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In This Issue

Forgiveness

When I first came to the COSA program I heard the members talk about forgiveness. I thought to myself “I don’t see how I can ever forgive.” I had too much pain to even consider that forgiveness could be an option. I continued to come back to COSA and started working the Steps. I saw that others before me had been able to forgive and heal and this gave me hope.

The more I worked the Steps, the more I was able to learn about addiction in general and I began to have compassion for my husband. I made attempts at forgiveness but it was so hard for me to let go. I had some misconceptions about forgiveness. I thought if I were to forgive my husband for the pain he caused me, it meant that what he did was acceptable. If I said I forgive you, that would mean that what you did to me was okay. I also thought that forgiveness meant I cannot feel my pain ever again. There was a part of me that needed to hold on to my anger so I would not forget how his actions hurt me. I did not want to be made a fool of. I thought withholding forgiveness somehow gave me safety.

Ten years ago my family went through something very devastating and tragic and I soon began to learn how to forgive. My oldest brother was shot and killed by his wife in a domestic violence situation. My sister-in-law was angry at my brother and got a gun and shot him and left him to die. It was devastating to me. I was in shock and went into a deep depression. What made matters worse was that my other brother had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and we were prepared to lose him, so when we lost our older brother first it was traumatic to say the least. While I was dealing with all this pain was when I learned how to forgive.

While I was going through court hearings and funeral arrangements, I had a hatred and anger in my heart. It started to affect who I was. It overtook me almost every day. I had too much anger to enjoy any good. I became depressed and found it hard to go on from day to day. Many people told me the anger was killing me and I needed to find a way to let go of my anger. My sponsor suggested I try to forgive. It made me so mad. I remember saying, “I will never forgive my sister-in-law, she does not deserve my forgiveness.”

Deep down inside I knew the anger was not good for me. I decided that my sister-in-law had already taken my brother’s life and I did not want her to take my life too. I set out on a mission to figure out if forgiveness was the answer. I have always been a religious person so I went to my religion and did research about forgiveness. I remember reading literature that that basically said I am required to forgive. Reading this made me mad!

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Seventh Tradition: Financial Report

December 17, 2013-February 28, 2014

<u>Group</u>	<u>Amount</u>
AZ-02	\$96.00
CA-08	\$108.00
CA-23	\$90.00
Central Arkansas	\$25.00
Columbus, OH	\$25.00
Ft. Worth, TX	\$81.58
Houston Sunday Night	\$91.00
Irvine, CA	\$42.00
Long Branch, NJ St. Anselm	\$25.00
Louisville, Friday night	\$150.00
Memphis Group	\$50.00
MI-01	\$40.00
North Vancouver, BC	\$100.00
NYC	\$100.00
Omaha, NE Monday Night	\$15.00
Orange, CA	\$25.00
San Francisco Intergroup	\$463.50
San Luis Obispo	\$91.00
Santa Rosa, CA	\$126.00
South Bend, Mishawonka	\$50.00
TX-01	\$50.00
Tenth Step Telemeeting	\$40.00
Waterloo, Iowa	\$100.00
Individual	\$858.43
Individual Recurring via Authorize.net	\$820.00
Donation Match	\$40.00
Paypal Recurring (Completed)	\$230.00
Total*	\$3,932.51

***Totals do not include Convention related donations.**



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



By the Fellowship - For the Fellowship

Balance , the newsletter of the International Service Organization of **COSA** is published six times a year. The ISO holds the copyright to this newsletter Editing, Design, Production & Layout by COSA Literature Committee

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/Writing_Guidelines_Revision_20110521_Final.pdf

Please send your articles to COSACopy@yahoo.com or by snail mail to the

**ISO of COSA Central Office
9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 212
Houston, TX 77024 U.S.A.**

**Phone: 866-899-2672
E-mail: info@cosa-recovery.org**

By the Fellowship - For the Fellowship

Letter from the Chair

Letter from the Chair

Something has changed in me as a result of the service work I am doing. I can't quite put my finger on it, but I know that my life is easier. I don't seem to have as many "buttons" to push, and I can't remember the last time I've participated in someone else's drama. I still have my own from time to time, but not nearly as often or for as long.

The biggest change I have noticed is that it's not nearly as big a deal when I make a mistake, forget a project, or miss an e-mail. Don't get me wrong; it's still very important to me to be responsible, and, well, perfect. But when I turn out to be just another member of the human race, it's really okay. The laughter comes quicker, and the shame sometimes doesn't show up at all.

The Nominating Committee is doing interviews for the COSA members that have been nominated for Board service next year. It was a phenomenal experience talking to these men and women regarding possible Board service. One of the things that I noticed was that COSA members are busy doing life. There are new businesses, and travel, and school, and families, and all sorts of exciting adventures that folks are engaged in. One of the lessons I learned from that is that recovery is for life. Life is not for recovery. If my recovery is not enlarging and enriching my life, I'm doing something wrong.

Please think about sending your money to serve COSA if life is getting in the way of your own involvement. Your first three months of donations to the International Service Organization of COSA will be matched by gifts from two generous COSAs in our fellowship. If we don't have \$3000 in new recurring donations by June, we'll lose money that is essential for COSA to move forward. Please donate by using PayPal on the homepage of the website at cosa-recovery.org.

But we're not just about asking what you can do for us. The weekly meditations, the faster response to e-mails and voicemails, and the Teleconference Step Studies are just some of the ways we are trying to serve the fellowship. I just wrote the letter from the Chair for the Annual Report, which you'll see on the Delegate website soon. In it, I highlighted some of the accomplishments that the Board has made so far over the last nine months this team has been working together. I was amazed and grateful at what we and our collective Higher Powers have done. Read the Annual Report for some of the details.

Thanks for all you do for COSA, and thanks for the recovery work you are doing that is changing your life, and the lives of people around you. You do make a difference.

Hugs,
Claudia

Step Three

If someone had told me five years ago that a day would come when I would be willing, even for one second, to put anything ahead of my own will (except maybe the addicts in my life), I would have thought that they were crazy. But the gift of utter desperation that came as my own co-addiction progressed changed almost everything that I once thought true.

In Step One, I finally surrendered. Years of my own best thinking had made my life increasingly unbearable. I was isolated, heartbroken, desolate, and in such emotional pain that I no longer wanted to live. When I finally surrendered, I also gave up my belief that I could keep myself safe by relentless attempts to think my way out of situations and to control everything around me. I realized that all my best efforts had failed miserably. Worse, it was an illusion even to think they could work. I admitted how deeply powerless I was over my own compulsive behavior. The unmanageability was so clear there was no denying it anymore. I was willing to do *anything*, even to revisit the idea of a Higher Power if that is what it took to have a life that wasn't constant misery.

I am so grateful that in Step Two I was given the freedom to believe in a God of my own understanding, not one that was determined for me, either by the fellowship, or by the religion that I was raised in. I was reminded that I didn't have to have perfect faith or understanding but simply a willingness to believe. Looking around my meetings at those who had worked the Steps before me, I was able to believe there was a spiritual answer to my problem.

After I had worked the first two Steps, it was time to make a decision. The beginning of Step Three for me was understanding precisely what I was turning over. For me, *my will* is everything that goes on in my head—it is my thinking, my perceptions, my feelings, my attitudes, my beliefs—if it is happening between my ears, that's my will. Could I turn that over? Looking at the wreckage my life had become gave me the answer I needed.

For me, *my life*, as expressed in Step Three, is defined by my actions. Could I turn that over and be willing to let my newfound Higher Power direct my actions? Surely the process and had to be better than beating my head against the wall trying to get people to love me no matter what it cost, trying to "fix" and manage my husband's addiction to no avail, and acting on my pain, grief, and anger in ways that caused me to hurt myself and those around me.

Based on the work I had done in the first two Steps, the verdict was in: I was willing. Everything else I had done up to that point had failed. It was time to try doing it a different way. I decided to turn my life and my will over to the care of my newfound Higher Power.

Today, I understand that this decision was a just a beginning. Just making the decision, while a step in the right direction, was not going to automatically teach me how to actually live out that decision. I first turned over my will and my life, in practice, by working Steps Four through Nine. Today, I act out that decision, one day at a time (and not always perfectly), by practicing Steps Ten through Twelve. Today, the Steps tell me how to seek and act on God's will for me. What a burden that lifts off my shoulders; I don't have to figure it out alone.



Made a decision to turn our will and our lives
over to the care of God as we understood God.



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.

Forgiveness-cont'd.

I am required to forgive? Surely there must be an exception in this case.

I asked my Higher Power to help me because I had no idea how to forgive. It truly seemed impossible to me. I went to my sponsor for help and she gave me a plan, a plan I did not like, by the way. My sponsor had me pray every day for my sister-in-law. My sponsor instructed me to pray for all good things for my sister-in-law. I told my sponsor, "How in the world can I do that when I do not want her to have good things?" My sponsor explained that it does not matter if I believe the things I am saying or if I do not want her to have good things. My sponsor said, "Trust the process." I was in enough pain that I decided to accept her suggestion and I began praying. I prayed for my sister-in-law to have peace, to be blessed, to have love surround her, to be guided by God, to be able to get sober, to find happiness, to be given all blessings and things she may need. It felt wrong but I did it. I did it every day. Some days I would just cry to my Higher Power "How can you require me to forgive? This is too hard and it is not fair!" My sponsor continued to encourage me to keep praying. After a few months of praying it became easier and I started to add to my prayer, asking my Higher Power to help me to forgive someday. That day came.

It was almost one year later that I had an amazing spiritual experience. I was at the sentencing hearing at my sister-in-law's trial. I was waiting outside the courtroom and there on the bench sat my sister-in-law. I did not know how to react. My sister-in-law walked up to me and stated she really needed to talk to me. I put my hand up and said no. My sister-in-law told me it was important and had to do with my other brother (the one who had cancer). I allowed her to talk. My sister-in-law stated that a few days before my brother died he bought a birthday present for our brother and she wanted to

Continued on page 8

Step Four

At first, Step Four felt really scary. Early in recovery I was filled with shame about myself and my predicament. I felt angry and fearful, even though I wasn't aware of the extent of it much of the time. I was in denial about a lot of things and had become very isolated. I was also a die-hard perfectionist and desperately afraid of making mistakes. This made it hard for me to open up and be honest with anyone, even (and especially) myself. After much stalling – which I don't recommend – I approached Step Four with all the earnestness and thoroughness I could muster.

