholarship before.
4. Out-of-state attendees who have received a scholarship before.
5. In-state attendees who have not received a scholarship before.
6. In-state attendees who have received a scholarship before.

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## Scholarship Information

Scholarship assistance will be given on a first come, first served basis with preference to group delegates. The scholarships are available to help cover costs of the conference fees only, not for hotel or transportation costs. Scholarship recipients will work 2 hours per day during the Conference.

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- \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_  
Amount of check \_\_\_\_\_  
Check number \_\_\_\_\_  
Scholarship amount \_\_\_\_\_