



**Volume 10, Issue 6 Summer Issue May/June 2014**

**What Sobriety Means to Me**

**In the Beginning.**

I qualified as a COSA from early childhood but came into COSA recovery because I was married to a sex addict. I first came into our rooms six months after my partner started working the Steps. I was like a wounded animal--dangerous. I didn't trust myself. I didn't trust my partner. I didn't even particularly like my partner, life, or myself. I certainly did not think of myself as an addict or even co-dependent. Nothing about life or my situation seemed fair; I was irate and confused. The only thing harder than being married to a sex addict was watching him get better while I got worse. Why did he get to be happy and I did not? I was jealous and even more resentful. He had something I wanted for myself: peace.

I went to my first COSA meetings and got stuck on the mysterious concept of sobriety. I heard COSAs talk about their sobriety in terms of the length of time they had been coming to COSA meetings. In my partner's program, I knew "time in recovery" was not the same thing as "being sober" and I had a hunch attending meetings was not the best barometer for my sobriety.

I committed to working the Twelve Steps the way my husband's sponsor had taught him. I knew I was powerless over my husband's addiction and I didn't want to base my sobriety on his sobriety. Whether I stayed married or not I needed to abstain from the harmful and compulsive things I was doing to others and myself.

**Defining My Sobriety**

I found it impossible to define my sobriety in isolation. I needed my sponsor, other experienced COSAs, and my HP to help me with what I believe is an important cornerstone of my recovery. I needed to know what I was trying to recover from so that I would know how to focus my work with the Twelve Steps. As a co-addict I needed to be able to recognize what my drug of choice was (i.e. my version of alcohol or heroin). How would I know when I was about to pick up my own proverbial drink to numb myself from the reality of life?

I discovered that my drug of choice is people. I have an insatiable craving to help others even when I haven't been asked for help or when doing so actually ends up harming someone else or keeps me from taking responsibility for my life. When I am not sober, I become compulsive in efforts to solve other people's problems and situations I have no control over. I have come to see that I do this in an effort to try to control my

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



## Seventh Tradition: Financial Report

March 1, 2014 to April 30, 2014

<u>Group</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Boulder, CO	\$25.00
CA-08	\$162.00
Columbus COSA	\$25.00
Ft. Worth, TX	\$81.58
Horseheads, NY	\$25.00
Irvine, CA	\$91.00
Marin, CA Wednesday COSA	\$30.00
Mesa, AZ	\$123.50
Omaha Monday COSA	\$15.00
Phoenix Still Waters	\$50.00
The Woodlands, TX	\$45.00
TX-01	\$50.00
Individual	\$60.00
Individual Recurring via Authorize.net	\$560.00
Paypal Recurring (Completed through 4/30)	\$975.00
<b>Total*</b>	<b>\$2,226.50</b>

\*Totals do not include Convention related donations.

## COSA Retreat in Washington DC

Who's up for a COSA retreat in the Washington, DC, area this fall? Telephone planning meetings for this event are now under way, and everyone who's interested will meet to discuss plans for the retreat at a joint meeting for both the fall 2014 DC Retreat and spring 2015 DC Convention at the LA Convention this Memorial Day weekend. You can call in to the meeting on Monday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, from 3:00 until 4:30 pm Eastern time. The conference call number is [\(712\) 432-0385](tel:7124320385) and the passcode is 859130#. The first half hour will be a debriefing of the convention. For more details about the retreat and to be put on the contact list for helping with planning and/or getting information about attending, please e-mail us at [ISO\\_COSA\\_Retreat@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:ISO_COSA_Retreat@cosa-recovery.org).

Come join the fun!

## 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](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Writing_Guidelines_Revision_20110521_Final.pdf)

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

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Houston, TX 77024 U.S.A.**

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**By the Fellowship-For the Fellowship**

# Letter from the Chair

## Letter from the Chair

About two hours after I wrote the last letter from the Chair, I was informed I'd made a mistake at work. A big mistake! A huge mistake! A mistake of a magnitude that has never been seen before and hopefully never will be again. And the shame came up. I was humiliated. I didn't think this had anything to do with perfectionism, because if you had made a mistake this big, you'd be mortified too! But I am learning that my recovery doesn't guarantee I won't feel shame over my mistakes- today it just means I have tools to move through that shame to the other side. After a short time of drowning in the fear and shame, I cleaned up my side of the street, and I talked about it with people who had earned my trust. I'm learning to feel the feelings, let them go, and then take action. Friends told me how they knew what I was feeling, because they, too, had made the biggest mistake in the world. I asked for - and got - reassurance from my boss. The sun shone again.

Recovery has been popping up on your ISO Board, too. We're learning to hear each other out, and allow people to be where they are. No, we're not perfect but we are learning. We can have differing opinions and still respect each other. We can make mistakes and recover.