What I have learned, to my relief, is that the Fourth Step is not a method for flogging others or myself. It is just as it describes itself to be: an inventory, a stock taking. It's simply a way of becoming aware. In fact, the Fourth Step for me is ultimately about forgiveness and peace.

For some, the focus on *ourselves* in the COSA Fourth Step seems a bit odd. Isn't the sex addict the "reason" for my being in COSA in the first place? Over time, what becomes more and more clear to me is that it is *only* in looking at my own part that I can truly find serenity. I used to constantly look to others to "make me" happy, make me feel safe and secure, or fulfill my life. My inner peace became contingent on those people: their moods, their attitudes, and ultimately whether they were in relationship with me or not. What I know now is that when I do this, I give all my power away.

The Steps have helped me turn the focus back to myself and my Higher Power, where it belongs. The grace of my Higher Power is *always* with me, if I am open to it. This openness is healthy reliance, and with this reliance, the Fourth Step helps me focus on where I *do* have power to change, where I *do* have choices: me. This realization has been the key to my serenity and a new sense of inner strength.

Working the Fourth Step has been a life-changing experience. It has helped me to see the consistent undercurrent of low self-esteem and fear that clouded most all of my perceptions and choices, not just those related to my qualifier and co-sex addiction. Taking responsibility for myself was a new concept and something that I certainly haven't done gracefully at times. I'm still in the process of recovering. I still have "off" days, and I certainly don't do things perfectly, but I feel much more comfortable being perfectly imperfect me. While I don't share my innermost recovery issues with everyone, I don't feel shame about them anymore either. Thanks to working the Steps, I feel more integrated and more whole. Who I present to you is who I truly am. I can be a nurturing friend to myself. I have more to give to others, and in a healthy way. Today I recognize that I have choices. I certainly couldn't have made these statements before recovery.

The Fourth Step process is like cleaning out a drawer. There are some great and useful things inside, but unless I stay aware of what I have and keep the clutter out, I won't be able to find what I need when I need it. So, from time to time I take a look at what I've got. I organize and simplify. I get rid of what I don't want – the things that are weighing me down, that I don't have use for anymore – and I identify the things I'd like to keep. I also recognize where I might need something new.

Sounds harmless and easy, right? I certainly wasn't able to achieve this level of calm



Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Forgiveness

Step Three-cont'd.

If someone had told me five years ago that I would be willing to turn my will and my life over to some illusory Higher Power “thingy” and then act on that decision by practicing the principles of the Steps, I would have told them they were nuts. I would have told them that because I was just not desperate enough yet. Today, I am grateful that my battle with my own co-sex addiction brought me to a point where I *was* desperate enough. Before recovery, I never knew what a beautiful gift life could be. I didn't know what it was like to be loved by others for who I truly am. I had good intentions, but was rarely able to act on my values. Today, I can live with less fear and need to control because I have faith in my God. Today, I don't do it perfectly, but I have finally become someone that I like, someone worthy of my own love, and worthy of being treated with respect. Most important, I have found a source of power and strength that guides me in ways that my own will never could.

I'm so glad I made that decision.

~Anonymous

Forgiveness-cont'd.

make sure he was given the present and told me to talk to her lawyer to get the gift. I thanked her and I ran to the bathroom. The tears began to run down my face and I began crying uncontrollably. I looked in the mirror and at that moment I knew in my heart I had forgiven her. I did not know how or why. I only knew there was peace and love in my heart and the anger was gone. I stood there looking in the mirror realizing I had just witnessed a miracle.

I have had ten years to process what happened to me and I have come to learn new truths about forgiveness: 1) Forgiveness is a gift that is given to me. It is not something I can do on my own. It is something that my Higher Power gives me. 2) I believe the reason my Higher Power requires me to forgive is that he loves me so much he does not want me to carry the hate and anger in my heart. He loves me so much he wants to bless me with freedom and peace. 3) Letting go and being willing to forgive feels more fulfilling and satisfying than holding onto anger and resentment. 4) Forgiveness is something I do for myself. It does not matter if the other person deserves forgiveness. It is something I do for me and it has nothing to do with the other person.

I have been able to learn from this experience and today I have been able to forgive my husband. It has been a freeing experience to let go and forgive. It is the best thing I can do for myself. I am worth it.

~Connie P.,
Mesa AZ

Support COSA!

Sign up right now to give monthly to the International Organization of COSA and **you could see your donations DOUBLED!**

Two anonymous **donors have offered to match the first three months of contributions from donors who sign up to make ongoing monthly donations.** There is \$3,000 of matching money available!

A gift of \$30 per month becomes \$180 dollars in the first three months.

A gift of \$50 per month becomes \$300 in the first three months. And so on.

Your donation is completely tax-deductible.

If we don't hit the \$3,000 dollar mark by the end of June, we will lose that matching money. Don't let that happen.

If you already give monthly, thank you! If you want to increase the monthly amount you give, that money will go toward the match as well.

Please consider making a monthly donation to the International Service Organization of COSA to help others experience the relief that COSA has brought you.

Your gift of \$10, \$20, \$30, or \$50 monthly can make all the difference...

Here's the link to get started: <http://www.cosa-recovery.org/donations.html>

Step Four-cont'd.

objectivity in working Step Four the first time. Through my years in recovery, though, I've come to realize (and have witnessed in others) the transformation that happens as a direct result of this internal housekeeping. So, despite the often uncomfortable feelings that may come up in doing an inventory, I know that the awareness I gain will bring healing and positive change.

Today I have a rich, fulfilling life guided by my Higher Power, self-responsibility, and the principles of this program. Today, I feel excited and free, and for that I am so grateful.

~Betsy H.

As seen in Volume 4, Issue 5 of the Balance.

Opportunity to Support COSA through Matching Donations!

COSA Book Update

Update on COSA Book

Dear COSA in Recovery,

The fellowship asked for it: a 'Big Book' of its own.

Now, a full COSA text is the top priority of the COSA Literature Committee.

What does that mean for you?

It means that the Literature Committee will not put out any new booklets until the text is done. The *Balance* will still come out every other month as usual.

While the book is eagerly anticipated, it will be a multi-year project and we appreciate your patience as we work toward this goal.

In the meantime, many helpful COSA booklets are available for purchase (including literature on all Twelve Steps!). The *COSA Meeting Guide*, past issues of the *Balance* newsletter, as well as literature for newcomers are available as free downloads from the COSA website, www.cosa-recovery.org.

Much gratitude and appreciation to all who have contributed to the development of the book so far! In order to streamline our efforts, the COSA Board decided to combine the contributions and talents of the Book Committee with the Literature Committee. We hope this will help move the project toward completion.

If you are interested in contributing to the COSA book in some way—as a writer, an editor, a reader, an administrator, or with a fundraiser— we need you! If you are inspired to get involved, in any way, big or small, send an e-mail to the Literature Committee at cosacopy@yahoo.com.

Thanks so much.

In Service,
Your COSA Literature Committee

COSA Has a New Online Store. Check it Out!!

There's a great new way to buy COSA literature!

Were you frustrated by our antiquated online store? Well, please visit our up-to-date site at <http://cosa-store.myshopify.com/> and purchase some MP3s, a few booklets, a CD, or a medallion. You'll find it's a lot more user-friendly and pleasant to use.

We've added descriptions for each of the literature pieces, and the literature which was just approved is available. Please check out:

- Steps Ten, Eleven, and Twelve
- Sponsorship (revised)
- Men in COSA
- The Healing Power of Giving

All of the recordings from Summerlin 2013 and Vancouver 2012 are available in CD or MP3 format, and these have descriptions to help you choose as well. We'll be adding other MP3 recordings in time.

Our customers from the old online store were not imported into the new site, so please reregister the first time you visit. You may also choose to shop as a guest. You'll use a major credit card to make your purchase.

We'd love to hear your feedback. If you have comments, please e-mail us at cosatechcom@yahogroups.com

In Service,
The COSA Technology Committee

Free COSA literature now downloadable!!

Four COSA pamphlets are now available as free downloads on our website. Just follow the link below and click on these titles to download the pamphlet in PDF format:

- Welcome to the Sunlight
- COSA FAQs
- COSA Tools
- Defining Co-Sex Addiction

In addition, you can now download past *Balance* issues, going all the way back to 1994 for free! You'll find personal shares on every Step, as well as Tradition shares, and questions on each Step. These are first-person reflections you won't find anywhere else.

You can find these great resource here:

<http://www.cosa-recovery.org/freedownloads.html>

These pieces are great for carrying the message to newcomers or to support your own recovery!



<http://www.cosa-recovery.org/literature.html>



Literature Committee Call for Diversity

Help make COSA literature as inclusive and effective as possible.

There is no simple way to describe the “usual” COSA member or COSA experience; as individuals, we have a broad range of life experiences and perspectives. As a fellowship, though, we unite as a multifaceted, sparkling gem.

As your Literature Committee, we want the COSA literature to truly reflect this diversity within our unity. We want COSA newcomers, no matter who they are, to see themselves reflected in our writings.

Right now we are especially in need of COSA male perspectives, as well as those of COSA parents, COSA adult children, and others who may be currently underrepresented in our literature. If you are interested in sharing your unique COSA perspective, we invite you to send us your written contributions, or join us on the Literature Committee in some capacity. Please email COSAcopy@yahoo.com for more information.

We value your input, and together, we can help carry the message of COSA’s hope and healing to others.

With gratitude,
Betsy H., for
The COSA Literature Committee

Call for Spanish Language Translators

¿Habla usted español?

COSA is taking its international status to a new level. The Spanish translation team has produced some literature in Spanish, but we are currently hoping to expand the size of our team in order to facilitate this process.

We are currently looking for bilingual COSA members who are willing to translate or edit translated material.

If you interested in joining a dynamic team of translators and you want to carry the COSA message to Spanish speakers who still suffer please contact cosacopy@yahoo.com.

Tradition Three: The only requirement for COSA membership is that our lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior. The members may call themselves a COSA group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

The Third Tradition is very close to my heart; it tells me that I belong and have a place in COSA. It also reminds me how important it is to extend the hand of fellowship to *anyone* who wants to attend COSA to recover from the devastating effects of compulsive sexual behavior.

When I first came upon the COSA fellowship, I mistakenly took it to be a recovery group for the “partners of sex addicts” only. I did not yet understand the Traditions. I am grateful that my understanding has grown.

