



**Volume 6, Issue 7 Summer Issue July/August 2011**

**DELEGATE MEETING SUMMARY**

**International Service Organization of COSA**

**Houston, Texas**

On May 27th in Houston, the 18th Annual Meeting of the ISO Board, Delegates, and Membership of COSA was held. There were 21 Delegates, 11 Board Members and two other COSAs in attendance.

The ISO Board made a few significant changes in regard to the Delegate Registration process and Delegate business items this year. Delegates were required to get their registration forms and fees to the ISO before the May 15th deadline in order to have voting privileges. The same deadline was set for any business items to be discussed at the Annual Delegate’s Meeting. The process was successful, and we hope to further streamline it for next year’s meeting.

Elaine shared that over the last six years or so the Board has been working on a Service Guide, which was completed just before the Convention. Information includes:

- COSA Mission Statement
- Diversity Statement
- Bylaws
- Chair job descriptions
- Some volunteer job descriptions
- ISO organizational chart
- Committee organizational charts

Business plans for each committee

Each Board Member was presented with a hard copy, which was passed around to the Delegates. The Board plans to send an electronic copy to all registered meetings and may be able to have it available in downloadable form on the website. This information will give the fellowship a better understanding of the ISO, and possibly encourage members to volunteer on an ISO Committee or become a member of the Board of Trustees.

The Delegates heard a brief synopsis of the three Goals the previous year’s Delegates assigned to the ISO Board. Mila T. spoke about Goal 1, Increase Service Workers; Kerstin H. spoke about Goal 2, Increase Financial Revenue/Responsibility; and JoAn D. spoke about Goal 3, COSA Book Task Force. A more complete summary is available in the Annual Summary booklet given to all the Delegates.

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**Every COSA  
group ought  
to be fully self  
-supporting,  
declining  
outside  
contributions.**

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

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ISO Office Manager

## Seventh Tradition: Financial Report/March–May

Group Donation	\$55.00
IN-04 COSA	\$51.30
CA-09 Oakland, CA	\$98.92
CT-02 CT Love & Hope Group	\$103.00
Telemeeting Intergroup	\$20.00
CA-09	\$98.92
CT-01	\$103.00
West Chester Ohio	\$30.00
Ne-06 Omaha Thursday	\$155.00
IN-04 COSA	\$28.05
Puget Sound Retreat Committee - Issaquah, WA	\$101.56
Sat. Night Spanway COSA	\$75.00
CA-18 San Francisco COSA	\$123.65
AZ-02 Stepping Into Recovery	\$70.00
WI-03 Eau Claire	\$30.00
WA-07	\$50.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,193.40</b>

## 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.

Guidelines for Submitting Literature:

<http://www.cosa-recovery.org/literature.html> (scroll down, then click on pdf link)

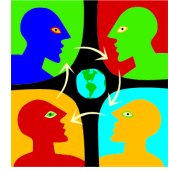
Please send your articles to [COSACopy@yahoo.com](mailto:COSACopy@yahoo.com) or by snail mail to the

**COSA ISO**  
**P.O. BOX 79908**

**Phone: 866-899-2672**

**E-mail: [info@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:info@cosa-recovery.org)**

## Delegate Meeting Summary – continued



### Bylaw Changes

1. Article X 10.1 was modified by the 2010 Delegates and amended “provisionally” for one year, at which time it will be revisited by the 2011 Delegates.

#### 10.1 General

The board of Trustees shall have the right to select and/or hire the employee(s) and/or contract workers as it deems necessary.

- a.) No paid employee(s) or contract worker may be a voting member of the Board of Trustees or any committee thereof.
- b.) Any employee(s) or contract worker may report to the Board of Trustees or committee at all regular meetings as required.
- c.) Such employee(s) or contract workers shall be under the supervision of the Board of Trustees and/or the committee chairman to which such employee/contract worker is rendering service.
- d.) The ISO Office Manager, and any assistants, must be a COSA member with at least 12 months in the program, unless no COSA applies or is qualified to fill the position, in which case a non-COSA member can be hired temporarily while the search for a qualified COSA continues.
- e.) Any entity such as an attorney, a consulting firm to temporarily fulfill the function of an attorney, CPA, etc. does not have to be a COSA member.

