



Love is a Feeling; Love is a Decision

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COME TO MINNEAPOLIS FOR THE COSA CONVENTION '96

Does your recovery program need a lift? Would it feel wonderful to be surrounded by people who understand and share your issues? Would you like to hear from some of the founders of COSA with 15 years of recovery? How about playing and having some fun in a safe recovery environment?

If this sounds good then the Freedom to Fly convention is for you. Memorial Day weekend Friday May 24-27, 1996 will be an opportunity to join with COSA members from around the country and around the world.

Freedom to Fly Minneapolis, Minnesota

The COSA convention is being held at the same time and location as the SAA convention. Some of the workshops will be open to everyone and others will be COSA only. The workshops will be clearly identified: **COSA/SAA** or **COSA** only. Some of the large group activities (entertainment, speakers (Pat C.), and meals) will be held with SAA. COSA will have a Marathon Room which is a combination safe room, COSA meeting room, and COSA socializing room. COSA "safe people" will be wearing ribbons and can act as temporary sponsors during the convention.

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BALANCE

*"Balance" is a Monthly
Newsletter.*

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News from the FREEDOM TO FLY Convention Program Committee

The convention committee is inviting you to participate in the convention by:

- a) presenting a workshop
- b) telling your story
- c) being a panel participant
- d) volunteering with a friend to do any of the above

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COME TO THE CONVENTION *[cont'd from page 1]*

Throughout this weekend we can experience:

- O WORKSHOPS ON A VARIETY OF RECOVERY TOPICS; SEXUALITY, CO-DEPENDENCY, COUPLESHP AND MORE
- O WORKING ON OUR ISSUES
- O RECEIVING SUPPORT FROM OTHERS
- O VALIDATION AND HOPE FROM OTHERS EXPERIENCES
- O HAVING FUN
- O LISTENING TO SPEAKERS
- O A WALK/RUN ALONG THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER
- O A PICNIC IN THE PARK
- O MUSEUMS AND GARDENS
- O TOGETHERNESS

Come on Friday and represent your meeting in business decisions that affect COSA.

See the enclosed registration form for details on costs, agenda, and accommodations. Registering before April 1, 1996 insures the best rates.

There are scholarships available from the convention committee for help with registration costs. Other resources for scholarships are local meetings and intergroup.

The Convention Committee

(Please see Insert for Conference Registration Form)

News from the FREEDOM TO FLY: Request for Speakers and Presenters

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Developing Healthy Sexuality in Recovery

Parenting in a Sexually Addicted Family

What Is Vigorous Honesty - with Ourselves and Our Partners?

Recovering with Help from Internet Support Groups

These are just a few of the topic ideas to be explored at the 1996 Freedom to Fly convention in Minneapolis over the Memorial Day weekend. This gathering offers an opportunity for COSA's nationally & internationally to share our experience, strength and hope with each other.

We are looking *only* within the COSA membership for speakers and presenters.

The final date for submitting presenter proposals is being extended to 3/15/96 so think about it - but don't wait too long! As one member recently put it, "whenever I do service work, I get back more than I give." Please consider this contribution of service work to our COSA community. Thank you.

The Program Committee

(Please see back page for Speakers and Presenters Form)

Here's what participants have said about past conventions:

"I loved the conference - the high energy, variety of workshops, feeling safe, enhancing my recovery and warm atmosphere."

"At first I was scared to be in the same place as SAA but I ended up feeling safe and I'm glad I came."

"Most everything was great. The topics were useful, relevant & varied."

"The couples in recovery workshop was just what we needed. We had been looking for a model for couples work for a long time."

"The workshops were helpful especially on sponsorship & group format."

"I like that both COSA SAA programs were on the agenda. Experiencing yoga was neat."

"I will probably never hear the person who abused me admit that he did it. But when I heard a recovering person take responsibility and feel remorse for abusing someone else it had a huge healing impact for me. I was really nice that there were safe people and places I could go to afterward to process the feelings. I'm grateful."

"I liked meeting and hearing the people from all over the country and the world."

1995 Fall Retreat Experienced

I would like to share about my first ever Fall SAA/COSA Retreat in Indianapolis, Indiana.

It usually is fairly comfortable weather in October in Indy but that weekend took a dive in temperature and it was very cold!

The theme of the retreat was the *THREE CIRCLES OF RECOVERY*. We used the Three Circles of Sobriety (as a model) and used the tools that have worked in our own recoveries instead. We built an outside fire (my very first campfire), roasted hot dogs and marshmallows, told what and how our stuffed animals had become important to us, we played games, we took long walks, we stayed awake late sharing with each other, we laughed, we had fun and we worked on our own recovery. We had warm wonderful meals also.

I came away feeling centered and connected. I was grateful that the retreat had been planned and that I was able to attend. I am now looking forward to my second retreat.

Thank-you for a chance to share my growth with you.

Sandra F.

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 below 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.

STEP TWO

"We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to Sanity"

As I look at Step Two, I reflect on the Higher Power beliefs that I brought to my recovery process. God was a punishing person. There was only one way for me to obtain approval and recognition from God (my Higher Power). That was to perform for people, a church, or a group to get approval that I thought was coming from God. My God stuff only happened at specific times, during a church service, a special prayer time, or other specific scheduled times. That was what I brought into my recovery relationship with God.

As I progress in recovery, I have come to believe in a power greater than myself. That power is with me all the time, not just when I am in a certain building, or at a scheduled meeting or event. Step Two has taught me a new constant relationship with my Higher Power. I need that constant relationship. I need that security of constant Higher Power support to restore myself to sanity.

As I look at the sanity part of this step, I again remember that Step Two does say it will restore me to sanity. It doesn't say restore me, if I happen to be insane. The step makes no exceptions. I was insane. I was insane in my beliefs about religion, God, and approval by works and performance. Step Two has given me my power. It has given me my serenity. Step Two is my beginning of letting go. It is my preparation for Step Three.

I turn my life over to a power greater than myself. That feels so caring for me. In my family of origin, I never felt that nurturing. There was no caring person that I felt safe to turn my life over to. Step Two gives me nurturing and hope.

Ala M.

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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HOUSTON, TX 77024

3RD ANNUAL COSA/NSO 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 March 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