I felt outright terror later in my recovery when I began to realize that I was a double-winner. I was afraid that if anyone in COSA found out I was an addict too, I would be “kicked out.” I had often heard the opinions of well-meaning, deeply hurting people after meetings regarding sex addicts. I was certain I was a COSA, but would I still have a place? Thankfully, I was gently reminded of the Third Tradition. There are boundaries, my COSA meeting is not the place for me to talk about outside issues, but as long as I have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior, no one can show me the proverbial door. I am grateful today for the grace and acceptance that my fellow COSA members have shown me.

To me, this Tradition is very much about belonging and inclusion. It tells me that no matter who you are, what your gender, sexual orientation, or how you were affected by compulsive sexual behavior, you have a place in COSA if you want one. COSA saved my life; moreover it helped me find a life worth living. I can't imagine what it would have been like if I had been denied recovery based on differences. I am deeply aware of the healing power of the COSA program; I would never wish to condemn any hurting human being, to withhold the healing and life changing power of recovery from anyone who wants it, or to possibly sentence them to the horrible isolation and darkness of this illness that I know so well.

I love that there is really no “membership rule” other than that someone believes their life has been affected. It is an individual decision that no one else has the power to make for me, or anyone else. As a fellowship, what we have received freely, we give away freely. We require no dues for membership, allegiance pledges, or forced way of self-identifying. There is no checklist of criteria to determine who is a “pure” COSA member. If you've been affected, there is a place for you. You belong too.

The rewards of this Tradition are huge for me. It lets me, from the heart, learn to focus on similarities rather than finding reasons to be certain that we are so different, that I have nothing to learn from you. I grow when I practice this Tradition. When I am willing to listen, the fact that you are male and I am female, the fact that our sexual orientations may be different, that we may have been affected in different ways, all cease to matter, and I gain the benefit of learning from your journey, your courage, and your strength.

Today I know there is something I can learn from every single COSA member, if I will but listen.

Traditions

Tradition Three-cont'd.

This Tradition also offers me some practical guidance. It tells me that I belong; it also keeps my meetings focused on only one thing--COSA recovery. We don't affiliate our name with any outside entity--no matter how worthy, thus avoiding potential division. When I honor this Tradition, I make it possible for the gifts of recovery to come true for anyone who wants them.

~Amy E.

Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or COSA as a whole.

Tradition Four encourages a balance of freedom and accountability, something that I have been working toward in my individual recovery. For me, attaining a healthy, right-sized sense of self involves being free and self-actualized, while also being considerate of others to the best of my ability. In my understanding of sobriety, the two are equally important and strengthen one another.

Each group may have distinctive needs, based upon its members, region, or specific circumstances. Tradition Four encourages groups to be responsive and meet these needs quickly and directly. For example, a group may wish to change from an open-sharing format to a steps and traditions focus. It may change from an hour-long meeting to an hour and a half, or it may meet early on the third week of the month. The meeting I attend changed from a women-only group to being open to both men and women COSAs. We accomplished this through discussion and a group conscience vote, guided by our Higher Power. Groups are free to exercise any of these options – and many others – in order to help their members grow and to effectively carry the message of recovery.

This freedom comes with responsibility. Since the conduct of any COSA group may reflect upon the COSA fellowship as a whole, we want to represent COSA in a healthy and favorable way to those seeking recovery and to our local community. For example, my group aims to be welcoming, supportive and safe for its members. In our interactions with the church we rent a room from, we pay our rent on time, we are courteous and tidy, consistent and cooperative. All of these seemingly small actions contribute to our shared well-being. We can recover and help others recover most effectively when our groups are guided by the good, orderly direction of the Twelve Traditions.

Matters that may affect other COSA groups or the whole fellowship need careful attention and thoughtful discussion before any action is taken. The vitality of the fellowship and its ability to serve depend upon it. Some matters are best resolved at our annual Delegate meeting and with the guidance of the trusted servants of the ISO of COSA. While consulting the entire fellowship is less immediate than making a quick decision at our local group, I have faith in this process. I want the help of COSA to be there for the next person who needs it. The balance of autonomy and responsibility ensure that it will be.

~Betsy

As seen in Volume 6, Issue 6 of the Balance.

Carrying the Message through Service

Service keeps my brain out of trouble. Without it, troubling questions arise, such as: What is my purpose here on earth? When I am helping others, that question is answered easily and satisfactorily. I have often doubted whether I am entitled to or deserve joy. Service mutes that insecurity as well.

Joy is a major motivator that keeps me seeking service. That's not the only perk. When I share what I've learned with sponsees, I'm reminding myself of the way I want to live. I also get to watch others grow. Wow, that's indescribable.

I joined the board of the International Service Organization of COSA to learn how to work well with others. I wanted to serve the fellowship, but the primary purpose of my service is my own growth.

In my working life, I sneered, rolled my eyes, and sat ready to attack while in meetings. This summer I spent four consecutive days in meetings with the ISO of COSA Board. I prayed for change within, before sitting down to the first day of the retreat.

Looking back, what happened is one of the most beautiful miracles of my recovery. We spent our first chunk of time setting up a structure for decision making. We made consensus a priority. We made time for everyone to weigh in. We allowed ourselves to disagree.

You know what happened? Many times I changed my mind based on the points my fellow COSAs made. That was simply astonishing. This is not how I remember being pre-recovery. Reconsider my decision based on others' input? Not me. I stick to my guns. I argue my point. I pay lip service to differing opinions.

But not here.

Here, we let our group's Higher Power lead us. Trusting others became a guiding principle.

I took those philosophies home with me. You know what I get from them? A new freedom and a new happiness. Immeasurable gifts I gained from the simple act of service.

~Emily G.

ISO of COSA Board Member

COSA Service-Carrying the Message

Meditation

Gifts of the COSA Program

I have been in COSA almost three years. I have read and heard the "Gifts of the COSA Program" reading many times, and I usually hear something new each time. I always thought that the phrase "gradually the gifts multiply" was beautiful. I liked the idea that recovery didn't just mean that my life would get better in a linear way, but even in an exponential way. Wow, what a concept! As I worked the Steps, I was amazed at the miracles of the program. When I first came to COSA, I was angry and at war with my partner. I was codependent with him, and with everyone I knew, except my two dogs. I only felt safe with animals. My partner didn't have a relationship with my dogs, and I resented him for this. I also excluded him from having a relationship with my dogs because they were mine, and I was going to keep it that way. My partner even told me when we were separated that he resented that I gave so much attention to the dogs. I wasn't ready to hear this, and I judged him harshly for even suggesting it.

In working the Steps and with the support of my fellowship, I have found that I can feel safe with people and animals. God loves me as I am, and following His will has led me to a better life. God still surprises me with good things in my life that are beyond what I even imagined for myself. A recent example involves my dogs. One of my dogs, Elvis, ate an avocado, peel and all, last week (but thankfully, not the pit). He seemed fine, but in the middle of the night, Elvis was vomiting all over the room. I jumped up to take care of him like I always do. I was tired and mad at myself for not keeping Elvis from the avocado. The next thing I know, my partner gets up and offers to help me take care of Elvis in any way he can. I have seen my partner grow to love my, I mean, OUR, dogs, and this was a miracle that God had planned for me, and I never expected. I felt love and gratitude to God and my partner. We were all on the same team. (And Elvis is fine too.)

~E.,
San Francisco, CA

Outreach on the Road

Stories of Hope from your Outreach Committee

[Note: our goal with this column is to feature stories from COSAs like you around the world who are willing to share examples of how you or your COSA meeting carry the COSA message to those who still suffer (our Fifth Tradition and Twelfth Step). There is no example too small to share and we believe your stories will inspire others in our fellowship to find new ways to do outreach in their community. We would love to hear from you, so if you have praise, suggestions, or a story to share with us please contact us at OutreachCommittee@cosa-recovery.org.]

Using the Annual Convention as a Springboard to start a COSA Meeting

Georgia K. from Nevada sent us this story about a COSA meeting that started in Las Vegas in the wake of the 2013 Convention.

"At the 2013 COSA Convention in Las Vegas, there was a meeting of anyone interested in starting a COSA meeting in Las Vegas, as there had not been a meeting in that large city with a great need for COSA for about 10 years. While I live in Northern Nevada, not Las Vegas, I attended that meeting. One person agreed to help get a meeting off the ground. She prepared flyers with information about the formation of a COSA meeting, and her husband took them to his local meetings. I agreed to send emails out to any and all persons near Las Vegas who had ever expressed interest in COSA about the formation of a meeting.

In June 2013, I came to Las Vegas and met with three people who were interested in starting the meeting. Plans were made, ideas were shared, and within a month the first meeting was held at a local AA clubhouse. Soon after, the meeting was registered with the ISO of COSA. For the first month, I called in to the meeting to act as a resource, to assist with procedures and answer questions. There are now 6-8 regular members in attendance and plans are already being made to begin a second COSA meeting in Las Vegas."

Way to go Nevada COSAs and thank you Georgia! This is a wonderful story of outreach in action and a creative way a COSA was able to practice the Twelfth Step by supporting the start of a face-to-face meeting from afar. The annual convention is a great place to spark the start of new COSA meetings. And it doesn't need to be limited to a meeting in the city hosting the Convention or even face-to-face meetings. What if some COSA double winners (double winners are people who qualify for more than one program) meet at the Double Winners Twelve Step meeting (on the Los Angeles COSA Convention Program this May) and decide to start a Double Winners Telemeeting! The possibilities are endless. It takes courage to start a meeting and wisdom to ask for help from those who have experience, strength and hope in starting and running meetings.

~Your Outreach Committee

Outreach in Africa

Kerry from Oakland, California shared this outreach story about her trip to Cape Town, South Africa:

"My partner and I recently traveled to Africa and I had the opportunity to attend the Thursday night COSA meeting in Cape Town, South Africa. Anytime I travel I like to look to



Outreach on the Road

Outreach on the Road-cont'd.

see if there is a local COSA meeting I can attend. When I looked up Africa on the cosa-recovery.org website I found the only registered COSA meeting on the continent of Africa was in Cape Town. I sent an email in advance just to confirm the meeting details since I would actually be arriving at the Cape Town airport just one hour before the meeting would begin that night. I got a very quick and welcoming email back from a member of the meeting. I looked forward to being able to have a meeting and experience COSA recovery in a different part of the world.

When I arrived, a woman with a big smile greeted me outside the building. She turned out to be the person I had emailed with. I am happy to report that COSA hugs are just as spontaneous in Cape Town as they are at the meetings I attend in the States. It never fails to amaze me how quickly I feel connected with people whom I've never met before but who are on the same path of recovery in COSA.