**Outcome** – The motion to remove the provisional approval and accept the version above as written was approved.

2. Addition of the following:

#### 8.3 Steps, Traditions and Concepts

In order to change the wording of any of the Steps, Traditions or Concepts the following procedure will be followed:

- a.) A registered group(s) sends the suggested change(s) to the Board of Trustees in the form of a *Proposal* complete with “pro” statements.
- b.) The Board of Trustees finds a registered group(s) to write a “con” statement.
- c.) The Board of Trustees sends out the proposed change(s) together with both the “pro and con” statements to all registered groups.
- d.) The *Proposal* passes when  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the registered groups approve the proposed change(s) in writing to the Board of Trustees within a six month time frame beginning with the date of mail out.
- e.) Any approved change(s) will become effective at the first meeting of the Board of Trustees after the certification of the vote by the Executive Committee.

The Chair explained to the Delegates that the Board received a proposal to change the wording of Step One and Tradition Three. The Bylaws contained no guidelines for handling this situation. After calling past Board Members to determine how this has been handled in the past, the Board researched the policies of other fellowships and devised the procedure outlined above.

The discussion that followed reassured the Delegates that proposed changes would

## NEW

## MEETINGS

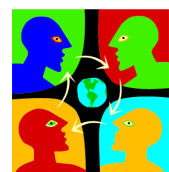
### CANADA

- **British Columbia, West Vancouver**

### US

- **New Jersey, Glassboro**
- **Texas, McKinney**

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





**Humbly  
asked him  
to remove  
our short-  
comings.**

## Step Seven Share

Step Seven is dear to my heart because I saw how my character defects manifested themselves, what program tools were most effective in restoring me to sanity, and how much more connected I became with my Higher Power all within twelve weeks.

My sponsor asked me to develop a chart of my shortcomings to observe daily for twelve weeks. I added a chart of the program tools I could check off at the same time that served as a reminder to be gentle with myself. Each day, I took time to review my day, check the charts and journal about it. Because of the daily check, I was able to see my patterns.

I found myself noting when I was taking care of others and when I was neglecting myself. My first reaction was to “fix” and be a caretaker to others. This was especially obvious to me in the way I related to those I love most, including my life partner and my children. I needed to stop and ask myself some questions: Whose problem is this? Who can solve it? How am I involved? What is my boundary? I intentionally focused on myself and my program. I learned to practice detachment with love.

Offering advice and finding solutions for the problems of others were traits I used to be proud of. It made me feel powerful, knowledgeable or smart when I was able to help others. Now I realized that all this gave me was a false sense of self-worth. Did others really want to hear advice or solutions? Maybe a listening ear was all they wanted. I saw that I was enmeshed with my relatives and close friends. Here again, I needed to find my own boundary and make sure I was not care-taking. I practiced caring.

Sometimes I communicated vaguely because I was unsure myself. Other times, I communicated vaguely because I wanted to please others. Sometimes I was vague because I was manipulating. Here, I needed to ask my HP for help. I had to discover the root causes of my issues. What did I want? What did I think? I checked in with myself. I found words that communicated directly. I took care to be direct, especially with family and friends. I minimized misunderstanding and conflicts. I became better at direct and honest communication.

In my work and personal life, I planned ahead, strategized and tried to control future outcomes. I was successful at this. Consequently, I obsessed and worried a lot in times of stress, high anxiety or emotional turmoil. I learned the meaning of “let go and let God”. I did my part. Asking my HP for help was really an important step to regaining sanity. I learned the benefits of being present. Journaling calmed me so I could be thoughtful about solutions. Sometimes I worked Steps One through Four to get clarity. Meditation was helpful in finding peace of mind and spirit.

In addition, I also found that I often lamented the past. I rehashed the past and thought about what else I could have done. Whenever I found myself regretting the past, I said the Serenity Prayer and asked my HP for acceptance. I realized how truly powerless I was to change the past no matter how much I regretted it.

I found myself to be in denial more times than I realized. When I was in denial I didn't

have to change my behavior. I didn't have to acknowledge certain uncomfortable realities. I needed to take a good long look at situations and acknowledge them for what they were. It took awhile and was often painful, but it was the right thing to do. I could no longer be in denial.

