



BALANCE



November 2001

Step 11

"Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out."

Since the tragedy of September 11th, I have practiced this step more yet felt it less. That may not make since yet that is the way it has been. In one meditation book that I read daily, one of the sentences in a step eleven meditation reads, "God never, never asks us to do anything He would not equip us to do". When I step away from God, I find that sentence difficult to take in. When I practice step eleven with a positive focus, I find that sentence comforting. All I have to do is trust. Trust, a difficult word for my codependency.

I know I moved away from God when my husband was diagnosed with ALS. It has been a long journey back to praying and LISTENING. I wanted to pray, but in a ranting way. I can't believe you did this. How much more do you want me to go through? [I did ask that question, but I never listened for His answer.] It has been a long, slow experience back to God. I am at a place where I believe only good will also come from this experience. As I come to that place, I realize that seeking through prayer, meditating and listening has improved my contact with God even though I was kicking and screaming through a large part of the process.

As for the September 11th tragedy, I do see the good that has come from the tragedy. Although I find myself fragmented and losing focus because of the constant terrifying news, I still see the good. As I journal, I can see the value of step eleven. I need step eleven to walk my path with focus. Even when I move away from God, I need step eleven to bring me back to my step work focus. As I look at the good that has come from the September 11th tragedy, I am also able to realize the good that has come from my husband's diagnosis. I am personally at a much deeper level of my recovery. Even though getting to that level has been extremely, I mean extremely painful.

Today, I will continue to trust step eleven. Even when I know I have moved from God, I still know where He is. He doesn't move from me. I can always find Him, if I seek & listen.

lla

Step 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 areas of our lives."

In a nutshell [to me] step twelve means: "I can't keep it if I don't give it away". I can't grow in the program and in my life's journey if I refuse to share my recovery through service work. I can't make amends if I continue to do the same behavior over and over. For me, an amends isn't an amends unless I earnestly attempt to stop the behavior that the amends was about.

I have had a spiritual awakening. On occasion, I still move away from God, however I have had the spiritual awakening. I know he is there. I know he hasn't moved. I just have to seek Him. My spiritual awakening has shown me I don't have to be in church to be spiritual. Every part of carrying the message in this step is spiritual activity.

I am not care taking as I practice this step. I am simply walking my path. If I walk my path by sharing my recovery work, the ways I've changed will be apparent to others. I will be carrying the message. The most important and loving way I can help others is by helping myself.

Today, I will continue to focus on my needs. As I change and grow, I will be sharing my step twelve journey.

lla

COSA Phone Meeting

I wonder if there are any other members among us who would like to have a COSA phone meeting once a week, since some of us live in areas where there are no 12f groups. Please think about it and let me know. The person who set up [not us] the couples' recovery group phone meeting might be able to help us with the phone bridge arrangements. Thanks.

Yours in recovery, K.C., of Morgantown, WV.

If you are interested in Phone meeting group, write P O BOX 14537, Minneapolis, MN, 55414, Attn, phone meeting. Your request will be forwarded to KC

I have been out of circulation for some time as, I have been working through some of my journey. I have been married for 26 years & have been together with my Husband for 29. Three before we were married. This year I filled for Divorce after a long time of recovering from several issues that arose through my life (before) my relationship with (my Husband) I then took the last 10 years to approach the marriage. I came to see my self differently as I walked the journey through the victim stage.

At the age of 12, I was molested by a (brother -in-law). This brought deception and the break down of my own sexuality. Set up for all possibilities, I came to meet my second perpetrator, at the age of 19. I married him at 21. The first nineteen years of the marriage I felt & wanted to trust, so I did. I found that the trust was slowly changing from trusting him to trusting me. Trusting how I felt, what I saw, what I heard and more deeply my higher power. My grieving about the covert and the overt incest began far before I realized the power it had over the influence of my decisions, before I met my partner and after.