I was so grateful to go to a meeting. Even though we live on two different continents, I heard the similarities in our stories. And I also love seeing/hearing the differences in how COSA meetings work. For example, their meeting reads the entire Serenity Prayer, not just the first verse. It was wonderful and I'm now challenging myself to memorize the rest of it.

When the meeting closed we continued to talk and I learned their meeting has been around for some years. There is a strong core group and newcomers find their way to the meeting in large part through local sex addiction therapists. I discovered they had been unable to order anything from the COSA On-line Store because the company that handles our credit card sales is not equipped to handle some international cards. In addition I learned that they are unable to download the free literature, convention mp3s, and copies of the Balance available at the COSA website. I have renewed gratitude for the speed and easy access I have to our COSA resources.

Attending their meeting wound up being a wonderful opportunity for some COSA outreach service. With some creative thinking we were able to work out a plan to get a full literature order sent to them when I returned to the States. We are also working on ways to make our free literature available to them in other ways, like emailing in a different format. And in an effort to help them feel more connected to the fellowship as a whole, we are looking for a meeting here in the US that would be interested in "partnering" with the Cape Town meeting members!

Thank you Kerry! Sometimes carrying the COSA message can be as simple as attending a meeting when you are traveling someplace far away or driving to visit a meeting that is an hour or two away. One of the miracles of doing outreach in COSA is the amazing impact of taking even the smallest step. For every person who learns about COSA there is an exponential potential for reaching so many more people. Whether it is talking about how the Steps have helped you to someone already in the program who hasn't worked the Steps yet, or letting a social worker or therapist know about COSA recovery, it is up to all of us to create awareness of the healing many of us have found in COSA recovery. We can help the miracles of COSA come true for others if we talk about our program out in the light of day, outside our meeting rooms.

~Your Outreach Committee

Reunión Semanal por Teléfono en Español

COSA's very first Spanish-language Telemeeting has begun!/iCOSA ha lanzado su primera Reunión por teléfono en Español!

COSA en Español has its weekly meeting each Tuesday, from 5:30-6:30 p.m. Pacific Time.

Call-in information is as follows:

Telephone number: [1-712-432-1500](tel:1-712-432-1500) Passcode: 1057988#

Meeting will be open to COSA men & women only. (Closed to people who do not identify as COSAs.)

For additional information please check the Telemeeting Schedule here:

http://cosa-recovery.org/cosacall_schedule.html or http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Sp_Telemeetings.html (in Spanish)

If you are interested in being of service for this telemeeting, please contact:

cosaenespanol@gmail.com or Maritza_i@ymail.com

COSA en Español tiene su reunión semanal por teléfono en Español cada martes a las

5:30-6:30 PM tiempo Pacifico. Informacion de la llamada es la siguiente:

Número Telefónico - [1-712-432-1500](tel:1-712-432-1500) Código de acceso: 1057988#

Esta reunion esta abierta solamente para aquellos que se identificana a si mismo como un/una COSA.

Para obtener mas informacion por favor consulte el itinerario de telemeeting en

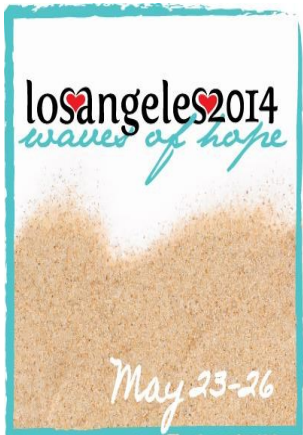
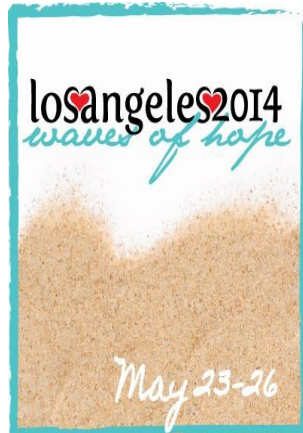
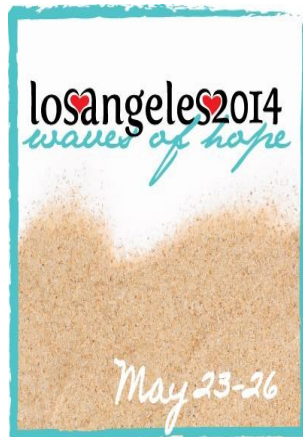
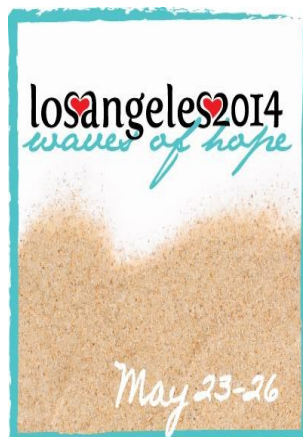
cosa-recovery.org sitio web (http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Sp_Telemeetings.html).

Sí usted está interesando en prestar servicio para está reunión por teléfono, por favor de ponerse en contacto con Maritza I. en cosaenespanol@gmail.com o Maritza_i@ymail.com.

Spanish Speakers Needed to Help at 2014 Convention!

For the first time, we will be offering Spanish language content during the upcoming Convention, both in workshops and Twelve Step Meetings. We need Spanish speakers who will be attending the 2014 COSA International Convention in Los Angeles to participate on Spanish language workshop panels. We have a variety of panels that seek your experience, strength and hope (ESH) – all that is needed is your willingness to share your story and how the COSA program has helped you. The speaking length will be between 5 and 15 minutes, depending on the panel. This is an opportunity to share with others that need to hear where you have been and where you are now. Please step up to multiply the gifts of COSA for yourself and others. If you have any questions, and/or are willing to help e-mail programcommittee@cosa-recovery.org.

COSA en Español



2014 Convention Program Now Available

The 2014 Convention Committee is excited to announce this year's expanded program and offerings! This year we are offering both day and conference rates. Take advantage of special early-bird registration through April 1!

The complete preliminary program is posted on the website: www.cosa-recovery.org/2014

Here is a sampling of some of the sessions being offered:

- The Serenity Prayer as a Guide to Step Work
- Recovery....In Writing!
- Sponsors in Short Supply? Consider Co-Sponsoring
- Emotional Reality: How identifying, experiencing, and managing our emotional selves affects recovery
- Conflict Resolution: Using Tools of Recovery with Your Partner
- Adult Children of Sex Addicts: Breaking the Cycle
- Romantic Relationships and Recovery: Building Healthy Intimacy
- From Confusion to Clarity: Working the Steps in Fifteen Minutes
- The Heart of Recovery: The Sponsoring Relationship
- What is a Double Winner and Am I One?
- Creating Healthy Sexuality in Recovery Using Your Principles, Values, and Outer Circle
- Finding Freedom with the Circles
- Construyendo Limites y No Paredes (in Spanish)

We will have five **speakers** featured at five different functions:

For the following COSA-sponsored events, your convention registration fee includes the talk; for food functions* the meal is an additional cost:

- Friday night kick-off
- Saturday luncheon*
- Sunday dinner*
- Monday brunch*

A COSA will also be speaking at the Saturday evening banquet sponsored by another fellowship holding its convention at the same hotel. COSA Convention attendees are invited to attend this function.

There will be close to 20 **Twelve Step Meetings** offered throughout the convention, including some with a specific focus such as Men, Women, LBGT, Double Winners, Children of Sex Addicts, and en Español.

The COSA Convention is also about support and having **fun!** Yes – we will celebrate the fun and joy in recovery! The second annual “No-talent Talent Show” and the new addition of “COSAoke” offer us a place to share of ourselves through music, entertainment, and laughter!

Be sure to visit the **COSA Bookstore** to see the COSA literature and other materials offered.

The **Silent Auction** is held to raise seed money for next year's convention. Groups or

Convention Program Available-cont'd.

individuals donate items which are then auctioned off at the convention through a written bidding process. We welcome any and all kinds of donations. Some ideas include jewelry, pottery, gift baskets, get-away weekends/weeks, art pieces, and new "re-gifted" items. Past donations have included items created through a group effort organized at a local meeting, an Intergroup function, or just a group of COSA friends such as beadwork, cards, bookmarks, or affirmations. We are in need of donations, and one does not need to attend to donate. If you have any questions about the silent auction, please e-mail the committee at silentauction@cosa-recovery.org.

Some attendees' reflections after last year's convention:

I am so much more connected in my program now. I took down people's phone numbers and have been making program calls, texts, or emails every day. I no longer feel isolated and alone! ~Larissa

I felt an instant connection with so many of the attendees. I felt an acceptance and understanding that I have only felt in my home group. ~ Maritza I.

We were reminded of the power of empathy, acceptance, and inclusion that's provided within the fellowship. I urge anyone who may suffer from co-sex addiction and codependency to seriously consider attending a conference at some point during their recovery. ~ Rob E.

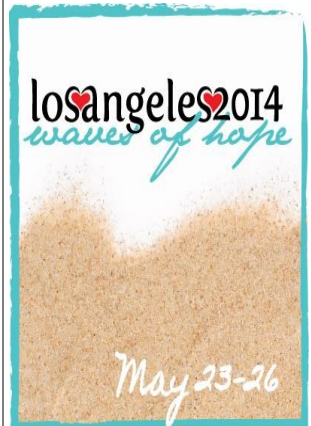
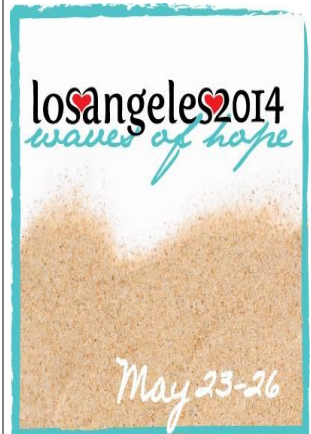
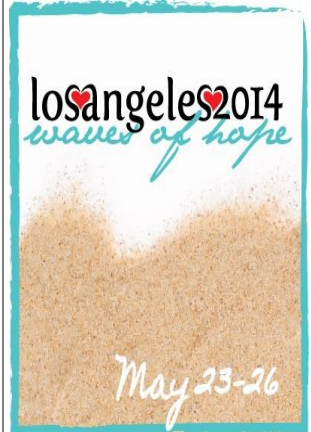
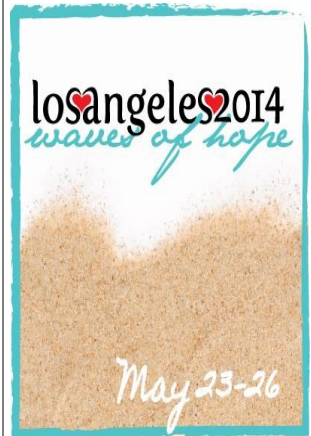
The Convention gave me a safe place to feel, learn and grow among friends and fellow COSAs who really understand what I'm going through. Convention was a gift from HP for me this year. I'm so glad I could attend. ~ Sue W.

