

Keep Coming Back It's Working

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BALANCE

"Balance" is a Monthly
Newsletter.

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HOUSTON, TEXAS 77024

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STEP TWELVE

STEP TWELVE: *"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 day to day living".*

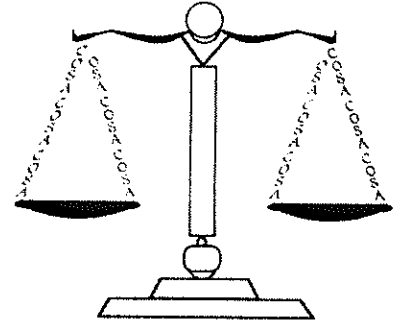
This is the perfect time of the year to be working on Step Twelve. Step Twelve is about sharing. Step Twelve is about giving. Step Twelve is about receiving.

SHARING: After I had the awakening and began to realize what the steps were really doing for me, I could see how important it was to carry my message to others. It felt scary. I wondered if I would ever be ready. I trusted my Higher Power would guide me to the perfect time.

GIVING: Early in recovery, my husband purchased a T-shirt with the saying "you can't keep it if you don't give it away." If I want to keep my program, if I want to keep my recovery solid, I need to give. I give this program by sharing my story of hope, hope that blossomed out of hopelessness.

RECEIVING: For me, I have never shared or given, when I didn't receive. It is not sometimes, it is always, always I receive more than I ever give.

This program still amazes me. It is the only concept I have experienced where I give and go away refueled, filled. Other times I have given and actually felt the strength, the hope, the



energy leaving me. I left empty. In my COSA program, I share, I give, I receive.

In the beginning, I wondered if I would ever be ready to give. My Higher Power did guide me to those times when I needed to give. The first time I shared my twelfth step, I came away with new family-of-origin insights. The second time I shared my twelfth step, a door opened for me to begin a deeper level of recovery work with one of my children. That is how Twelve Step work has been for me. It can be the same for you. This program does work, IF I work it.

Ila D.

FALL RETREAT '95 EXPERIENCED

Hey! I just came back from the Fall 1995 COSA/SAA Retreat in Livingston, Texas. Where I'm from it doesn't get very cold very often, but this weekend it did get cold!!!!!! We bundled up using all the clothes we brought and borrowed (some of us even wore our pajamas as an extra layer).

[continued on page 2]

RETREAT '95

The retreat theme this year was Body/Mind. We visually discovered a lot of "baggage" that we carry around with us, we played kazoos and let ourselves have fun, we took nature walks and listened to a couple share how they are using their recovery in their relationship. We built fires outside and sang a million songs and learned how hard the Twelve Steps are when using them to tie a monkey fist knot. We went up to "the hill" and learned about the stars and constellations and some of us got lucky and saw meteors, and we laid on our mats and listened to soothing voices tell stories.

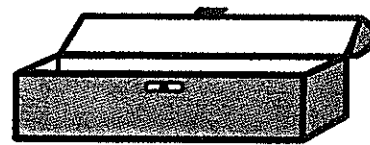
I came away committed to my recovery and my serenity. I am so grateful to have the retreat to go to and have the opportunity for fellowship with my recovery community.

Robyn M.

Have you been to a COSA retreat or activity that you would like to talk about? Please write down your thoughts and experiences and drop it in the mail to BALANCE (see back for address). We sure would like to hear from you and it gives others the opportunity to hear about what's going on in recovery throughout the world. If your recovery group is sponsoring a retreat or workshop please let us know and we'll be glad to get the word out.

NEED SOME NEW INSPIRATION?

Look in our toolbox for more tools!!



REST

I feel inadequacy and shame creep up on me when I am feeling tired. The inadequacy and shame are accentuated when I see everyone around me going and doing and I don't ever catch up. Thus, one of the hardest decisions I can make is giving myself permission to rest.

There was a time when I went to sleep in order to deal with pain and depression. I did this for many months and it did not take long for my body to lose its strength. As a result of this neglect to my physical body, I am sometimes confused about whether it is really time to rest. When is rest a needed retreat for my mind? When is it an attempt to put off the next action I must take? When is rest something I must have because my physical body can no longer go on?

I have made a lifelong commitment to having my feelings (including and especially those I never had in the past). Healing from digging up old hurts in the past takes time, effort, and energy. Dealing with relatives, moving through the holidays, investing in my relationships, taking time for myself, and connecting with my Higher Power, also takes time, effort, and energy.