When I got angry, I got carried away by my emotions. I became sarcastic, blamed others, and pointed out the mistakes of others. I rationalized or "intellectualized" my anger and was righteous about it. In addition, I got very angry at myself when I discovered my own mistakes, did something stupid or performed "less than" my own expectations. For this I berated myself and put myself down.

In recovery, I learned that there are healthy ways to deal with anger. I could acknowledge my anger, but not act on it. I discovered program tools to calm myself, such as program calls, journaling, meditation and asking my Higher Power for guidance. I could set the issue aside and work steps around this. This new behavior was very difficult for me since I had allowed my anger to rule me in the past.

As the weeks went by, I became more mindful of my traits and behavior. At the end of the Seventh Step, I knew I had grown in recovery and was very grateful for the gifts of the Program.

Mila T.

## Step Seven Questions

1. What is my definition of humility?
2. It is said that humility is necessary to work the Steps in COSA. Why?
3. What does humility have to do with recognizing our fellowship of equals?
4. Do I have confidence in asking my Higher Power for help? Why or why not?
5. How can I cooperate with my Higher Power in Step Seven?

## Sober & Sustainable Teleconferences

Is your COSA meeting struggling to attract service volunteers? Are you thinking of starting a new COSA Meeting? Concerned about how to attract and retain COSA newcomers or old timers? Bring your questions and/or your Experience, Strength and Hope about starting and sustaining Sober COSA Meetings.

### Upcoming Schedule:

#### NEED the SCEHEDULE

The Teleconference # is **218-862-1000** and the **Access Code is 1051791#.**

Cost is only whatever your personal long distance carrier charges.



**Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. .**

## Step Eight Share

My first Step Eight was slow and agonizing work. The list itself took months, because I was paralyzed with an irrational fear that the list might be infinite. My sponsor encouraged, supported, and cajoled me, and I finally had a list which included every name on my Fourth Step and more. She told me that if I was in doubt, write the name and we would talk it over. I met with my sponsor regularly, and we worked hard together on the second part of Step Eight as I learned to become willing to make amends to them all. First, I was asked to make three columns. The first column listed all the people I was “Willing” to make amends to now. The second column held names of people I could “Maybe” make amends to someday. The “Never-in-a-Million-Years” people were all lined up in the third column, and they seemed to be laughing at me.

My sponsor asked me to make some of the easier amends, and I continued the process of becoming willing. Each time I met with my sponsor, we talked about what was holding me back from being willing to make amends to each of the people I was not yet ready to deal with. Many times, I told her “He HURT me!” or “She should be making amends to me!” Slowly, patiently, my sponsor taught me that Step Eight was all about being willing to let go of the hold other people had on me. I had a dozen people on my back and they were there because I let them be there. I learned that I was the only one standing in the way of my recovery.

Forgiveness was the key for me. I needed to forgive one person at a time in order to be willing to approach them to make amends. It took time and patience. I had to realize that “it takes what it takes” and I had to be willing to trust the process.

Little by little, names were moved from “Never” to “Maybe” to “Willing.” As Step Eight melted into Step Nine, I continued to recover and claim more of the miracles this program holds for me.

-Claudia M.

## Step Eight Questions

1. Do I need to forgive anyone before I can add their name to my Step Eight list? Why or why not?
2. How can my sponsor help me make my Step Eight list? What do I need from my sponsor now?
3. What is my motivation for Step Eight work? What are the gifts of Step Eight for me?
4. When in my life have I been willing before? Why have I been willing?
5. Can I start my amends before I become “willing to make amends to them all”?

## On the Diversity Statement

The face-to-face meeting I attend is for COSAs. Most often, these COSAs are young and middle-aged, and the vast majority are women. The Diversity Statement and the Traditions remind us, though, that the meeting is for all COSAs. Regardless of who walks through our door, if he or she identifies as a COSA, he or she is welcome. The promises of recovery are available equally to all of us.

