



NEWSLETTER OF THE INTERNATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION OF COSA

## Holiday Issue November-December 2008

These Wishes, Gifts and Gratitude's have become a custom for the last issue of the Balance. Peace, The Balance Team



### Holiday Wishes from ISO of COSA Board Members

**May the new year bring each of us peace and serenity.**

**Joey Z, Chair**

**My wish for all of those suffering would be to experience the transformation COSA offers; peace, serenity, unconditional love, a defined inner voice, and a direct connection to a Higher Power.**

**Suzanne D., Vice Chair**

**I wish the "Promises" of the program for all our COSAs and for those who still suffer. Let us continue to gift all with support, love, and hope.**

**Jackie, Secretary**

**I am grateful for the hope that this recovery program gives.**

**Margie S., Treasurer.**

**I wish everyone to find joy, peace and happiness within themselves.**

**Elaine K., Chair of the Communications Committee**

**I am so Grateful for our COSA fellowship. I wish everyone Peace, Serenity, and Love.**

**Lindy T. East Bay, California, Chair of the Literature Committee**

**As the year comes to a close, my wish for the COSA fellowship is that we each begin our own recovery holiday traditions; ones that support our sobriety and allow our presence to be the present we give to ourselves, our friends, our families of origin and/or our families of choice.**

**Kerry M., Chair, Convention Committee**

**I wish that all COSAs stay until the miracle happens! For me service work and the growth that it brings has been indispensable to the miracle happening. Thank you COSA!**

**Luralisa, Public Information Committee**

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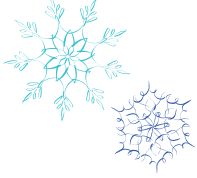
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# Helping reach those still suffering.

## THANK YOU!

### 7th Traditions Individuals

Anonymous	\$1,000.00
Oakland, CA	\$ 150.00
New York City, NY	\$ 20.75
Woodside, NY	\$ 10.00
Eugene, OR	\$ 7.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,187.75</b>

Recurring Donations  
Total for 9/02/08-11/01/08  
**\$597**



### 7th Traditions Groups

AZ-03	\$ 18.00
AZ-03	\$ 31.00
MN-11	\$ 15.00
MO-04	\$ 20.00
NY-03	\$ 35.00
WI-04	\$ 30.00
CA Retreat	\$ 60.00
COSA Board Meeting	\$400.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$609.00</b>

### Tuesday & Thursday Telemeeting's

#### Telephone number:

**1-906-481-2100 Passcode: 679461**

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m. Pacific Time  
(8 Mountain, 9 Central, 10 Eastern)

Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. Pacific Time  
(7 Mountain, 8 Central, 9 Eastern)

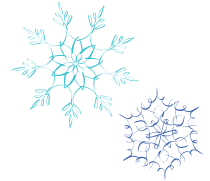


### Welcome NEW COSA Groups!

**St Cloud & Buffalo: MN-16**

**Neptune: NJ-02**

**Niagra Falls, Ontario: INT-15**



### By the Fellowship, For the Fellowship

We encourage every group, intergroup and member to submit articles that **share your ESH** (experience, strength, and hope). Also, articles and announcements that **share upcoming COSA events** in your area; such as retreats, workshops, speakers etc. We also would love to hear your ideas for **what you would like to see** in future articles. The Balance is a newsletter for the membership, by the membership.

Please send your articles to: [COSACopy@yahoo.com](mailto:COSACopy@yahoo.com)  
or by snail mail to the COSA ISO PO Box listed on the envelope below.

### Contact the ISO of COSA

*Balance, the newsletter of the International Service Organization of COSA, is published six times a year. The ISO holds the copyright to the newsletter.*

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**My wish is that you begin to view your pain as motivator, teacher, and friend. Without the suffering engendered by my addiction interacting with my partner's addiction, I would never have had the impetus to struggle, embrace and surrender to my 12-Step recovery process. I finally have grown to understand this as my greatest gift.**

**JoAn D., Public Information Committee**

**My Holiday Wish for my friends in recovery, and for myself as well, is to fully feel all that we need to feel to heal while in the presence of our loving friends.**

**Deborra, Member at Large**



**My Holiday wish for all fellow COSA's is peace- Peace of mind --Peace with the God of your understanding --Peace with neighbors --Peace with family and loved ones -and Peace within.**