I'm new in COSA and I'd never been to a Convention before this one. My sponsor recommended that I attend. It was definitely a jumpstart to my recovery. ~ Debra G.

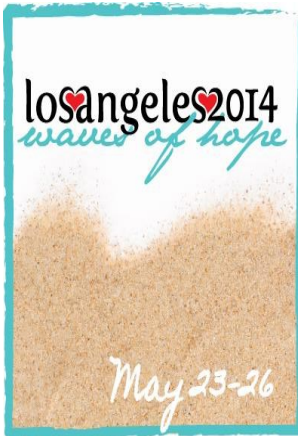
Being at convention with my fellow strong, amazing, brilliant and kind COSAs helped me to further accept and love myself, just as God accepts and loves me - exactly how I am as my perfectly imperfect human self. Each time I get this opportunity I grow and heal and become closer to the God of my understanding. ~ Sarah S.

I always feel Higher Power's presence at Convention... The convention was a totally spiritual experience for me, and I felt so very connected to my fellow COSAs and to my Higher Power that it was truly extraordinary! ~Linda P

There were people from all across the country, in different stages of recovery, all with their own stories and journeys. It is so enriching to meet and get to know others who share not only the pain and devastation of sex addiction and co-dependency, but the victories of recovery. ~ Sara P.



Service Opportunities 2014 Waves of Hope Convention



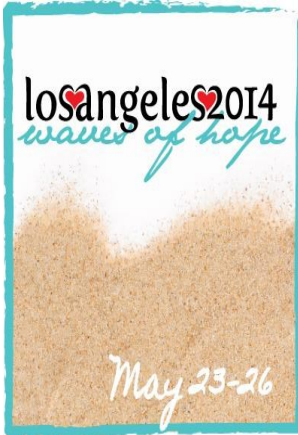
A Great Way to Provide Service: COSA's Silent Auction

At each convention, a silent auction is held to generate start-up funds for the following year's convention. Those in attendance may bid on items that are donated from the fellowship (you can donate whether you attend or not). Together we can all make our auction a success by generating needed funds while having fun!

We are in need of volunteers to help with the silent auction before and/or during the convention and **we need donations**. Previous donations have included time in vacation timeshares/vacation homes, framed artwork, handmade quilts, restaurant gift certificates, stained glass artwork, jewelry, self-care "baskets" and many handmade crafts.

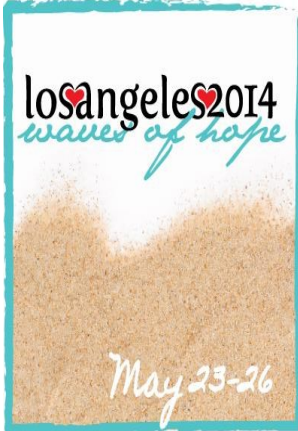
Do you have new items hanging around in your closets that you don't use? Have something you want to re-gift? Do you have a special talent for sewing, making note cards or jewelry that you would be willing to share by making something for the auction?

If you aren't able to attend the convention or send your donation with someone, that isn't a problem! We can help you find someone to bring the item or it can be shipped in advance of the convention. Call or email Becky (307-899-3297; beckysmk@bresnan.net) with any questions, to volunteer, and to get instructions on where to send your donation.



Convention Committee – Volunteers Sought

The entire convention is organized and run by volunteers. The convention committee is seeking volunteers to assist on several of the subcommittees (hospitality, registration, care and support, outreach, recording, teleconferencing, program, talent show). There are positions for those not attending the convention, those who can only work at the convention, and those who want to be a part of the planning. Not sure what you want to do? No problem, we can help match you (your available time, talents and interests) to a service position that you can enjoy! Join us as we strengthen our recovery, enjoy fellowship and have fun through service on the Convention Committee! Please contact Wendy W (volunteers@cosa-recovery.org ; 520-591-3453) to volunteer or if you have questions.



Waves of Hope-2014 Convention Program

2014 Convention Hours (Tentative)

Registration:	Thursday 6:30 pm–8:30 pm Friday Noon–7:15 pm Saturday 8:00 am–11:45 am Sunday 8:00 am–9:00 am
Hospitality Suite:	Fri-Sun 7:00 am–Midnight; Monday 7:00 am–Noon
Meditation Room:	Fri-Sun 7:00 am–Midnight; Monday 7:00 am–Noon
Bookstore:	Friday 3:00 pm–7:15 pm Saturday 8:00 am–11:45 am; 2:30 pm–8:15 pm Sunday 8:00 am–5:15 pm Monday 7:30 am–8:45 am; 11:45 am–2:00 pm
Silent Auction:	Drop off items during set-up on Friday, Noon–7:15 pm Saturday 8:00 am–Sunday 5:15 pm during Bookstore hours.

Tentative Schedule of Events

Friday, May 23 · 4:15 pm-5:45 pm

Meet and Greet

A gathering for those interested in an informal time of conversation, connecting, and collaborating with new and old friends. This is an excellent opportunity for first-time attendees to meet fellow COSAs and to begin the unique convention experience.

Friday, May 23 · 6:00 pm-7:15 pm

Convention Orientation

Kerry

ALL participants are strongly encouraged to attend this workshop, which is designed to benefit ALL Convention attendees, not just those who are attending a COSA Convention for the first time. An overview of the Convention is provided, as well as how to get the most recovery benefit out of it.

Friday, May 23 · 7:30 pm-9:15 pm

Opening Ceremony

Stephanie H. will provide an icebreaker activity.
Rob E. will share his COSA Story.

Friday, May 23 · 9:30 pm-11:00 pm

Meet and Greet

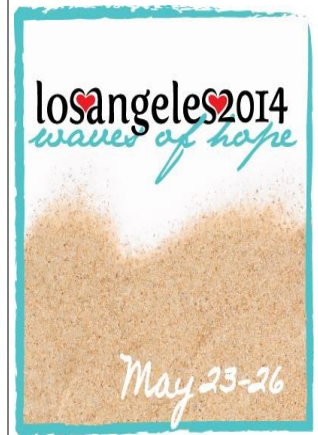
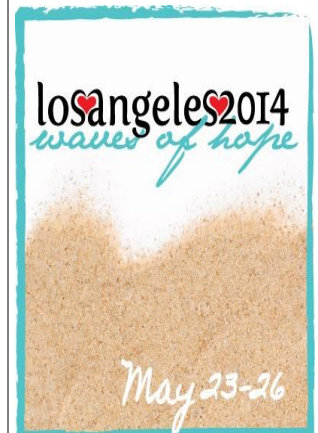
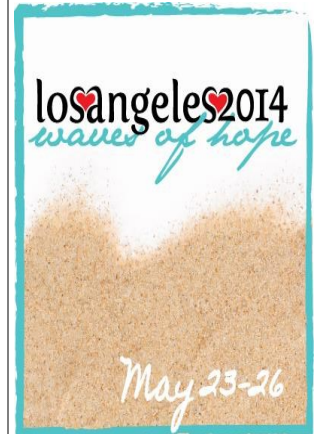
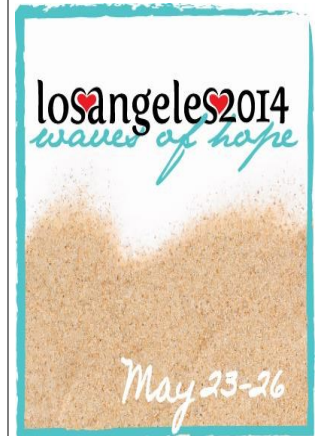
Another opportunity for those interested in an informal time of conversation, connecting, and collaborating with new and old friends, timed to follow the opening ceremony and welcome those who might have arrived after the earlier “Meet and Greet”.

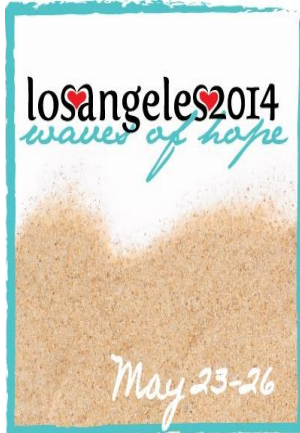
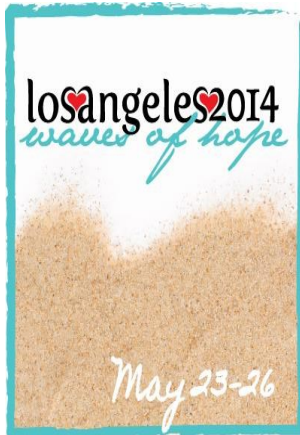
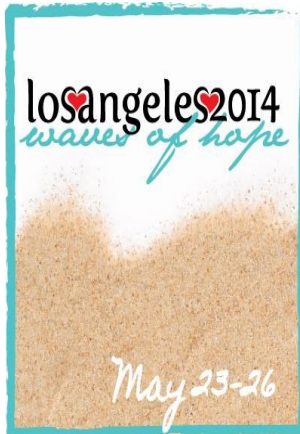
Saturday, May 24 · 8:00 am-8:45 am

Convention Orientation (2nd option)

Kerry

For participants who could not attend Friday night’s orientation, an abbreviated orientation





2014 Convention Program-cont'd.

is offered as an overview of the Convention, as well as how to get the most recovery benefit out of it.

Sábado 24 de Mayo · 9:00 am 5:15 pm

en Español

Estamos contentos de ofrecer sesiones y reuniones de Doce Pasos en Español.

Construyendo Limites y No Paredes

Moderador – Maritza I.

Panel (Cerrado)

Esta sesión será en español y asistirá a los participantes a entender que límites son. Un panel va a presentar las dificultades y triunfos que ellos han enfrentado en crear y poner límites.

Voces de COSA

Un panel de COSAs compartirán sus experiencias, fortaleza y esperanzas seguido

Saturday, May 24 · 9:00 am-10:15 am

Creating Healthy Sexuality in Recovery

Julie

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Defining principles, values, and healthy sexuality gives us tools to define what our own healthy sexuality behaviors are. Taking this sensitive subject into the light is recovering ourselves.