I know it is up to each of us to safeguard the Traditions. Tradition Three says, in part: "The only requirement for COSA membership is that our lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior." For me, that means that the COSAs in my group belong there by virtue of the fact that their lives have been so affected. Tradition Three says that is the ONLY requirement. I cannot require that the COSAs who come to my group be just like me, and I cannot shut the door to those.

I experience more diversity in the online and telephone meetings I have attended. I have found that men have a perspective to offer which has become precious to me. Part of the problem I had with my partner was that I did not understand that his thoughts and attitudes were different from mine. I expected him to tick like me. My friendships with the online COSAs and tele-meeting COSAs have given me a safe way to become more comfortable with men. I thank the men of COSA who are teaching me to understand my partner and offering me new friendships.

Claudia M

## 2011 Convention Experiences

The Convention was a mix of sights, sounds, aha moments and nagging fatigue. I made new friendships, deepened old ones, and sealed email and phone relationships with a chat or a meal together, which forever changed the nature of those relationships. The people were the highlight of my Convention.

Before I arrived, I was dreading 17 hours of business meetings that kept me busy on Thursday and Friday. My sponsor reminded me to keep an open mind. "My Higher Power sends me angels all the time, but I don't know what they look like, so I have to listen to everyone", and I heard what I needed to hear from the most unlikely sources. I also found I enjoyed those 17 hours. Who knew? Sometimes during the weekend, I realized that while other people work their own programs different from the way I work mine; they all love COSA just as much as I do and they had much to share with me and the other attendees. We are indeed a fellowship of equals.

Claudia M  
Mesa, AZ

## Reflections on 2011 COSA Convention

The words of the Promises and the Unity Prayer came to life for me at the Houston Convention. Every workshop and every speaker

## ISO of COSA Diversity Statement

- COSA Diversity is consistent with the Third Tradition of COSA, which states that the only requirement for COSA membership is that our lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior.

- The COSA Fellowship welcomes all genders, all varieties of relationship to the addict, all religious and spiritual preferences, all employment statuses, all marital statuses, all ethnicities, cultures, and languages. COSA does not discriminate on the basis of class, sexual orientation or gender identification, physical or mental challenges, race, financial status, or national origins.

- In COSA, we find hope whether or not there is a sexually addicted person currently in our lives.

- COSA Diversity is consistent with the First Tradition of COSA, which states that our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on COSA unity.



## What if there was only half an ISO?

**Well, in a sense, a part is missing.**

In COSA recovery, we learn that the only thing we can change is our part.

This year the ISO Board has changed many things—the size and location of the Central Office, the new toll free phone number, and the range of new free services provided to help local groups carry the COSA message. But....

**We can't do it without you!**

If you have not already done so, please consider including the ISO in your annual charitable giving by making a tax-deductible contribution through the ISO website.

**To do your part, simply go to the ISO of COSA homepage at [www.COSA-recovery.org](http://www.COSA-recovery.org) and click the *Donate Now!* button.**

If each member were to contribute in this way, just think how far we could carry the COSA message together!

In your service,  
The ISO Board of Trustees

## Delegate Meeting Summary—continued

be communicated to the fellowship effectively.

Outcome – The motion to add this Bylaw was approved.

### Delegate Business Items

1. Kerry M., representing the Telemeeting Intergroup, explained their Business Item. Kerry proposed adding a line item to the ISO of COSA annual budget for ISO of COSA Board Member Travel Expenses. Currently all Board members cover their travel, hotel and meal expenses for the mid-year face-to-face Board meeting and the face-to-face Board meeting held in conjunction with the Annual Delegate's Meeting each year. Many Board members consider their travel expenses as a Seventh tradition donation to ISO of COSA, but not all Board members can do that. It would be ideal to eventually be fully self-supporting as a fellowship and cover our Board members expenses as they complete their Board service requirements (i.e. attend the two annual face-to-face meetings.) Until that is possible, we are concerned that members of the fellowship might be precluded from service at the ISO Board level without assistance. We do not feel someone's personal financial status should be a determining factor in their ability to be of service as an ISO of COSA Board member. It was pointed out we needed to add the line item even though we may not be able to fund it now so that we set the intent.

Outcome – The motion of adding a line item to the budget for Board Member Travel Expenses passed. It is unfunded at this time.