**Ann, Member at Large**

**Other Holiday  
Wishes from the  
COSA Fellowship**



**I am grateful for being on the receiving end of so much love and support from my COSA friends. I wish all those that are reading this a multitude of blessings, which become so abundant and clear when you give yourself the gift of recovery.**

**Paula K. ISO of Cosa Coordinator**

**I'm incredibly grateful for the COSA program. In COSA I feel connected and a new sense of ease; I'm developing skills for identifying and sharing my feelings with safe people. My relationship with my qualifier is healing, nurturing and empowering for both of us. I've let go of much of my harsh self-talk, and I am building healthy self-esteem. Thank you all for being a part of COSA – from the newest newcomer to the longest long-timer. My holiday wish is for all of us to discover the miracles of recovery.**

**Betsy H.**

**My holiday wish for all COSAs is to have a safe, sober, and serene holiday season filled with joy, friendship, intimacy, laughter, and love. May we all feel our feelings, set our boundaries, continue recovering, and keep coming back in 2009! Happy Holidays everyone!**

**Sarah S., San Francisco**

**For more of my COSA brothers and sisters to find out that freedom comes with surrender.  
MB, NYC**

Those of us receiving this newsletters are blessed. Our blessing is our recovery. Our blessing is our release from denial. May we each step into 2009 listing our many blessings. Our addiction is a blessing. Our addiction brought us to recovery and gave us life.

I am grateful for COSA. I will step into 2009 writing my gratitude list.

When my children were young, we all gathered at midnight of the new year. I gave each of them a bowl with 12 maraschino cherries. As they wrote one positive goal for the new year or one positive blessing for the new year, they could eat one cherry. They loved doing it. It feels like they are more goal oriented because of that tradition experience.

That was before recovery. We started it again after recovery. It has much more meaning since recovery.

Now, when we do it, we have adult children, their spouses, and grandchildren.

Ila D.

*Step Eleven: 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.*

The 11<sup>th</sup> step used to be a mystery to me. I always felt like I was failing because I couldn't sustain a regular morning quiet time with God, as I believed everyone else in COSA did. Things changed for me when a friend directed me to the suggestions in a book about 12-step recovery. I discovered that I did not have to be perfect. I started using the guidelines to think about my day when I woke up, and to ask God to direct my thinking. What a relief! I didn't have to work and work and work to have this step work for me.

Through the years, my practice of Step 11 evolves. These days I most often maintain conscious contact with my Higher Power when I'm working on my lawn and with my flowers. I feel connected when I'm walking my dog in the many beautiful places we have to walk here in northern Nevada. I feel God's presence when I'm in meetings, and when I'm in my living room looking out at the beauty of the Sierra Nevada mountains. I feel God when I have a real, honest conversation with one of God's kids, often my COSA friends. I feel God when I tell the truth about how I'm feeling, instead of keeping it inside so that I look strong and wise. I feel God when a solution



to a problem miraculously presents itself without any effort on my part.

Today my husband and I are separated, but remain good friends with love and respect for one another. This separation has shown me that I have lots of work to do and changes to make in myself. This is clear to me, now that I don't have the sex addict right here daily to focus on. My years of practicing

Step 11 have resulted in a quiet surety that God is looking out for me, and that God will show me what my next step will be. I don't have to have all the answers today. It's such a relief to acknowledge that. I trust that my Higher Power knows what I do not know and has a plan for my life that will help me continue to grow and love and enjoy THIS DAY. I find that I stay in the present much more often now, and life is almost always peaceful right at this moment. My practice of Step 11 looks much different today than I thought it would when I was a newcomer to COSA. My practice of this step is perfect today, and may or may not stay this way tomorrow. I look forward to seeing what the evolution of my practice of Step 11 will bring.