Sobriety Action Planning Using the Circles

Eleanor S.

Hands-on Workshop (Closed)

Learn about this helpful tool to take your recovery on the road. You'll receive a template and suggestions for transforming your Sobriety Circles into a daily action plan.

The Serenity Prayer as a Guide to Step Work

Kerry

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Have you ever been tangled up or triggered, and struggled to know which of the Twelve Steps holds the answer to your problem? The Serenity Prayer is a tool to show us where in the Steps we can turn.

Saturday, May 24 · 10:30 am-11:45 am

Emotional Reality: How identifying, experiencing, and managing our emotional selves affects recovery.

Rob E.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

A large part of recovery is accepting that our bad behaviors are actually maladaptive attempts to manage our emotional selves. We will explore how correctly identifying emotions affects recovery.

Continued on page 25

2014 Convention Program-cont'd.

Conflict Resolution Using Tools of Recovery with Your Partner

Wendy W. and Gopal K.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Twelve Step/Recovery- based tools for conflict resolution. A process to achieve understanding about the hows and whys of being on the same “team,” to harness the power of integrating our higher power into speaking and listening to one another, and ultimately come to a resolution we will try together.

Maintaining Serenity: Living With A Non-Recovering Addict

Moderator - Debra G.

Panel (Open)

Not all COSAs have partners who are actively pursuing recovery. Some of us live with partners in complete denial while others watch our partners try to “white knuckle” it through. How can we maintain our own serenity and sobriety amidst this backdrop?

Saturday, May 24 · Noon-2:30 pm

Luncheon

Jennifer C. will share her COSA Story.

Saturday, May 24 · 2:45 pm-4:00 pm

Riding the Recovery Wave: Working the Twelve Steps Through a Relationship Conflict-Part 1

Albert

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Conflicts in relationships can feel overwhelming and painful, making our lives unmanageable. This workshop demonstrates how to work the Twelve Steps through any conflict.

The Key to Serenity: Deepening Our Recovery on a Daily Basis

Moderator – Linda P.

Panel (Open)

A panel of COSAs will share their experience working the Tenth and Eleventh Steps including the gifts this simple daily practice offers. You do not have to have worked Steps One through Nine to benefit from this workshop; these Steps can be worked at any point in recovery.

Living Without Triggers

Dani S.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Our disease often leads us to seek out and soak in our triggers. This workshop will teach a simple way to use the Steps to be free from the pain and overwhelming feelings of any triggers, so you no longer have to put any effort into avoiding them.

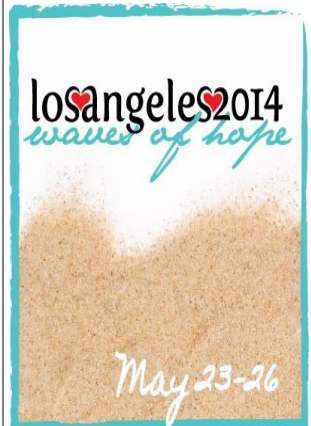
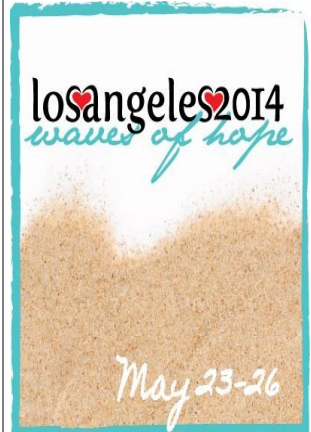
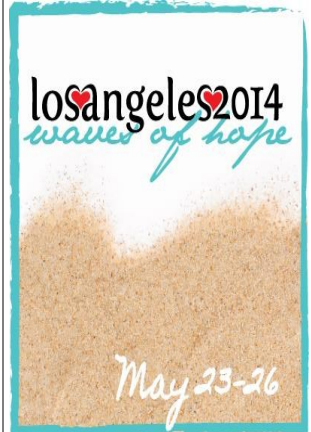
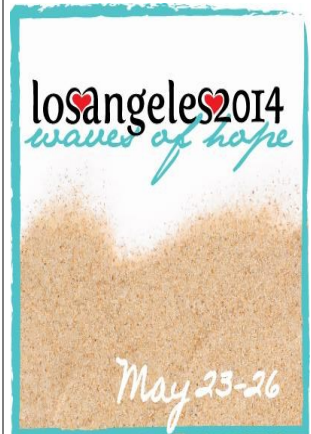
Saturday, May 24 · 4:15 pm-5:30 pm

Recovery...in Writing!

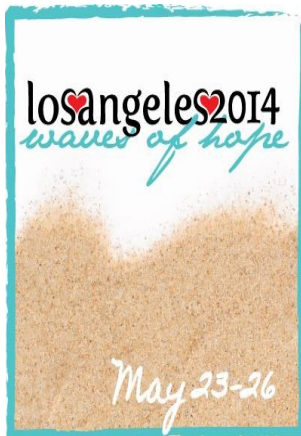
Betsy and Amy E.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Join us to learn about the progress on the COSA basic text, and how you can get involved! We will discuss the healing power of writing for recovery, whether it is individual writing or



2014 Convention Program-cont'd.



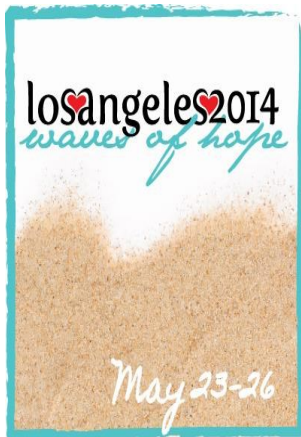
writing for possible publication. Workshop participants will have a focused time for writing and for sharing.

Adult Children of Sex Addicts: Breaking the Cycle

Moderator - Debra G.

Panel (Open)

Sex Addiction is a "family disease." The closer we look, the more we find. How do we best understand and heal from the intergenerational effects of this disease? How can recovery help us break the cycle?



Riding the Recovery Wave: Working the Twelve Steps Through a Relationship Conflict—Part 2

Albert

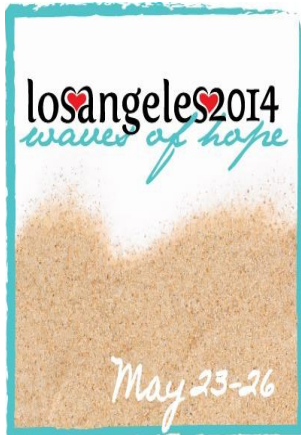
Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Conflicts in relationships can feel overwhelming and painful, making our lives unmanageable. This workshop demonstrates how to work the Twelve Steps through any conflict.

Saturday, May 24 · 7:00 pm-8:15 pm

COSA Voices

A panel of COSAs will share from their experiences, strengths, and hope followed by a time for attendees to share their own experiences, strengths, and hope.



Saturday, May 24 · Evening

Sarah B. will share her COSA Story as a guest speaker at another recovery banquet. COSA conference attendees are welcome to attend.

Sunday, May 25 · 9:00 am-10:15 am

What Are We Doing Here?! (Carrying The Message)

Dani S.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Our whole purpose in COSA is to help others find freedom from our common problem by working the Steps. But hardly anybody knows COSA exists! How do we share our experiences with friends, family, neighbors, professionals, and even the media, without embarrassing ourselves or breaking the Traditions?



Finding Freedom with the Circles

Betsy

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Participants will gain insights into how the Circles can help us identify the specifics of our own sobriety, move away from thoughts and behaviors that hold us back, and grow toward living life to the fullest! Our Circles evolve as we grow, and can be applied to specific situations, too.

Romantic Relationships and Recovery: Building Healthy Intimacy

Rob E. and Amy E.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

2014 Convention Program-cont'd.

How to engage in healthy romantic relationships is fundamental to all of us. We will cover how we get to know someone, intimacy and sex issues, and maintenance of a healthy romantic relationship.

Becoming Whole as Individuals: A Couple's Recovery Journey

Stephanie H. and John H.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

In this workshop you will learn how honesty, vulnerability and boundaries can awaken intimacy and spiritual growth within a relationship. Presenters, Stephanie H., a recovering COSA, and her partner John H., will share their experience, strength, and hope as they share their individual recovery stories with you.

Sunday, May 25 · 10:30 am-11:45 am

What is a Double-Winner and Am I One?

Moderator - Sara P.

Panel (Open)

In looking at one's sexual conduct, it is often helpful to view one's issues as two sides of the intimacy coin with addiction or compulsivity on one side and codependency or being a COSA on the other. Panelists will share personal experiences from sexual addiction, sex and love addiction, and sexual anorexia to help identify who and what is a double-winner.

Sponsors in Short Supply? Consider Co-sponsoring

Moderator – Sherry S.

Panel (Closed)

Join a panel of COSAs to hear and share the benefits and challenges of co-sponsorship: setting goals, maintaining integrity with goals, ensuring safe and inviting discussion, celebrating successes.

A Roadmap to the Twelfth Step

Kerry

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

The Traditions are our roadmap for learning how to practice the Twelfth Step. Is the difference between promotion and attraction a mystery to you? Do you want to know how to protect anonymity?

From Confusion to Clarity: Working the Twelve Steps in Fifteen Minutes

Claudia M. and Connie P.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

We will learn together how to unleash the power of the Steps by working them with a fellow member in fifteen minutes. Bring a very specific challenge to the workshop, and see how the Steps can bring you hope and help with a little honesty and vulnerability.