I went to a meeting that helped me enormously both in the COSA meetings I attend and in my personal life. The topic was autonomy. Some people I respect said some preposterous things about letting others make mistakes, and realizing they may not be mistakes. I heard that autonomy demands respect for the individual and their right to make decisions. This was unbroken ground. Don't you understand, I KNOW the Traditions and the Concepts. Surely I, like Ford, have a better idea.

I know there are times when I have to speak up when I believe the Traditions are being broken. I know we are all guardians of the Traditions. I'm just glad there are no COSA police, who come and drag people away for sharing too long or mentioning their church.

I'm learning that every time I think someone is doing it wrong, I need to look at me, and consider conversation rather than commandments. If people are making mistakes, perhaps they are their mistakes to make. When I take someone's problem, I take their solution, too. Is it possible I am not the authority- in my meetings or in my home?

We have a lot of lively discussions on the Board- more so when we can be quiet and listen. Sure, we tell each other what we think, but we generally don't insist it's the only way to look at something. We are trying to practice the Third Concept and give people the right to make decisions that are within their realm of authority.

I have been taking the Concepts home, and my husband has been appreciating it. I can ask him to tell me what his thoughts are around trimming the trees that way, rather than ask him "What ARE you thinking?" Maybe I get "my way" less often, but I am finding that is not always a bad thing. I am letting go of "I am good and you are bad" and replacing it with "You and I are different."

It's not easy, and I slip a lot. Sometimes I just can't get my head around the fact that his ideas on the duct work in the attic or her ideas of a meeting format change might be just

## Step Five

Before I joined COSA, I used to tell anyone who would listen, including therapists and psychiatrists, how miserable my life was. "You'd be miserable too," I said, "if you were married to my husband." I unburdened myself over and over again with details about his worst failings as a husband and father. I was looking for sympathy and for someone else to join me in my condemnation and sense of moral superiority and judgment. Afterwards, I'd feel terrible. I'd feel full of shame, humiliation, remorse, and guilt about my marriage, my husband, and myself. I'd feel more isolated than ever with my secret life as the wife of a sex addict. I was a failure. I just couldn't seem to say the right words or take the right action that would put an end to my husband's addiction once and for all! I had reached the point where my entire life was dominated by the wrongdoings of my husband and others I associated with his addiction. His neglect and infidelities had come to define me and I was stuck in a life of spiritual dis-ease filled with hardened chunks of anger and resentment.

And then I started attending my local COSA meeting. I found a wonderful group of supportive people who understood exactly what I was struggling with. I found my sponsor and I began working the Steps. Step Five was my first opportunity to take action to reverse the damage of my old habits. I was going to tell ONE person MY whole story. The time for confessing the wrongs of others was over and now it was time to talk about my own.

By the time I reached Step Five, I was entirely ready to have this conversation. I was emotionally and spiritually drained from carrying around the burden of my resentments--against my husband, the therapists who had failed to fix him, and the people who had enabled him. And, my attendance at COSA meetings and my conversations with other COSAs reassured me that my thoughts and actions as an out-of-control co-addict were not unique in any way. By the time I finished the Fourth Step, I was entirely willing to place all my accumulated resentments, fears, and humiliating behavior on the table for myself, God, and my sponsor to see and hear. My sense of relief, of being freed of a great burden, was immediate. I literally felt lighter and my life took on a new heightened level of joy and serenity.

Through the Step Five process of admitting my wrongs to myself, my sponsor, and my Higher Power, I was finally able to honestly identify my character defects. Here, my sponsor was an indispensable guide providing me with insights that had previously been inaccessible to me. At last, my shortcomings took shape and had names like dishonesty and self-neglect. The powerlessness and unmanageability of my life when I began COSA meetings was suddenly transformed by the knowledge that with God's help I could grow and heal spiritually even if those I loved dearly never changed one bit. I had actually laid hold of a new source of power through the humbling acknowledgment that I too was deeply flawed and had perhaps a lifetime of work to do on my own shortcomings before I'd ever be spiritually fit enough to tackle someone else's.

~Anonymous



**Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**



## 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.

## Sobriety-cont'd.

environment. I live in an illusion that helping others helps me cope with (aka avoid) the never-ending tidal wave of fears that can rule my conscious and sleeping mind.

We didn't have a COSA booklet on sobriety when I started in COSA 12 years ago but some of us decided to use the sobriety pamphlet our addicts used in their program. That was how we began to use "the Circles." I started with over 30 behaviors in my first inner circle (the things I was supposed to abstain from) and about three in my outer circle (the things I was supposed to do instead). There was no doubt I was living life upside down!