2. Linda P., representing the Oakland, California Monday night meeting, opened her group's Business Item which asked that the suggested Step requirement for future Board members be changed from a completed Step Four to a completed Step Twelve. She explained this served two purposes. It would let the Delegates determine what suggested requirements for the Board membership might work best, and it would strengthen the fellowship even further by asking that Board members experience the spiritual transformation that comes from working all the Steps. The Oakland group believed that Board members could then carry the message more effectively to the fellowship because they would have experienced a spiritual awakening personally. The discussion following involved the difficulty of finding volunteers to fill the Board positions and having the requirement of working all Twelve Steps could make it harder. One Delegate said this idea was both scary and exciting. It was pointed out exceptions could be made especially when dealing with those positions where a certain skill was imperative in order to do the job.

Outcome –The motion to have the suggested requirement for all future Board members changed to completion of all Twelve Steps was passed.



## 2011 Convention Stories—continued

brought knowledge and inspiration far beyond my expectations.

As a tele-meeting participant, it was my hope to meet as many fellow tele-meeting people as possible and to be able to put faces to the voices I have been listening to for the past ten months. My birthday was on Saturday and that was the day of the face-to-face meeting for tele-meeting participants. Seeing everyone and getting hugs was the best birthday present I could ask for.

At one meeting, we expressed our goals for the Convention. Mine were to learn and to grow. With every workshop and every event I attended, I grew closer to achieving my goals. I learned more about boundaries, the three circles, and about how to deal with trauma. I also gained information about sponsorship which I hope to be able to use in the near future. I felt so comfortable and safe at these workshops. The compassion and understanding that I felt as I shared with others at the workshops was heartwarming.

I felt so fortunate and blessed to be able to hear three COSA First Step stories and one First Step story from an addict. It was emotional, humbling and inspiring to listen to their open and honest sharing of their experience, strength and hope. I came home motivated to continue writing my First Step story. Yes, the words of the Promises and the Unity Prayer were indeed present for me at this convention and I will make every effort to attend next year's Convention in Vancouver.

Janie A

### Convention Story: by K. C., of Northern WV

"Houston, We Have *No* Problem - All is Well, with COSA face-to-face Support All Around!"

When I decided to make the trip this year, after a couple of years hiatus, I had no idea how much I would receive from this year's Convention in Houston. I am rising above the past, and moving toward the Light.

Seeing my old and new friends in the Delegates' Meeting, from Eight AM - Four PM, was exciting. Experiencing the relatively new "Roberta's Rules of Order" in action, insuring a well-organized and efficient business meeting, made me very proud to be a COSA. The way we interacted, in such a professional and mutually respectful manner, was very gratifying.

Meeting my fellow tele-meeting members, some for the first time, at our face-to-face meeting, I had to first close my eyes to recognize the voices I knew from the phone calls. I then learned to connect them to the faces I hadn't seen before. We have developed a deep bond over the years. Now, I can picture these friends when I hear them on the calls. The bonds grew deeper.

Learning lots of new lessons from long-timers and newcomers in workshops, meetings, and during fellowship, in the hospitality room, at the banquet, and COSA meal-time speaker-meetings, was a great benefit to my own longtime recovery as a COSA. I know I am *not* alone. There *is* support.



### COSA Telemeetings

## Announcement

The tele-meetings are looking for a few good men and women to serve. Many of the tele-meetings would like to increase the diversity of their trusted servants. We need COSA members who are interested in being of service as a guest speaker and/or reader for seven to ten minutes at the beginning of meetings. We are especially interested in COSA members involved in service, including Board and committee members.