*Georgia from Reno NV*

## 2009 COSA Convention

*May 21-25, 2009  
Memorial Day weekend  
Oakland, California*

To register online or for more info:

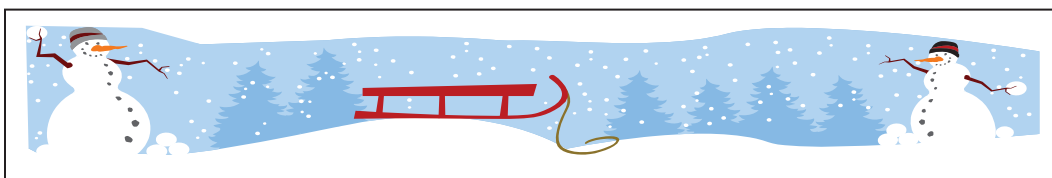
[www.cosa-recovery.org/oakland](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/oakland)

User Name: oakland

Password: cali2009

Or contact the COSA Convention Committee for additional information at:

[convention@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:convention@cosa-recovery.org)



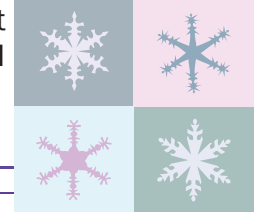
*Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all areas of our lives.*

I have always taken this step seriously, because if someone hadn't taken it seriously in December of 1993, I would have had a very different life. I had just discovered that my husband of three years was a sex addict, and I felt shattered, scared, and broken. One other co-dependent of a sex addict shared with me. Then her husband, in recovery from his sex addiction, shared with me. At the end of that long phone conversation, I again had hope. .

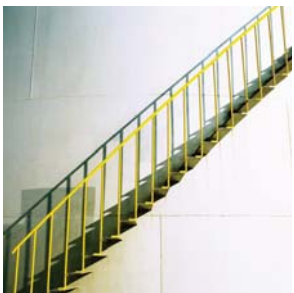
I realized early on that my recovery would be enhanced by my sharing with others in my situation, and I took this step seriously. After about a year, the meeting in my city closed, and I spent six months mostly sitting alone trying to start it up again. My recovery was helped by studying COSA literature, learning about sex addiction, and occasionally talking with other COSAs seeking out the meeting. I worked the steps with my long-distance sponsor, and participated in an 18-month group with three other women to go through the steps of COSA again. We carried this message to others. I was the COSA phone contact in my state and talked to many who were searching for help. I became a sponsor and strengthened my recovery by guiding others through their steps. I attended several national conventions, and met those of you stronger in your recovery, who shared your experience, strength, and hope with me.

Through my years in recovery, I've focused on the first part of this step. Only in the last few years have I been brought to the awareness that practicing these principles in all areas of my life is as important as carrying this message to others. Living my life by these principles makes my life peaceful and contented, and at the same time, carries the message to others that there is a solution. I'm grateful that this step is an ongoing step; on the days that I'm not practicing too well, I know that I'll have another chance tomorrow, and that I can love myself and others, and let God and others love me.

*Georgia from Reno NV*



### Step 11 Questions



- Am I taking time out during my day to pray or meditate?
- When I do this, how do I feel? How do I feel when I don't?
- If I find it hard to be quiet and still, what might be some other ways to nurture conscious contact with my Higher Power?
- What does this Step have to do with healthy surrender?
- How can I tell when I am seeking my Higher Power's will? Is this the same or different from acting on self-will?

### Step 12 Questions

- Am I open in sharing the gifts of recovery with those who are still suffering?
- How do my daily words and conduct carry the message of recovery (both in and out of recovery rooms)?
- Am I being mindful in allowing others room to come to their own conclusions?
- Can I practice this Step even if I haven't formally "studied" all Twelve?
- If I don't feel that I have had a "spiritual awakening" or profound change yet, what might I do to seek this?

(from Betsy, Costa Mesa, CA and Julie H. from PA)





## Voices of Services Volunteers from the 2008 Convention

### Chart Your Course...Step By Step

May 22-26, 2008  
Memorial Day weekend  
Seattle, Washington

Last Spring I was nominated to speak at the 2008 COSA convention luncheon in Seattle, Washington . That invitation scared me: What would I talk about, what would I share, did I have a compelling story to tell, would the person who nominated me be disappointed in my talk? I was plagued with anxiety and self-doubt. At one point I thought about backing out of the commitment. Thankfully, I stopped, prayed, and listened. The wisdom I received from my higher power: The 12th steps. God suggested I talk about my spiritual awakening as a result of the 12 steps. So I prepared my talk. I created an inventory of my recovery tools, I examined how each step brought me closer to a spiritual awakening, and I prayed to my higher power for guidance and courage.