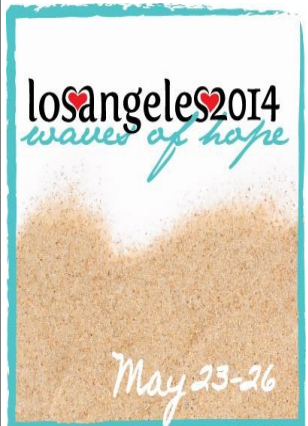
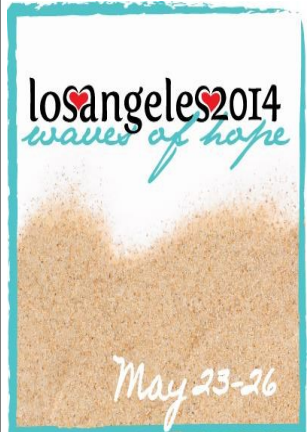
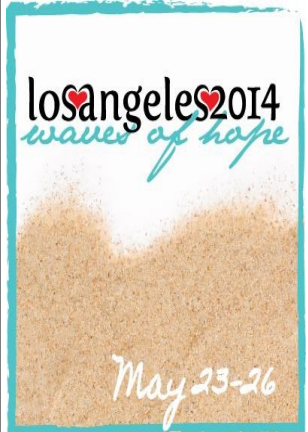
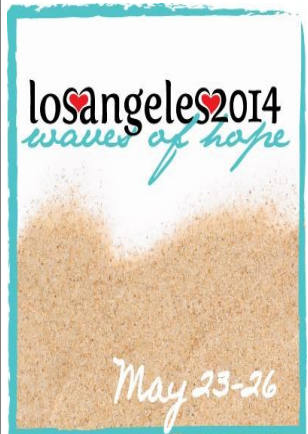
Sunday, May 25 · 2:30 pm-3:45 pm

Sexual Sobriety in Recovery: Discovering and Developing our Authentic Sexuality

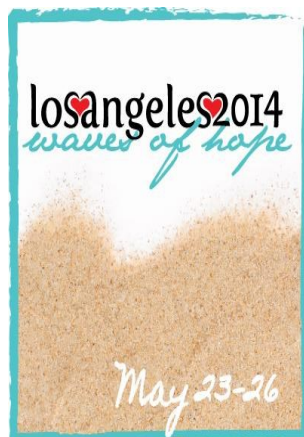
Amy E.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Has the very idea of sexual sobriety brought confusion or even shame? Have you wondered



2014 Convention Program-cont'd.



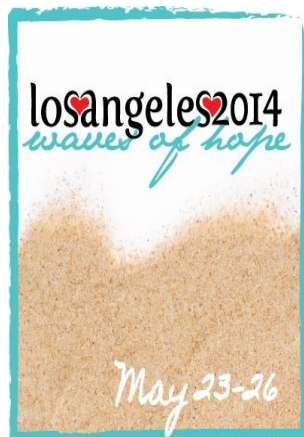
how to heal from the wounds of being affected by someone else's compulsive sexual behavior? Do you have a distorted sense of sexuality as shameful, triggering, or traumatic? Sex can be more positive, genuine, and affirming. Join us as we use the Steps and the Circles to move together towards healing and health.

COSA Service! - Get Involved and Make New Friends for Life!

Moderator – Wendy W.

Panel (Closed)

Service – another way to practice your program. Representatives from a variety of COSA committees will share information about the service positions available within their committees. They will answer your questions and share with you how to get involved.



The Heart of Recovery: The Sponsoring Relationship

Moderator – Linda P.

Panel (Open)

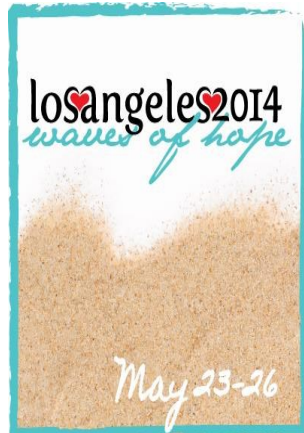
The Steps are not meant to be worked alone: this is a WE program! A panel of COSAs will share their experience with sponsorship and the gifts of being sponsored and sponsoring.

The Give-It-To-God Box: Decorate Your Own God Box and Learn to Use It!

Sue W. and Sarah S.

Presentation with Audience Participation (Open)

Come join us as we show you how to craft God Boxes! We will practice letting go and giving our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understand God. You will explore Step Three, decorate your own God Box, and begin using it in this relaxing workshop.



Sunday, May 25 · 5:30 pm-8:15 pm

COSA Banquet

Dani S. and Annie G.S. will share their COSA Stories.

Monday, May 26 · 9:00 am-11:30 am

Brunch

Mila T. will share her COSA Story.

Annie G.S. will offer a re-entry activity.

2014 Twelve Step Meetings

There are several meetings scheduled throughout the convention, including early morning, late night, as well as during the day.



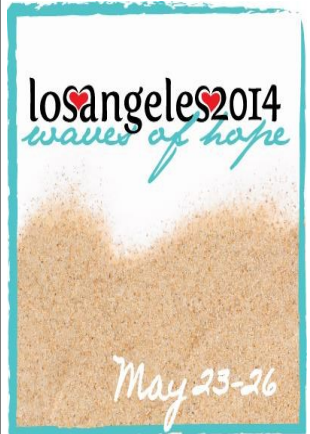
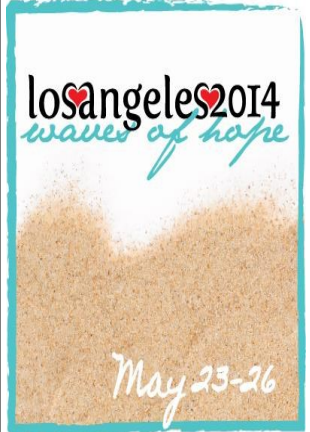
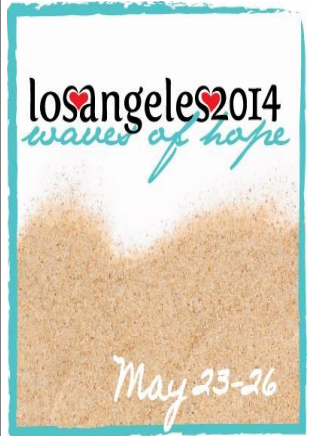
Traditional COSA Twelve Step Meetings that are open, and Traditional COSA Twelve Step Meetings that are closed.

2014 Convention Program-cont'd.

Meetings with a special focus:

- ◆ en Español
- ◆ Telemeeting members
- ◆ Four Month Step Workshop Group members
- ◆ The Tenth/Eleventh Step
- ◆ Adult Children of Sex Addicts
- ◆ Men
- ◆ Women
- ◆ LGBTQ
- ◆ "Double Winners"

We also have lots of opportunities for FUN and FELLOWSHIP including the Hospitality Suite, the COSA "no Talent" Talent Show, and MORE!



2014 Convention Flyer & Registration

2014 COSA International Convention Waves of Hope ♥ May 23-26 ♥ Los Angeles, California

Welcome to Los Angeles

This is the once-a-year event where you may obtain valuable information about working the Steps, reflect and grow in your recovery, and connect with other COSAs. It is a unique opportunity to share experience, strength, and hope with people from many regions. The convention kicks off with a speaker on Friday night followed by two days of workshops and panels on a variety of topics dealing with recovery. Special functions offer speakers who share their recovery stories. There are a variety of COSA Twelve Step meetings offered throughout the weekend, along with a hospitality room, meditation room, and many opportunities for fun and fellowship, such as the COSA "No Talent" Talent Show. Please join us!



2014 Program & Special Events

The Convention Committee is pleased to offer several additions to this year's program. The first is the expansion to four concurrent options during session times. There is a wide-variety of workshop topics such as recovery tools, working the Steps, and healthy sexuality. Certain workshops have special focus such as adult children of sex addicts, double winners, partners in recovery, and Spanish speakers.

COSA Speakers & Meal Options

Each day of the conference, COSA offers a special session that features a COSA's recovery story. All of our speakers are COSAs that share from their own experiences, strength, and hope. The first speaks on Friday night in conjunction with the convention opening. For those in the area who have never attended a convention, we invite you to attend this event without charge. Saturday Luncheon and Sunday Dinner will each feature a speaker. All registered attendees are welcome to attend; meals are purchased in advance as an option when registering. On Monday, the convention wraps up with a Brunch (also an option when registering), a speaker, and a re-entry activity.

Hotel & Convention Location

The convention is located at the LAX Marriott, located at 5855 West Century Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90045. The hotel offers a complimentary shuttle to and from the airport. Parking for convention attendees is \$12/day (\$26/day regularly). The contracted nightly rate is \$119/night (single or double occupancy) plus applicable taxes (for a total of \$137). It is critical to reserve your room under the COSA group block name *Waves of Hope*, so you get the discounted rate and COSA is not charged for unused rooms. To ensure you receive the special rate, consult the COSA website to go through the on-line reservation link or call the dedicated Group Reservations phone number 1-800-266-9432. You must ask for the *Waves of Hope* rate and book prior to **April 30, 2014**. Please note: do *not* call the hotel directly or the regular Marriott reservations phone numbers as they will not be able to make reservations under our group block/rate.

Service Scholarships

The COSA service scholarship fund will provide financial assistance to COSAs on a first come, first served basis, helping with the registration cost. COSA service scholarships are funded entirely by fellow COSAs; donations to this fund are greatly appreciated. To request financial assistance, write a brief statement describing your need and whether you will require 50% or a 100% scholarship to attend. Online registrants – check the box indicated for scholarship request and write your brief statement of need in the box provided. Mail-in registrants please include this as a note with your registration form. Service scholarships are in exchange for service hours at the convention (4 hour minimum) and are limited.

Care & Support

Part of the convention experience is receiving recovery support. For those attending the convention for the first time, there are Convention Mentors available to guide new attendees through the process. Indicate your need or willingness to help out on your registration.

Volunteering

The convention is run entirely by volunteers. Please consider helping with any number of positions (registration, hospitality, leading Twelve Step meetings, silent auction, recording, or a number of other areas). Indicate your willingness to help when registering; you will be contacted by the Volunteer Committee.

Silent Auction Donations

A fun way of raising seed money for the next convention is our silent auction. Please consider a donation which can be brought or shipped to the convention. You can donate even if you don't attend. For any questions, including shipping instructions, please contact silentauction@cosa-recovery.org.

For additional information, consult the website at www.cosa-recovery.org/2014 or contact the COSA Convention Committee at convention@cosa-recovery.org

REGISTRATION

2014 COSA International Convention

Waves of Hope ♥ May 23-26 ♥ Los Angeles, California

Please complete the following:

Name _____

City, State, Country _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Nametag (suggested format is first name, last initial, city, state, country if outside US):

Convention Registration Fee (Does not include meals)

- | | | | |
|--|-------|--|------|
| <input type="radio"/> Early Bird payment by April 1 | \$130 | Day Rates (Saturday or Sunday only): | |
| <input type="radio"/> Pre-registration payment by May 15 | \$150 | <input type="radio"/> Pre-registration by May 15 | \$80 |
| <input type="radio"/> Walk-in registration | \$160 | <input type="radio"/> Walk-in registration | \$85 |

Meals must be ordered & paid by May 15

- Saturday Luncheon with speaker \$38
- Sunday Dinner with speaker..... \$42
- Monday Brunch with speaker \$30

Indicate special dietary requirements/preferences:

- Vegetarian Dairy Free
- Vegan Sugar Free
- Gluten Free Fat Free
- Other _____

Scholarship Donation

- My donation to *the scholarship fund*..... \$ _____

Care & Support to Attendees

- I am a first-time COSA Convention attendee.
- I would like a "Convention Mentor" to support me at the convention.
- I would like a temporary sponsor at convention.
- I will be a "Convention Mentor" to first-time COSA Convention attendees.
- I will be a temporary sponsor to other returning COSA Convention attendees.