I felt overwhelmed and couldn't imagine how I could ever stay sober for more than a couple minutes if I had to abstain from all those behaviors. It was my first real hint of what my partner must have felt when he first faced abstaining from his inner circle behaviors. I had a newfound respect for what he had already accomplished and it gave me hope.

### **Inner Circle: Unacceptable Behaviors for the Life I Want**

I noticed most Twelve Step programs had one measure of sobriety (like no alcohol, no drugs, etc.), not a list of 30. I decided it might be a good idea to pare down my list to a number I could actually remember off the top of my head. That number for me is no more than three to five behaviors. I also needed my inner circle behaviors to be so specific, clear, and measurable that anyone (myself included) would know if I had a slip or not.

## Step Six

By the time I began Step Six, I was tired (exhausted, really) from struggling against myself and my circumstances. I had begun identifying my character defects in Step Four and knew they no longer served me. I could see how they had contributed to my suffering and insanity and I felt desperate to let them go. But I could not let them go. As with the sex addict, I had no control over them. My sense of control had been a mere illusion. I had spent a great deal of time trying to remove my shortcomings but still they remained. In admitting my powerlessness over my character defects, I felt a sense of relief. I no longer viewed myself as a failure for not being able to shake these aspects of myself.

This, like every other aspect of recovery, I could not do alone. I learned it was my Higher Power, not me, who would release me from the captivity of my shortcomings. Nonetheless, I struggled to believe that my Higher Power could or would remove them. My character defects were so deeply ingrained in me, and I had tried so hard for so many years to do it on my own. Surely it was impossible for things to change. I lacked faith in my Higher Power's ability to do for me what I could not do for myself. In developing faith, it helped to remind myself of all the miracles my Higher Power had already worked in my life.

Even after I opened my mind and heart to the possibility that my Higher Power was capable of removing my shortcomings, I doubted that it would happen: I clung to the notion that my Higher Power wanted to punish me. I felt unworthy of the freedom that would be mine were my character defects to be removed. At these times, I reminded myself of my Step Three work, where I learned that my Higher Power loves, adores, and cares for me. When I forget how my Higher Power feels about me, I sing a line from a song about how a father loves his daughter. And, without fail, I feel His love.

Once I truly believed that my Higher Power not only could but would, in His time, take from me all that holds me back from fully living, the only thing holding me back was me. Although I was entirely ready to turn over most of my character defects, there were still a few that I was not quite ready to let go of. Denying my reality was one of those. It has protected me from feeling some pretty intense emotional pain over the years, and its removal means I have to feel my feelings. That's tough for me because I have a faulty core belief that pain is unbearable. My sponsor reminded me that I did not have to be 100% ready before moving on to Step Seven. Looking back now, I see how moving on in my Step work helped me become more willing to turn my denial over to my Higher Power. And the miracles just keep on coming.

~Colleen T.



**Were entirely ready to have God remove  
all these defects of character.**

# Sobriety

## Sobriety-cont'd.

Today, the inner circle behaviors I abstain from are:

- **Drinking alcohol or using drugs.** I don't consider myself an alcoholic but I see alcohol is a gateway for most of my co-addict behaviors. I used alcohol to numb myself when I was stressed, to feel comfortable being around others and to be able to have sex. I am 12 years sober from this behavior.
- **Isolating with suicidal thoughts.** While thoughts are not the same as actions, if I am having suicidal thoughts for more than 24 hours without reporting them to my therapist, husband, mother, brother, or sister, I am not sober. I am six years sober from this behavior.
- **Interrogating my partner.** Asking my partner a question can, of course be quite healthy, but badgering him with questions because I do not like, believe, or accept his response is not sober behavior for me. So it is not sober for me if I ask the same thing more than once, even just in a slightly different way, in 24 hours. I am three years sober from this behavior.
- **Keeping secrets for more than 24 hours when I am afraid or ashamed.** If I keep a secret about fears or shame for more than 24 hours I am not being honest or sober. Having a secret is not un-sober, but keeping a secret that is burning a hole in my soul is. To stay sober I need to tell my sponsor, or another trusted person, before 24 hours have passed from the time I first become conscious I am keeping the secret. I am almost three years sober from this behavior.

My compulsive behaviors are just as cunning and baffling as any addiction. In some ways my addiction is more difficult to spot because my "acting out" gets cloaked under a socially acceptable, ostensibly altruistic label of "helping others." For me, acting out often looks like neglecting my own care and well-being, stockpiling resentments, acting as if I need to carry the weight of the world on my shoulders, acting as if I know what is best for other people, and being dishonest with others and with myself.

It was difficult for me to stay sober in the first few years. It wasn't until I experienced my first slip that I found true compassion for others' slips and/or relapses in recovery. My slips often caught me completely by surprise until I learned how to make better use of my middle circle behaviors.