There was much work in preparing for the talk but the rewards were well worth it. Helping others gain a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps helps me stay sober and connected to my higher power. Paraphrasing a recovery quote: The only way I get to keep the gifts of the program is by constantly working to give them away. Speaking at the COSA convention was **a wonderful way** for me to do just that!

Albert A

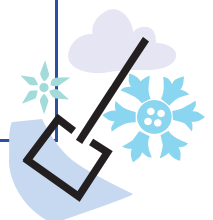
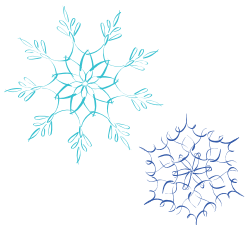
I had been in the COSA program a bit under two years when someone asked me to moderate a panel on the two Steps that I happened to be stuck on and didn't understand. I felt awkward, but I had fabulous panel members! I found that the moderation of the panel wasn't the point. I was deeply grateful for the panel's knowledge of the program that helped me see the Steps in a cohesive whole for my recovery. No matter how awkward I felt, it began to restore a sense of confidence to me that I'd completely lost in my disease. Sue D.



I was Secretary for the HIR Meeting/Workshop in Seattle. Even though I was used to the script, I was pleasantly challenged by some participants' questions. I was able to let go and let it happen. Before the Convention, a few of us prepared a FAQ sheet for this meeting/workshop. It was a good experience! Lindy T. Oakland, CA.

I had a fantastic time running a panel workshop at last years convention. As part of my Twelfth Step, it felt great to give back in such a way. I learned so much from the process, including extra tools to help my recovery. I also got the chance to meet CO-SAs from other parts of the country who volunteered to be on the panel. Sarah B-Oakland, CA

I believe that whenever we share our own personal story, another layer of shame, guilt and secrecy that surrounds this disease of co-addiction is lifted, and that gives my recovery a huge boost. Margie



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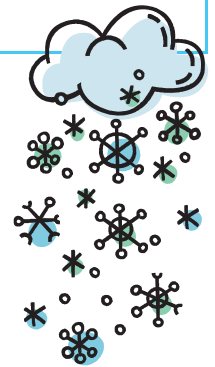
## More Shares on the Gifts of Service

*Continued from page 6*



Service work has been for me one of my best recovery teachers. Speaking, leading meetings and workshops have provided opportunities for me to witness myself interacting with my anxiety, low self esteem, lack of confidence, avoidance tactics, and sometimes utter terror. A recovery highlight for me was being able to tell my story at the joint banquet during the Indianapolis Convention. I had realized that I was addicted to the adrenalin rush of negative drama, which resulted from my feeling like a victim--being able to justify blaming and shaming--staying excited and hypervigilant--enjoying the feeling of negative excitement. When I began to recover and feel calmness and serenity, it seemed dull and boring. At that point I chose to try positive excitement by doing scary service work activities, like being on the board, presenting workshops and telling my story before larger and larger groups of people. I recommend doing service work as a positive recovery gift. JoAn D.

Connection through fellowship at the conference in Seattle and at the Bay Area retreat has lessened the withdrawal and isolation from my own disease. Presenting a workshop at the retreat allowed me to focus on an area of recovery by presenting it to others. The old adage "we teach what we need to learn" has really applied to my commitment to recovery. I've only been in "true" recovery for 7 months and the more I have committed to COSA, the deeper my own recovery commitment has become. Linda S.



### Call for Speakers:

We are looking for COSA speakers who will quake our 2009 convention attendees with inspiration as they

share their experience, strength and hope. Go to [www.cosa-recovery.org/oakland](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/oakland) to complete a Speaker Nomination form. Also, please consider submitting a Workshop Proposal (go to [www.cosa-recovery.org/oakland](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/oakland) to complete the appropriate form) to offer at the convention or encourage someone from your fellowship to do so! Everyone's experience is valuable in COSA and sharing your experience working the steps or tools that have been particularly effective in supporting your recovery work is a great way to practice the 12th Step (to help carry the message to others). The deadline for Speaker Nominations and Workshop Proposals is January 15, 2009 and we would like to

give all members an opportunity to apply, so please bring copies of the forms to your home meeting and help us spread the word. We look forward to seeing you "Quaking with Clarity" in Oakland May 22-25, 2009! If you have any questions or concerns please contact us at [convention@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:convention@cosa-recovery.org)



Oakland  
2009

quaking with clarity