If you are interested in helping please email us. You might also encourage others to consider serving the fellowship in this area. The email addresses for each tele-meeting are listed at:

[www.cosacall.com](http://www.cosacall.com)

## Over-committed and Overwhelmed

*I am powerless over the difficulty I have saying “no” to anything. Some days when I wake, I would swear all the recovery knowledge has been wiped from my memory banks. I have had a long-standing belief I should say “yes” to any person who “just needs a few minutes of my time”. That belief has not served me well. Of course, I get something of value when I do this: I get an instant hit that makes me feel important and useful when the person thanks me for my wisdom and my time. Unfortunately, my work doesn’t get done when I’m making calls, checking e-mails, answering the phone and making myself available to help those who are struggling at that moment. The result is that I often feel overwhelmed or bad about myself for not getting as much work done as I had planned. If I weren’t self-employed I would have probably been fired for not doing my job.*

A COSA friend once shared with me that she was worried about her sobriety being threatened by having too many friends. Her question intrigued me because sometimes I feel overwhelmed by the demands that other people make on my time. Was it possible my life would be better if I limited the number of friends I had? Intuitively, I knew the number of friends could not be the problem. I was over-committing myself to friends and, having many friends is harmful to me only if I have no boundaries.  
Anonymous

## Delegate Meeting Summary—continued

### Board Proposals

1. COSA Teen Safety Guidelines Proposal – Carol Ann R. led this discussion. She explained that these guidelines were adapted from Alateen and that she had received approval from Alateen saying they did not infringe on their copyrighted material. There was some discussion and clarification in regard to adults’ involvement in the meeting and after some edits to the wording suggested by the Delegates the proposal was passed.
2. Goal 3 COSA Book Recommended Criteria for Selecting Authors Proposal – JoAn D. led this discussion. Discussion involved clarification of what was meant by “published author” and the sobriety requirements for the authors. To respect the tradition of “remaining anonymous,” the Goal 3 Committee will strike out the full names of writers and pioneers mentioned in the proposal. It was reiterated that all authors must be COSA members. The motion that the Goal 3 Book Development Committee be empowered to create a group of experienced writers and editors to oversee the continuity of the COSA Book passed.
3. The Literature Committee Removal of the Tips and Tools Series Proposal – Carol Ann R. led the discussion and explained that the Literature Committee has no plans to continue with this series. Since the Delegates approved *Step One Tips and Tools* and *Step Two Tips and Tools*, it required Delegate approval to remove it from the COSA literature offered for sale. The Literature Committee is concentrating on completing the remaining Step Booklets. The Delegates approved the motion to discontinue the *Tips and Tools* Pamphlets.
4. Year Round Delegate Proposal – Elaine K. led this discussion and explained that this proposal was the result of research done by the Board as directed by last year’s delegates. The proposal was sent to the individual meetings in September 2010 and again in February 2011 requesting feedback. A total of seven responses were received. The responses were so drastically different that the Board decided not to change the original proposal which stated that Delegates would serve a two year term with a maximum of three consecutive terms and no life time limit. Delegates are asked to serve on a committee for one year. They also represent their meeting and share information with that meeting. Discussion centered on the two year term, serving on a committee, and the importance of connecting the local meetings to the ISO Board. The Delegates approved the Year Round Delegate Proposal as written.

### 2011-2012 Budget

Margie S., our Treasurer, explained how challenging it has been to prepare the books since our May 31 fiscal year-end coincided with the Convention. The Budget and Finance Committee has faced time-consuming one-time challenges this year such as helping to get the new office set up, transferring bank accounts and training the new Office Manager. Delegates asked specific questions about certain line items and Ben, our Budget and Finance Co-Chair, asked for flexibility. He said that they were working on ensuring the numbers were put into the correct categories, but in the past it didn’t always happen.

Elaine announced that the Board has formed a task to review the efficiency of the Central

Office. The Board is very aware of the current problems. It became apparent that Paula, our past employee, had been working many extra hours on a volunteer basis. The fifteen hours per week that Tatum is working is simply not enough to keep the office running efficiently. The task force will look into the possibility of partnering with the Houston members and utilizing volunteers at the office. It was agreed that 15 hours per week is not sufficient for our paid worker.

Margie pointed out that the proposed 2011-2012 Budget was unbalanced and has a \$3,276 deficit. Mila T. asked the Delegates how they wanted to respond to this. The options were cutting expenses or increasing revenue. After some discussion about fundraising ideas, the delegates voted to balance the budget by increasing revenue.

Mila also announced that the Board has formed a new committee called Resources and Development. Its purpose is to focus on fundraising and finding volunteers. It will be led by Brian, our Volunteer Chair.