When I slip, I do the following: 1) I get honest (tell on myself to my sponsor, to my feedback group, to the people at my meetings and to my partner); 2) I re-establish my connection with HP; and 3) I do something to be of service. My healing begins when I have the courage to admit I am not sober. It is important to say out loud when I am Still Learning I'm Powerless (SLIP) and my life is once again unmanageable. Because my slips are most often about selfishness and a lack of humility, telling on myself keeps me honest and reduces any guilt or shame I might be feeling.

Lastly, the definition of my sobriety has not been static. For example, having unprotected sex with my partner or having sex when I am dissociating have been in my inner circle at times. With time, sober living, and rebuilding trust, I was able to move both those behaviors from my inner circle to my middle circle.



## 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>

## Letter from the Chair-cont'd.

as admirable as mine. But when I can get there, I get what I really want: a marriage or a meeting based on equality and humility.

I and the other members of the Board are learning, and we're not the same people we were a short 11 months ago. Our service has brought us recovery in the way we manage our service work and our personal lives. Come and join us. For more information, e-mail me at [chair@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:chair@cosa-recovery.org),

Hugs,  
Claudia

Opportunity to Support COSA through Matching  
Donations!

# COSA Book Update

## Update on COSA Book

Dear COSA in Recovery,

The fellowship asked for it: a basic text 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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:

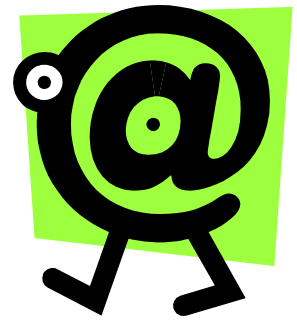
- Welcome to the Sunlight
- COSA FAQs
- COSA Tools
- Defining Co-Sex Addiction

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 Opportunities

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:cosacopy@yahoo.com).

## **Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to those who still suffer. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps ourselves.**

Before recovery, the primary purpose for everything in my life was being as perfect as I could be. If I put all my energy into being perfect, I could make everyone happy. If I were perfect, everyone would love me. If I made everyone else happy then I would be happy...right?

The concept of "everyone" never included myself--at least not in a way that placed my health and well-being first. Disregarding my own happiness made me exhausted and resentful in my professional and personal relationships.

My first COSA meeting placed me in a completely different position. I was angry at having to be in that room because my spouse thought it was a "good idea". Why should I have to be there when I didn't do anything wrong? My primary purpose that night was to make myself so different from everyone in the room, that I didn't belong and had an excuse to never come back. I left with exactly what I came for that night.

When I re-entered the meeting room three months later, I was no longer resentful and looking to be different. Instead, COSA was all for me. It was for me to get recovery. It was for me to find a way to stop suffering. It was for me to work my Steps to better understand myself. It was all about me.

What I quickly realized was that I needed the support from my fellows. When they spoke of their hardships and discoveries working the Steps, I related and understood my feelings more--feelings that I had never before known how to express or explain. My suffering lessened the more I listened and became part of the fellowship. The support, caring, and trust in the circle gave me a safe space to explore my fears and understand my emotions. Instead of "finding myself" I'm creating a new self that never existed. For the first time, I'm creating a "me" who has strong boundaries and an abundance of self-love.

As I continue to practice the Twelve Steps and give service to the fellowship, I become like so many around me--united in carrying a strong message of recovery to those still suffering by sharing my experiences, strengths, and hope.

~Ashley H.,  
Mesa, AZ.

# Traditions

## **Tradition Six: A COSA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the COSA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.**

This is another Tradition that keeps my focus sharp and simple. As with Tradition Five, it is useful in so many facets of my life, both in and outside of recovery. I can ask myself “Am I getting distracted from my goals?” “Am I juggling too much?” “Have I spread myself too thin to accomplish what I set out to do?” I have a big heart, enthusiasm for life, and I enjoy being helpful, so I can easily find myself taking on too much. All this does is leave me feeling tired and like I’m not giving enough attention to anything in my life, particularly the people who are important to me, and the things I enjoy doing. In this way, Tradition Six helps me practice self-care. It reminds me to return to the basics and prioritize. As it relates to my group and the fellowship, it helps us keep our true purpose clear and foremost in our minds.

This Tradition protects us from unnecessary complications, controversies, and entanglements. It is a relief that no one in my meetings is trying to persuade me to patronize any certain business, join any religious congregation, or attend therapy sessions at any one counselling center. All of these things may be helpful and positive, but in the meeting context they may cloud what we are trying to accomplish.