Sometimes rest means deserting the confusion, closing my eyes, breathing, making a support call, or petting my cat. Amazingly, I have felt completely rested after a really good cry. Sometimes rest even means lying down, closing my eyes and sleeping for 30 minutes or the whole night.

I give myself permission to rest.

Lisa Mc.

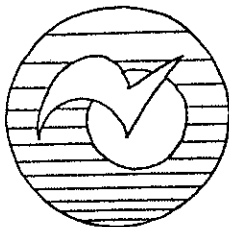
Freedom to Fly '96

Minneapolis here we come!

The planning committee of the 3rd Annual COSA *Freedom to Fly* convention is seeking COSA speakers and presenters. The mail-in form for those who are considering presenting at the convention is included on Page 4.

Anyone interested in presenting at the Minneapolis, Minnesota convention can fill out the form. There are a few general guidelines:

- (1) at least a year in the program
- (2) deadline is February 15, 1996



In The Future...

Look for registration forms to attend the Freedom to Fly Convention in future issues of the "BALANCE" newsletter.

Pen Pals + Service Work = Me ☺

Pen Pals are Needed

The communications committee is again asking for volunteers who wish to do service work by writing to someone who is in an area without meetings. If you are interested in being a long distance pen pal, please write to:

P.O. Box 502
Mt. Morris, Michigan 48458.

Please consider this service work. I remember how lonely I felt before I had group support. An occasional letter or card brings so much support and hope to those with no support network. Please announce this need for service work at your meetings.

Thank you,

Ila D. and Dana

TO ORDER LITERATURE:

Write: COSA LITERATURE
P O BOX 502
MT MORRIS, MI 48458

COSA Brochure.....\$0.20
COSA Welcome Brochure...\$0.20
How To Start A Group.....\$2.00
COSA Stories Vol. I.....\$3.50
COSA Stories Vol. II.....\$3.50

COSA Medallions.....\$3.00 ea. (blank, 6 mos., 1-15 years)
COSA Laminated cards w/ Serenity Prayer & steps....\$1.00

Starting A New Grp. Audio Tape.....\$5.00
1995 Conference Audio Tapes.....\$6.00

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

Orders totaling \$.20 to \$2.00	add postage...\$.75
Orders totaling \$2.01 to \$9.00	add postage...\$2.00
Orders totaling \$9.01 to \$30.00	add postage...\$3.00
Orders over \$30.00	add postage...\$5.50



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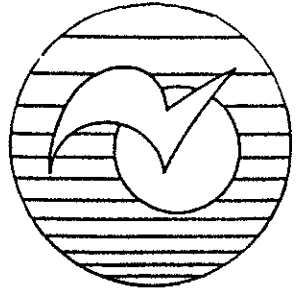
SHARINGS FROM YOU CONTINUE THE PURPOSE OF THIS NEWSLETTER AS A COMMUNICATION LINK TO STRENGTHEN AND CONNECT COSA SUPPORT GROUPS AND ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO ARE STILL STRUGGLING ALONE.

Share with other readers about your new meetings, retreats, social activities, meeting experiences, life experiences.

3RD ANNUAL COSAINSO CONVENTION

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA MAY 24-27, 1996

Freedom to Fly



Request for speakers and presenters

The Freedom to Fly 1996 Convention Committee is currently seeking volunteers and recommendations for presenters, panel participants and speakers. We welcome new and past presenters. We suggest that the presenter have a year in the fellowship as well as the support of a sponsor or group. Proposals should be sent to the program committee before February 15, 1996.

Name(s) of presenters _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

Is it OK to leave a message at home? _____ At work? _____

(If you do not wish to be contacted by phone, please indicate and we will communicate by mail. All communication will be handled discreetly. In responding to communications, please do the same.)

_____ I am willing to be a keynote speaker

_____ I am willing to tell my story

_____ I am willing to be a part of a panel

_____ I am nominating someone else

_____ I am willing present a workshop

_____ I am willing to be taped

_____ I would be willing to participate in a talent show (COSA only _____ With SAA _____)

If yes, give a brief description of your talent _____

ABOUT YOUR PRESENTATION...

Subject _____

Title of Presentation _____

Session will be open to: _____ All _____ Women _____ Men _____ COSA _____ SAA

Name of Sponsor or Group endorsing presentation _____

Brief Description of Presentation _____

Helpful information to know about presenter/presentation _____

Special equipment or set-up needed _____

(The convention committee is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items)

Please reproduce and distribute this form to anyone you think might be interested and any group that does not receive the COSA Newsletter **BALANCE**.

Send reply to :

COSA (Attention: Megan)

P.O. Box 14537

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415