### 2011-2012 Goals

Elaine requested that the current Goal 2, Increase Financial Revenue/Responsibility and Goal 3, COSA Book Development remain the same. She also requested that Goal 3 continue in future years until we have a book. The Delegates agreed to both of these items.

Elaine also reported that Goal 1, Increase Service Workers, was a long-term goal but needed to be restated in a more specific and focused manner. The Board suggested that Goal 1 be focused on increasing the number and availability of sponsors. The Delegates made several other suggestions which were: increase number of delegates; increase number of Intergroups/Intergroup support; increase communication between the ISO, meetings and individual members; better practice of the Traditions; and limit the Goal Committees to Increase Financial Revenue/Responsibility and COSA Book Development. After some more discussion, the Delegates were asked to vote.

The new Goal 1 is Increase Communication between the ISO, Meetings and Individual Members.

### New Literature Approval

The Literature Committee presented four new pieces of literature. They are *Design for Success: A Group Resource* (revised *How to Start a New Group*), *COSA Seventh Tradition Pamphlet*, *Step Six Booklet* and *Is COSA for You?* (to be posted on the website.) These pieces went out to the fellowship for the 90 day review and feedback was requested.

After discussion about the first piece, it became apparent there was a general concern about the approval process. In the past, the Delegates had sent in comments which were not always applied to the literature before it was published. Since it seemed that the

### Slow Down

I used to wake with a constant sense of urgency, always feeling I had more things to do than the time to do them. One day I woke with that feeling and then my dog got sick. I rushed to squeeze a trip to the vet into an already busy day, fully expecting I'd still be able to accomplish everything on my list for the day. I left the house ten minutes later than I knew I should have to arrive on time for the appointment. Every light was red. My frustration grew by the block as I slowly crept to my destination, while watching the clock on the dashboard. At one point I got stuck in an intersection as an elderly man tried to parallel park nearby into a space near the intersection. He was crosswise in the street; traffic was stopped in all directions as he jockeyed back and forth to get into the space. Finally I passed him. When I raced up to the next traffic light, the person in front of me stopped just as the light was turning yellow! I was fully prepared to exercise my frustration with my horn when I noticed a sticker on the back of the car: "Student Driver." I was transported back to when I was learning to drive and how embarrassed I'd been when I was overwhelmed by everything I had to pay attention to. My anger waned and I could see my Higher Power had been sending me messages to slow down all morning, but I hadn't listened or paid attention to all the signs. I felt ashamed of myself for not having compassion for my dog, the old man in the car and the student driver. Fortunately I had enough recovery at that point to turn my shame and my anger at myself over to my Higher Power and let it go. To my amazement, every light after that was green and I pulled into the vet's office exactly on time.



The COSA Literature Committee is responsible for producing booklets, pamphlets, and other literature for the fellowship, as well as publishing the *Balance*. Also, LitCom would like to develop an editing team and a layout and design team to work with the COSA Book Task Force toward completion of Goal 3: COSA Book Development. We have an ambitious plan for this year's literature and we need your help!

Would you be interested in serving the fellowship through involvement with LitCom? Some of our current projects include booklets on Steps Seven, Eight, and Nine, a booklet about Triggers, and a piece on Attraction Not Promotion. If you would like to write, edit or do layout and design with us, please email CO-SACopy@yahoo.com for more information.

Thanks!  
Claudia M  
Literature Committee

## Delegate Meeting Summary—continued

Delegates did not have the opportunity to approve completed literature, it was decided that the process needed to be changed.

The Delegates voted for the new literature to be “provisionally approved”. The Literature Committee will incorporate changes during the summer and send the edited versions of the new literature to the 2011 Delegates for a vote to remove the “provisional” status.

The Literature Committee will look at the current process and timeline of literature approval to determine what can be changed to allow the Delegates to see the edited versions of the new literature.