Individually, I can give suggestions, but when I do, I am speaking for myself only, not for my COSA group or for COSA as a whole. For example, I may have found an organization that provides excellent therapeutic services for S and COSA issues. I may want to share about their offerings with others in my group. Or, I may have found another Twelve Step program that helps me with something specific that is not a COSA issue, and feel there may be fellow COSAs who would benefit from knowing about it. My sharing resources with others is fine, but I need to do this outside of the meeting time, and I ought never to display outside literature alongside COSA literature. No matter how effective or great the outside enterprise, and no matter how good my intentions, the boundaries need to be clear.

COSA addresses recovery from COSA issues using the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It’s that simple, and in order to continue being effective, it needs to stay that way. We want the COSA recovery environment to be as safe, inclusive, and as distraction-free as possible. This tradition ensures that our message of recovery is strong and clear.

~Betsy

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

## Sobriety-cont'd.

### Middle Circle: My Early Warning Detection System

I think of my middle circle as the equivalent of a neon sign that says "Bar" for an alcoholic. I might be able to sit in there, drink soda water, and hang out with my friends but I better have a strong connection with my HP if I'm going to keep myself from sipping that first alcoholic drink. The behaviors in my middle circle are the most dynamic part of how I maintain my sobriety today.

Some of my middle circle activities are: sex, TV, food, and exercise. There is nothing inherently wrong with any of these, but when I do them to numb out or avoid something (like my feelings or stress) I need to pay heed. If I start eating food in a secretive or compulsive way I report it to my sponsor (or another COSA) as soon as I become aware of it. Likewise watching too much TV or late at night can be a symptom of avoidance or anxiety about having sex with my partner.

Likewise, I can abuse or neglect exercise as an avoidance strategy. I have physically injured myself by over-exercising which then leads to a period of time when I cannot exercise, and the cycle goes on and on. Exercise is in my middle circle because I can exercise in healthy and unhealthy ways. Sex is one of my more complex middle circle activities. I can have sex, or withhold or avoid it with my partner out of fear, anger or revenge. I have also been able to have healthy sexual intimacy.

How and what I am doing in my middle circle can help keep me from suddenly finding myself in my inner circle. I believe being more mindful about what is going on in my middle circle has allowed me to achieve the length of sobriety I have today, and I don't get blind-sided as often.

### Outer Circle: My Sobriety Depends upon a Steady Spiritual Diet

My outer circle is populated with healthy alternatives (or what some people refer to as the antidotes) to what is in my inner circle. My outer circle is largely populated with physical, emotional, and spiritual self-care--anything that can keep me connected me to a Higher Power. In early recovery I was so estranged from knowing what my needs and wants were, it was a struggle to know what to put there; I knew how to take care of others but not how to care for myself. Today I have an ever-expanding outer circle including praying, meditating, going to meetings, sponsoring, working the steps, reading, swimming, walking, taking a bubble bath, gardening, photography, etc.

My co-addiction is every bit as harmful, damaging, life threatening, and compulsively programmed into me as any addiction. Before I worked the steps I was convinced my partner was the "problem." Today I know we share a common spiritual ailment and the labels of our problems (sex addict, co-addict) have become surprisingly irrelevant to me.

Lastly, I should say that I have used the concept of sobriety circles for many different challenges and situations in my life. The one I continue to explore, refine, and practice on is sobriety in service. But that is a story for another time.

~Kerry M.

The Three Circles concept is © copyright 1991 Sex Addicts Anonymous. All rights reserved.

**Sobriety**

## Flexibility (a tool for resentments)

Okay, I admit it. God's personality is different than mine – and sometimes we clash. I believe God is spontaneous and I'm not. I have deluded myself for most of my adult life, by coming up with laborious schemes for getting others to believe I am flexible. I can only imagine how many years of my life I could total up to wasted time spent on shoring up this illusion, only to see that everyone else had x-ray vision and saw my very rigid bones. One of the things I do to create the illusion of control in my life is planning everything out in great detail. That works if everybody conforms to the plan I've laid out in my mind, or on the scraps of paper I rarely share with anyone. I have to say this has been a very good formula for disaster.

I recently planned a very special birthday dinner for one of my parents. My original plan was for four and this number grew by three in one day. It took a little work to get past my initial response – anxiety about the plan changing and the certainty that more variables (i.e. more people) always increases the risk of my plan derailing (I come from a big family so I have a large sample size of data to support this but it doesn't stop me from trying). My anxiety seems to have a best friend in Resentmentville, because when Anxiety comes over, so does Resentment. I'm so uncomfortable with my anxiety that I default to getting frustrated with the human variables. This, of course, is completely obscured by the obvious and underlying goodness: that other people wanting to spend time with me means they like or love me. But I throw that wisdom to the wind in nanoseconds – discounted quickly as 'not possibly able to be true.' Thank God for recovery friends, my Higher Power, and my therapist. I find while I'm just as quick to lose my mind over the littlest things, I have gotten much quicker at asking for help so my sanity is restored before people actually show up at my door. Then I am able to be more present to enjoy the full experience my Higher Power spontaneously intends for me.