Additional Information

- I am a Delegate for my home group (please note, Delegate registration is a separate additional process).
- I attend teleconference meetings (a phone icon is included on your badge).
- I attend on-line meetings (a computer icon is included on your badge).

Volunteering (shift lengths vary)

- Work the registration table
- Help in Hospitality Suite
- Lead Twelve Step COSA meeting (materials provided)
- Work with the Silent Auction
- Work in the Bookstore
- Help with recording workshops or panels
- Assist with 7th Tradition at workshop or panel
- Teleconferencing

To help with scheduling volunteers:

Arrival Day _____

- Morning Afternoon Evening

Departure Day _____

- Morning Afternoon Evening

The COSA International Convention is a 100% volunteer effort and we need your help!

Silent Auction Donation

- I will donate to the silent auction. (Someone will contact you with further details.)

Payment (required at time of registration unless full scholarship requested).

Complete this form and send with check or money order in US\$ payable to **ISO of COSA**

ISO of COSA – Convention Registration
 9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 212
 Houston, TX 77024

Amount enclosed \$ _____

- I am requesting a service scholarship.

Registration Online
 Go to www.cosa-recovery.org/2014
 Payment by credit card only
 (via website interface)

Online Meetings/Online Message Boards

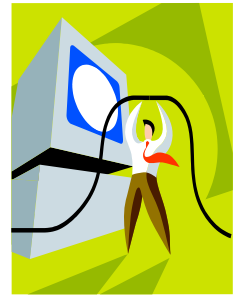
<http://www.cosa-recovery.org/online.html>

Join [COSA 12 STEP](#), a Yahoo Groups forum for COSA members. COSA 12 STEP is an announcement board owned and operated by the ISO whose main purpose is to help isolated COSAs connect and to support our online chat meetings.

Telemeetings—www.cosacall.com

For call in numbers for each Telemeeting, check the www.cosacall.com website.

DAILY	Daily Tenth Step	Noon (PT) (1 MT, 2 CT, 3 ET)
	Daily Eleventh Step	9:00pm (PT) (10MT, 11 CT, Midnight ET)
MONDAY	Step/Tradition Study	9:00am (PT) (10MT, 11 CT, Noon ET)
	Recovery Tools	5:00pm (PT) (6 MT, 7 CT, 8 ET)
TUESDAY	COSA En Español	5:30pm (PT) (6:30 MT, 7:30 CT, 10:30 ET)
	Step Study	7:00pm (PT) (8 MT, 9 CT, 10 ET)
WEDNESDAY	COSA Tools	4:00pm (PT) (5 MT, 6 CT, 7 ET)
THURSDAY	Serenity	6:00pm (PT) (7 MT, 8 CT, 9 ET)
FRIDAY	Step/Tradition/Concept Study	6:00pm (PT) (7 MT, 8 CT, 9 ET)
SATURDAY		5:00pm (PT) (6 MT, 7 CT, 8 ET)
SUNDAY	Men's Only COSA Mtg.	10:00am (PT) (11am MT, 12pm CT, 1pm ET)
SUNDAY	Eighth/Ninth Step Mtg.	11:00am (PT) (11am MT, 12pm CT, 1pm ET)



COSA Online & Telemeetings



Ship to Name: _____

Date: ___/___/___

Street/Apt: _____

Evening Phone: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

COSA Pamphlets

A Question of Recovery	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA FAQ ☐	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Media Information	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Tools ☐	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Defining Co-Sex Addiction/Sexual Codependency ☐	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Fact Sheet For Professionals	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Twelve Concepts for Groups	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Twelve Traditions in Action: A Checklist for COSA Groups	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Welcome to the Sunlight! ☐	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____

COSA Booklets

A Program of Recovery / 52 Questions	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Attraction not Promotion (New 2012!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Boundaries in Recovery	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Caretaking	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Parents in Recovery	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Triggers (New 2012!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Twelve Traditions	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Healing Power of Giving (New 2013!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Men in COSA (New 2013!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Sobriety in COSA	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Sponsorship Guide (New 2013!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step One, w/COSA Voices and Exercises included!	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Two, w/COSA Voices and Questions included!	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Three, w/COSA Voices and Questions included!	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Four, w/COSA Voices and Exercises included!	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Five, w/COSA Voices and Questions included!	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Six, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2012!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Seven, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2012!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Eight, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2012!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Nine, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2012!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Ten, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2013!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Eleven, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2013!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Twelve, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! (New 2013!!)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Using the Twelve Steps to Work Through any Conflict	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____

Collection of English COSA Literature (9 Pamphlets & 24 Booklets)	\$60.00 x _____ = \$ _____
Simple Newcomer Welcome Packet of Literature (4 Pamphlets, noted by ☐)	\$1.00 x _____ = \$ _____

COSA French Literature

COSA FAQ: Foire aux Questions (Pamphlet)	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Tools: Les Outils de COSA (Pamphlet)	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Defining Co-Sex Addiction/Sexual Codependency: Identifier le Problem (Pamphlet)	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Welcome to the Sunlight: Bienvenue au grand jour (Pamphlet)	\$0.75 x _____ = \$ _____
Step One: Premiere Etape (Booklet)	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____

Outreach Priced Literature

100 - Defining Co-Sex Addiction/Sexual Codependency (Pamphlet) (Black/White).....	\$20.00 x _____ = \$ _____
100 - Fact Sheet For Professionals (Pamphlet) (Black/White).....	\$20.00 x _____ = \$ _____
100 - COSA Outreach Business Cards	\$10.00 x _____ = \$ _____

Additional COSA Material

COSA Stories, Volume I (book)	\$3.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Stories, Volume II (book)	\$3.50 x _____ = \$ _____
A Guide To Program Calls, Pocket Meeting (Serenity Prayer, Twelve Steps, & Twelve Traditions) and Spirituality in COSA: Mutual Respect & Diversity (2 Wallet Cards and 1 Card)	\$1.00 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Medallions (3 or 6 month, 1-25 year, blank)	\$3.00 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Pins (Colored Cloisonne COSA Logo)	\$4.00 x _____ = \$ _____

COSA International Convention CDs—\$7.00 each

These recordings are from the annual COSA International Conventions. They haven't been edited for sound quality or content.

For a complete listing of all COSA recordings, please see http://www.cosa-recovery.org/convention_CDs.html.
MP3s of our more recent conventions are available for purchase at our online store for \$3.00 each.

2013 - Summerlin

13-1 2013 COSA Opening Session—Georgia	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-2 Tools and Triggers—Joey Z.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-3 COSA's Secret Side: The Twelve Concepts—Dani S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-4 Boundaries: COSA Perspectives—Linda P.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-5 Joy in the Journey—Two Recovery Stories—Claudia M. and Joey Z.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-6 The Fourth Tradition: Boundaries and Relationships—Sarah S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-7 Men's Issues in COSA/Codependency—Rob E.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-8 Strengthening Your Core: Using the Program in All Areas of Our Lives—Dani S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-9 COSA/SAA Joint Banquet COSA Speaker—Betsy H.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-10 COSA Circles: A Simple Approach—Joey Z.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-11 Living Trigger-Free—Dani S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-12 Ready to Sponsor? Ready to Sponsor! - Annie S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-13 My Recovery Plan: Tools to Maintain Sobriety—Rob E.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-15 2013 Sunday COSA Luncheon - COSA Speaker: Sarah S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
13-16 2013 Closing COSA Brunch - COSA Speaker: Amy E.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____

2012 - Vancouver

12-1 2012 COSA Opening Session—Helene B.'s COSA Story	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-2 Let's Start the Steps – Part 1—Dani S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-3 Writing for Recovery —Claudia M. & Betsy H.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-4 Safety in Open & Closed COSA meetings—Joey Z.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-5 More on the Steps – Part 2—Dani S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-6 Sponsors: Allies in Recovery—Lindy T.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-7 Healthy Boundaries for COSA Service—Kerry M.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-8 COSA/SAA Joint Banquet COSA Speaker—Claudia M.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-9 Let's Finish the Steps – Part 3—Dani S.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-10 Retreat Planning Made Easier—Shannon T.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-11 Breaking the Shame Spiral—Maritza I. & Mila T.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-12 Working the Twelve Steps on a Problem—Judith M.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-13 Enjoying Life through Boundaries—Ila D.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-14 Fireside chat with COSA Sponsors on the Steps—Kerry M.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
12-15 2012 Closing COSA Brunch—COSA Speaker: Linda P.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____

2011 - Houston

11-1 COSA/SAA Joint Banquet COSA Speaker – Gayle J.'s COSA Story	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
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2010 - Albuquerque

10-1 2010 COSA Opening Session—Jaime S.'s COSA Story	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-2 First Things First—Brian K.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-3 Step One: Is the Wording Acceptable to You?—Georgia K.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-4 The 12 th Step at Every Step – Finding a reason to believe—Ann R. & Brian K.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-5 The Circles: How I define my own sobriety by using this tool.—Kerstin H.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-6 COSA/SAA Joint Banquet—Margo M. & Bob H.'s COSA Story	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-7 COSA Luncheon Speaker: Elaine K.'s COSA Story	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-8 Brunch and Closing Ceremony-Reentry Workshop—Carol Ann R.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____
10-9 Steps 2 & 3: An Interactive Experience Workshop—Ann R. M.	\$7.00 x _____ = \$ _____

S&H Fees

Please mail your order with a check or money-order payable in U.S. dollars to:
International Service Organization of COSA
(or ISO of COSA)
9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 212
Houston, TX 77024 U.S.A.

.25 to \$15.00 order = \$5.00
\$15.01 to \$40.00 order = \$7.00
\$40.01 to \$70.00 order = \$11.00
\$70.01 to \$100.00 order = \$15.00
Greater than \$100.00 order = \$20.00

For S&H charges outside of the U.S., email ISO@cosa-recovery.org

Literature Total \$ _____

CD Total \$ _____

S&H \$ _____

DONATION: _____ Group _____ Individual

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____