### Nominations and Election of 2011-2012 Board of Trustees

The slate of nominees was presented and they were: **Elaine K.** of Keller, TX (Chair), **Brian K.** of New York, NY (Vice Chair and Volunteer Chair), **Mila T.** of Piedmont, CA (Secretary), **Margie S.** of Richmond, IN (Treasurer), **Ben B.** of Martinez, CA (Budget & Finance Chair), **Claudia M.** of Mesa, AZ (Literature Committee Chair), **Ann R.** of St. Paul, MN (Communications Chair), **Dani S.** of Oakland, CA (Member at Large), **Dorothy O.** of Milford, CT (Member at Large, Treasurer in Training), **JoAn D.** of Tacoma, WA (COSA Book Chair), **Lindy T.** of Berkeley, CA (Member at Large), **Lura Lisa W.** of New Orleans, LA (Public Information Chair), **Yvonne S.** of Squamish, BC, Canada (Vancouver Convention Chair). The motion to pass the slate of nominees was passed.

## Goal Three Committee Report: COSA Book Development

June 23, 2011

The Book Development Committee met with eight members in attendance. We will be scheduling a series of three "Back to Basics" teleconferences to work all Twelve Steps as a refresher, and to fulfill the Step requirements for members of the Goal 3 Committee.

We are examining the tables of contents of nine other fellowships' publications to determine what would be most helpful to include in our book. We will be looking at various introductions, forewords, and prefaces.

We have changed our meeting time to four two-hour sessions.

JoAn D.  
Chair, Goal 3 Committee

*Every  
COSA  
group  
ought  
to be  
fully self-  
supporting,  
declining  
outside  
contribu-  
tions*

## Tradition Seven

Being self-supporting has several layers of significance in my recovery. First, it means supporting myself; I need to actively support my own life and my healing. This means being willing and taking action. It may be obvious to some, but for me it was something I had to learn. For a long time I hoped that someone or something would rescue me. I can enjoy the help and support of others, but they cannot do my recovery (or my life) for me – that is my responsibility. My Higher Power is always there for me, and I also need to do my part.

Another aspect of being self-supporting is being attentive to the balance of give and take in my relationships. If I am passive, allowing the other person to take all the initiative, make decisions, and carry the relationship, I am not being self-supporting. This type of behavior may feel comfortable for a while, but leaves me feeling helpless, beholden to others, and smothered. On the other extreme, if I am over-extending myself because I am driven by the desire to earn someone's love or acceptance, then I am not being self-supporting either. Even though my intention may be to help (or in feel in control), it may actually hurt the other person and the relationship.

What is healthy on an individual and relationship level also applies to the group. This is why it is important for me to help nurture the group, and also to rotate out of service positions when the time is right. I can support my group in many ways. The most obvious is giving money when the Seventh Tradition basket is passed. I can also lend support by offering a smile or extending good will. I can share my thoughts and feelings, listen intently to another recovering person, or help with set up or clean up of the meeting space. I can be helpful to meeting servants, or take a service commitment. Each contribution, no matter how humble, brings healing for me and support for the group.

As a group, we are COSAs supporting COSAs. I take comfort knowing this, because this is one way we stay focused on our primary purpose – to recover and help others recover. By not accepting outside contributions, we aren't subject to compromises and obligations that even the most well-intentioned gift may bring with it. I am grateful that Tradition Seven keeps things clean, clear and simple. It ensures our precious autonomy as individuals, as groups, and as a fellowship.

Betsy H

## Tradition Eight:

I am grateful for all of the volunteers who keep the ISO of COSA running. The dedication of these generous people is touching and inspiring. Even though the link may not be immediately obvious to a casual observer, I owe my recovery in large part to COSA volunteers at all levels of the organization.

I also understand that there are certain jobs that need to be done within any organization that will be best done by an employee or special worker. Paying someone to perform a professional service ensures a level of continuity and clarity of purpose. The ISO of COSA may at times need to hire an administrative assistant, a writer, or a legal advisor, for instance. Where the Traditions provide a point of clarity here, though, is that this person is just that: a professional administrative assistant, a professional writer, or a professional lawyer – not a “professional COSA”, because there is no such thing. No single person ought to take on the role of professional representative of COSA because COSA is a diverse, dynamic group of people.

As with other Twelve Step fellowships, we aim to keep our organization lean, compact, and humble. We strive to maintain a minimum of bureaucracy. We want the connection between the COSA program and the COSA who is still suffering to be as direct and unencumbered as possible.

Betsy H

*COSA  
should  
remain  
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Non  
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service  
centers may  
employ  
special  
workers*