~Anonymous

*As seen in Volume 8, Issue 5 of the Balance.*



## 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](mailto:OutreachCommittee@cosa-recovery.org).]

#### How Intergroup Can Help Start a New Meeting

"A little over two years ago, there were no COSA meetings in my immediate area, and I felt called to start the Santa Clara, California COSA group. I knew it would take time for the meeting to grow and that part of my service work would be to sit in our meeting room every week, alone if necessary, until the meeting was able to sustain itself.

Those early meetings were very small--sometimes just one other person joined me--but I never had to sit there alone. Not only did I have other COSAs in the room with me, I had my Higher Power and the help and support of our local Bay Area Intergroup.

Intergroup helped us financially with seed money that ensured our little meeting had enough to cover start-up expenses, such as rent, newcomer packets, and literature. This gave our meeting time to become self-sustaining through Seventh Tradition donations. And when our meeting and one other in the area were at risk of losing our space due to liability insurance requirements, Intergroup was able to pool funds to help us get coverage our meeting alone could not have afforded.

Intergroup also helped support us spiritually, by connecting us to other meetings in our area. Just as we can isolate as individuals in recovery, our meetings can isolate themselves from the larger COSA community. Through Intergroup, our meeting remained connected through periodic telephone meetings. Intergroup also helped spread the word to other meetings that we needed support, and we were able to get speakers with significant sobriety in COSA to visit and share their experience, strength, and hope with the many newcomers in our meeting. Our Intergroup also organizes an amazing retreat each year where people from meetings throughout the state get together to attend meetings and workshops and share fellowship and recovery for a weekend.

Our group has doubled in size over the past few years. People are sponsoring and working the Steps. The despair and isolation of our newcomers has given way to laughter and hope. We would not have been able to thrive and to keep offering help and hope to the newcomer without the help and support of Intergroup. I'm so very grateful to know that Intergroup was with us from the start, and I never had to sit in a meeting room alone." – Submitted by Amy MJ

*Thank you Amy MJ – Did you know that there are only four registered COSA Intergroups in the world? Your story makes a compelling case for starting a COSA Intergroup in a region to help support the growth and health of COSA meetings. Just as we share our experience, strength and hope in working the COSA Steps with newcomers, an Intergroup can help*



## Outreach on the Road-cont'd.

*facilitate a collection of meetings' abilities to share experience, strength, hope and resources with a new meeting. The First Step reminds us that we are a "we" program, and this is just another example of how we can practice asking for and offering help. If it takes a village to raise a child, then perhaps it takes an Intergroup to raise a new meeting. -- Your Outreach Committee*

### **Step Workshops: Help for Sponsor-less COSAs**

"The word 'sponsorship' can seem a bit scary! I know I avoided sponsoring for a long time simply because of a misunderstanding of what a sponsor is and what a sponsor does. I thought a sponsor was a combination parent figure/therapist/Higher Power-surrogate-- which put a lot of pressure on my own sponsor, I'm sure! What I came to learn, though, was that a sponsor is simply a person who has worked the Steps, who can tell another person how she did it!

I thought to myself, "Hey, wait a second! I've worked the Steps! I can tell people how I worked them!"

Once I started sponsoring, I realized it was as simple as that. I don't need to have all the answers. All I have to do is point my sponsee at the Steps and say, "That sounds like a Step One issue!" or "Have you tried working your Tenth Step about it? Keep doing that!"

Dani and I were talking after Convention last year about how to use new technology to help people learn to work the Steps, even if they could not find a sponsor in their own area. The more we talked, the more we realized a) that God was showing us the way, b) that we could be of service by teaching a Steps, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop over the phone, using recordings and email to reach out to those who could not be there live, and c) that, in keeping with the Eleventh Step, if it was God's will, He would give us the power to carry it out!

Dani and I are just wrapping up our first-ever Steps, Traditions, and Concepts Workshop! God did show us the way and give us the power. I truly hope that the workshop has been a valuable resource for everyone who participated. I have seen miraculous changes in the people I've talked to who are working the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts with me and Dani week by week!

And I will say that service saves my life as well! I feel like my own recovery has sky-rocketed! What I say to others week by week and between workshops has also been re-focusing my life on working the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, and being of service to everyone I meet! After all, I've got to practice what I preach, right? For just the effort of telling people how I work the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, I am given incredible gifts of emotional sobriety, serenity, clarity, and a closer relationship to Higher Power!

I am so thankful for the opportunity to be of service, and I hope others will consider sponsoring others or leading a workshop. This kind of service is a way for us to truly live the Fifth Tradition and put our primary purpose first by carrying the message to those who are still suffering!" – Submitted by Annie GS.