I married an Alcoholic and Sex Addict. I was sure of one, but the sex addict was not some thing that I knew existed. Only felt uncomfortable blaming my self at times, for the guilt & shame I internalized as a child. Today I recognize the difference to what is mine to keep and make the difference & what to give away. What to hold on to & what to let go.

The toxic relationship played a part in my life. Bringing me closer to my power source. It aloud me to grow by choice. Learning more about me, teaching me that truth (is) the reality I had sought after. Holding on to the fear & rejection of the abnormal. I began to work towards making the abnormal /normal. I was not sure where I fit into the theme of this reality. Continuing to struggle through the denial I was being taught that, Holding on was not what I was doing, but letting go of what was mine to gain. I lost the identity of self-needs & desires to be who GOD intended me to be. Making the disease my existence.

Last year, (Jan. 2000-2001). I experienced anger that had been a long time coming. I learned that the fear of being angry was keeping me in a non-safe, but safe place to be. I was angry at the deception, lies & deceit that were in my life. Finding out I was the only one that was going to stop letting it in. I then turned around & saw, accepted what truth there was left. It was not on my own I was able to this, but there I saw a spiritual beginning of a new existence. Choices and decisions to make. I was learning a new way to let go & let in.

Today I do not regret this, for this played a spiritual part in my journey. Bringing me closer to the spiritual part of my being. Trusting not all of what I saw but that I did not see. Trusting what I did not feel and seeing a different side of my journey. Today I have closure on parts of the life that brought pain and despair. Lessons that I learned from, tools that were gained. I do not regret the years I spent with an addict. I felt that I benefited from my disease as well as his disease. He may have been the vehicle that drove me, but I know now that GOD was doing the driving. I feel peaceful to move on, excited to know that newness is there for me to capture. The new chapter in my journey and the experience to live it.

Thank-you, To all who know my story & who have been there for me all the way. You're still there in spirit every day. Today is a new day. I still need your prayers & support. Kris R.

"Starting A New Group Experience"

The end of last year I was trying to locate a group for myself and after several weeks of looking on the web, calling local therapists and talking with friends and other groups discovered to my disappointment that there were absolutely zero groups available for the partner of the sex addict. I decided to contact National to inquire about the possibility of starting a new group in the Tampa Bay area. I had actively participated and volunteered with Co-Dependents Anonymous for the past 10 years so I figured I had enough experience to take on this endeavor.

National sent me a packet of information and I stewed about the possibility for several weeks. I was feeling scared and "less than" about the future. Finally, I just got sick and tired of being sick and tired and decided to just "Go For It". I talked via email with a representative from National several times who in turn put me in contact with another representative who also had started a group in Florida. Their support was so crucial and uplifting. They had much to offer by means of personal experience, strength and hope.

I talked with my own therapist and another friend who was also a therapist about the possibility of using their office to begin with. They were gracious enough to agree to allow me to use one of their vacant offices free of charge. I purchased a pager and mailed away for a minimal amount of cosa literature to start with. I also received a money donation as well as a literature donation from two other groups and was truly moved by their support.

I received an email from one of my National contacts that had been contacted by a local gal who was interested in attending. I was THRILLED and contacted her to give her information on the group. She came and we shared for almost 2 hours that night!!! We met every week and immediately began working the steps using a workbook. That was April 26, 2001.

I then emailed our local SA and SLAA groups with the New Cosa group information to share. My therapist and my friend also starting giving out the group information and within a couple weeks I received my first page regarding the group. I was scared but totally excited. We were now up to a total of 3 of us and really felt like a "group". I proceeded with creating a flyer to announce the start up of the new "Women's Cosa Group" and asked the two members if they might ask their partner's to take them to their men's groups.

WELL, as of this week we are now up to 11 members and really working the Steps. It has been more rewarding than I could have dreamed. We have some members who have had no prior 12 Step experience and some who have. We even have a couple members who used to attend a cosa group from years past that had dissolved and they are excited to have the support of the 12 Steps back..... I am positive that we will continue to grow, as the demand is immense.