## 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](http://cosa-recovery.org/cosacall_schedule.html) or [http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Sp\\_Telemeetings.html](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Sp_Telemeetings.html) (in Spanish)

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

[cosaen espanol@gmail.com](mailto:cosaen espanol@gmail.com) or [Maritza\\_i@ymail.com](mailto: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](http://cosa-recovery.org) sitio web ([http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Sp\\_Telemeetings.html](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/Sp_Telemeetings.html)).

Sí usted está interesando en prestar servicio para está reunión por teléfono, por favor de

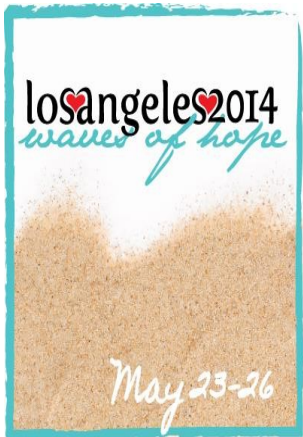
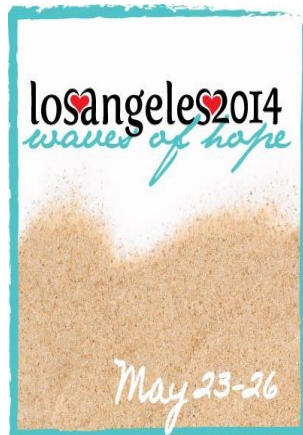
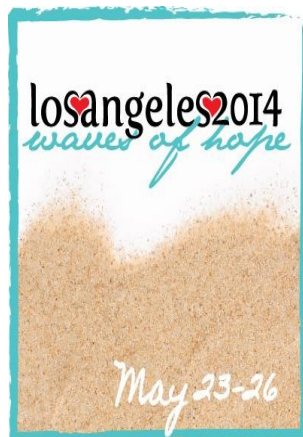
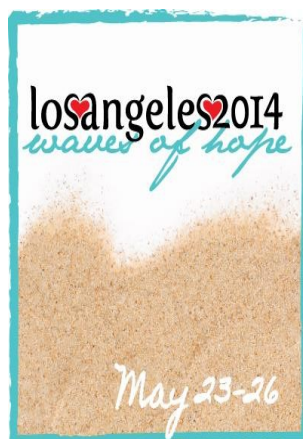
ponerse en contacto con Maritza I. en [cosaen espanol@gmail.com](mailto:cosaen espanol@gmail.com) o [Maritza\\_i@ymail.com](mailto:Maritza_i@ymail.com).

## Outreach on the Road-cont'd.

*Thank you Annie GS (and Dani S)!*

*Without a doubt your workshops have been one of highlights of outreach efforts this year! Last year's delegates at our annual meeting confirmed that the demand for COSA sponsors far outweighed the supply and that reality was keeping many COSAs from experiencing the promises and spiritual awakening that result from working the Steps. Working the Steps is the one way we all carry the COSA message and without sponsors we'd have no experience, strength and hope to show us the way! This workshop series has achieved two goals in one: we now have many more COSAs who have worked the Steps and more COSAs who are now in a position to sponsor others. When we say "yes" to sponsoring we are doing perhaps the most important outreach work we each have to offer: carrying the message of our own healing **and** spiritual awakening. – Your Outreach Committee*

**COSA en Español**



## Waves of Hope: The 2014 ISO of COSA Convention

The 2014 Convention is nearly here! This year's expanded program and offerings make for a packed weekend and multiple opportunities for support! This year we are offering both day and conference rates, and discounted registration can be made through May 15. After that, you may register on-site.

The complete preliminary program is posted on the website: [cosa-recovery.org/2014](http://cosa-recovery.org/2014)

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

- \* The Serenity Prayer as a Guide to Stepwork
- \* 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)

For the first time, we will be offering Spanish language content during the Convention, both in workshops and Twelve Step Meetings.

For those who cannot attend in person, there are a number of sessions that will be available via **telemeeting**. The full schedule is posted at [cosa-recovery.org/2014](http://cosa-recovery.org/2014).

We will have six **COSA speakers** featured at five different functions.

For the following COSA-sponsored events, registration includes the Speaker Share and other program content; for food functions the meal is an additional cost (must have been pre-ordered and paid for by **May 15**):

- 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 attendees are invited to attend this function.

There will be 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.

## Waves of Hope Convention-cont'd.

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! Fellowship and snacks will be available in the Hospitality Suite throughout the Convention weekend.

Be sure to visit the **COSA Bookstore** to see the COSA literature and other materials offered – including recordings of Convention speakers and workshops.