Thanks for letting me share. Karen T. - The "Hope Group" of Tampa Bay

“SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES”
“Service Is A Primary Recovery Tool”

Are you looking for a way to be of service to COSA and carry the message of recovery? Examine your choices and decide which service fits you.

Literature

The Literature Committee needs you! We are looking for COSA members with a little time to give and the willingness to share the experience, strength and hope they have gained in COSA. If you would like to contribute to COSA Literature by writing or editing existing texts, please contact one or both of the Literature Committee Co-Chairs:

Lisa - Edjacobsdesign@mindspring.com or Tracy - tracy@mail.happens.com or call Tracy at (541) 338-4457.

(Please note: The Literature Committee currently communicates through email. Thank you so much! Tracy

Telephone Volunteer

The COSA National Phone line is in need of volunteers. These people obtain messages left by newcomers and return their calls, telling them about meetings and offering other information. All information is provided for you to pass on to those you contact. Money is available to reimburse long-distance calls.

Requirements: COSA suggests that phone volunteers have one year of attending COSA meetings and are currently working a COSA program.

Long Distance Sponsors

Many newcomers are in areas where there are no meetings. Sponsors are desperately needed to provide support by email, phone or letter writings. Many of these newcomers only need to talk a few times, although some are looking for longer-term support. If you are ready to benefit from this service work, please take the risk and give it a try.

Translating

COSA en Español - (COSA in Spanish)

A COSA volunteer is asking for your help in translating some COSA materials into Spanish. Do you know any COSA members who are fluent in Spanish? Please ask your group if anyone would like to help translate. Or better yet, has your group translated anything? We've had a few requests for Spanish materials in the past, and could potentially carry the message to many more people if they could see what our fellowship is all about.

This project will focus on the Steps, Traditions, and COSA's brochure. A very rough draft will soon be available; we need volunteers to review the translation and provide feedback so we can get it right.

The finished items will be posted on the website so Spanish-speaking people can use them. The National Service Organization isn't prepared to print and sell such materials yet, but providing something in Spanish on the Internet would be a starting place. Please have interested volunteer's call, write or e-mail the NSO (see the contact information on the last page). Thanks!

Tradition Seven: "Every COSA group ought to be fully self-supporting declining outside contributions:

Oakland, CA.- Individual...\$10.00	Corpus Christi, TX- Grp. \$40.00	Groverville, NJ.- Individual..\$2.50	Rapid City, SD.- Individual...\$20.00
Apple Valley, MN- Grp.. \$3.60	Galveston, TX- Individual..\$40.00	Lansing, MI.- Individual...\$5.00	
Kirkwood, MO.- Grp..\$20.00	Lafitte, LA-Grp.. \$5.00	Tucson, AZ.Freedom to Fly- Grp..\$50.00	
Individuals fr. St. Paul East, MN. Mon. night Grp..\$50.00	Mesa, AZ.-Individual..\$20.00	Birch Run, MI.- Individual..\$50.00	St Paul,MN Thurs. Grp. \$15.00
Las Vegas, NV-Grp-\$14.00	Pensacola, FL-Hopefulnow Grp. \$9.00	Thank you!!!! Your support is the necessary link that continues the life of our recovery on a National Level. As we each donate and step forward with support, the entire organization strengthens and moves forward. Each dollar represents one way of stopping the cycle of codependency for our families and friends. We are committed to using the dollars as wisely as possible.	
Mendota Heights, MN- Grp..\$25.00	Ann Arbor, MI.- Individual..\$50.00		Lafitte, LA.- Individual..\$25.00
Minnetonka, MN- Grp..\$10.00	Indianapolis, IN.- individual..\$10.00		
Los Angeles,CA-Grp..\$40.00	Individuals fr.Woodbury, MN.. Grp..\$50.00		
Individuals fr.Desert Flowers Grp.WI...\$65.00	Maryland Heights, MO.- Individual..\$20.00		
Desert Flowers Grp. WI..\$30.00	Pueblo, CO.- Individual..\$20.00		
Individuals fr. Costa Mesa, CA Grp. \$100.00	Edina, MN.- Individual..\$20.00		
Northville, MI. Individual..\$40.00	Lafayette, LA.-First Things First Grp...\$60.00		
Granite Bay, CA.- Grp. \$100.00	Individuals fr. Cosa of Brevard, FL...\$110.00		

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We're On The Move!!

Last month you received a suggested letter to mail to therapists for doing outreach. If you decide to do a mailing, you may want to update the contact information on the back of your literature. Our literature will be updated as we run out of current supply.

Enclosed is a template with the updated information. I copy these on Avery labels, number 5160.

The COSA-NSO web site on the Internet is moving. Please update your links and e-mail address

Web site: www.cosa-recovery.org [replaces www.shore.net/~cosa]

E-mail: Info@cosa-recovery.org [replaces cosa@shore.net]

The old addresses will be discontinued at the end of January.

We need volunteers to help spread this message on-line.

The task is:

-find other web sites that have old information about COSA.

-write to their webmasters and ask them to update their sites.

-also ask them to use the correct snail-mail address and phone number for the NSO[since many sites have old information].

If you are willing to help, please contact Ruth at willing@netpath.net

WELCOME!!!!WELCOME!!!!!!WELCOME!!!!

South Bend, IN.

Spring, TX

We WELCOME you as you begin your journey with your new group. You are continuing the recovery process. You are practicing the 12th step. Your area is fortunate to have this beautiful tool of recovery. As your National Service Organization, we are here to support you. Please contact us with your needs and suggestions.

My Mistake!!!!!!

I apologize for an error in the last issue. The Serenity Grp, was listed as Hitchcock, TX. That group meets in Galveston, TX, not Hitchcock. I apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused

To Contact COSA-NSO:
Write: NSO-COSA,
P O BOX 14537,
MINNEAPOLIS, MN,
55414

NATIONAL COSA
PHONE LINE:
763-537-6904
&&&

To Subscribe:
Send \$12.00 to:

BALANCE
NSO-COSA
P O BOX 14537
MINNEAPOLIS
MN 55414

Make checks
payable to:
NSO-COSA
Please specify
"For Balance
Subscription"
On your check.

&&&
UPCOMING EVENTS
MARK YOUR
CALENDAR

Clarkston, MI. Retreat
4/19/02 thru 4/21/02
Topic: "Control"
Write: COSA Retreat
P.O.BOX 502
Mt. Morris MI 48458

National Convention
May 4th-27th
See attached
flyer... more details in
future issues!!!

Holding on:
Holds false power.
Holding on:
shuts one down.
Holding on:
Shows anger &
unforgiveness.
Holding on:
Keeps them from
loving themselves
Holding on:
Keeps them from
loving another.

Holding on:
Brings in emotional pain.
Holding on: Sets the
stage for aggression.
Holding on:
Sets one up in
their defenses.
Holding on:
Justifies the. (anger,
hurt and emotional pain)
Holding on:
Builds the foundation
for narcissistic behavior.
Holding on:
Keeps any wisdom to
enter the circle
of issue's at hand.
Holding on:
Destroys the balance
in communication.
Letting go
is to forgive
Letting go:
is going forward.
Letting go
is giving them back
to themselves.
Letting go:
is taking back what
is yours to live with.
Letting go:
is the freedom of
thought & feelings
Letting go:
is opening up to newness
Letting go:
is the gift you
give your self

Letting go:
Allows one to heal.
Letting go:
Brings you back to
your self.
Letting go:
Takes one to new
acceptance.
Letting go:
Brings peace
Letting go:
Breaks the barrier
of confusion.
Letting go:
Turns lies into truth.
Letting go:
Cuts through the
denial to reality
Kns R.