The **Silent Auction** is held to raise seed money for next year’s convention. Groups or 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 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 email the committee at [silentauction@cosa-recovery.org](mailto: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.

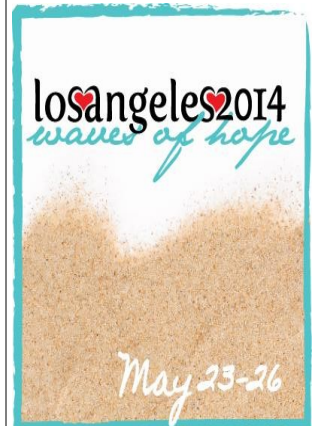
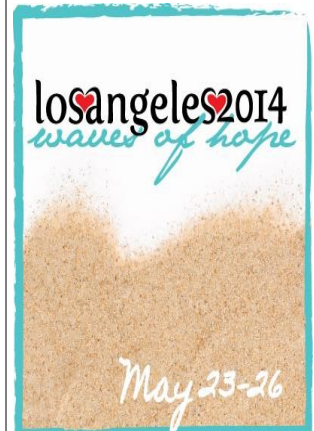
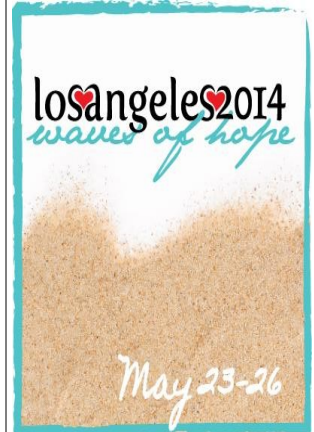
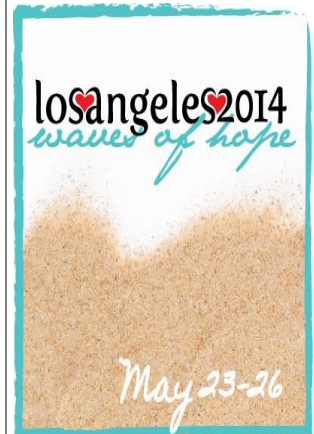
We were reminded of the power of empathy, acceptance, and inclusion that's provided within the fellowship. I urge anyone who may suffer from co-sex addiction and codependency to seriously consider attending a conference at some point during their recovery. ~ Rob E.

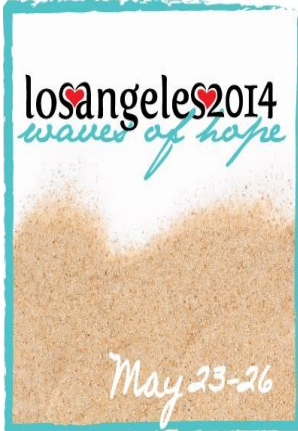
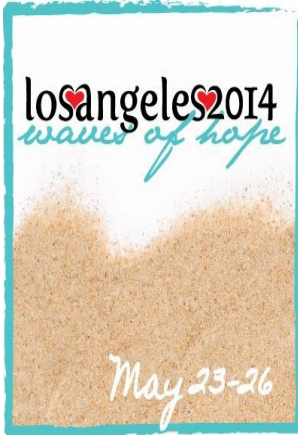
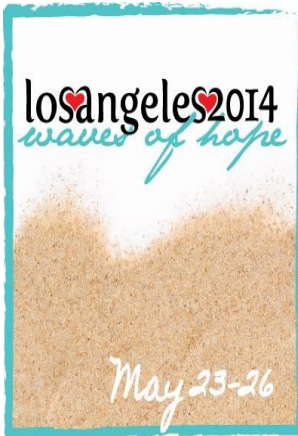
The Convention gave me a safe place to feel, learn and grow among friends and fellow COSAs who really understand what I'm going through. Convention was a gift from HP for me this year. I'm so glad I could attend. ~ Sue W.

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





## Waves of Hope Convention-cont'd.

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. Email [silentauction@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:silentauction@cosa-recovery.org) 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](mailto:volunteers@cosa-recovery.org) ; 520-591-3453) to volunteer or if you have questions.

## Teleconferencing Schedule-2014 Convention

The 2014 Convention Committee is pleased to offer an extensive list of simulcast sessions of the *Waves of Hope* convention to be held May 23-26 in Los Angeles. For those wishing to phone in via teleconference, the phone number to use is provided with each listing. **Times listed are in Pacific Time.**

### FRIDAY, MAY 23, 8:05-9:00 pm

*Opening Ceremony*

Introduction by Amy E., Speaker is Rob E.

Closed (only for those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### Sábado 24 de Mayo s En Español

Construyendo Limites y no Paredes con Maritza I. s 10:30-11:45 am

"Voces de Cosa" con Suyapa s 2:45-4:00 pm

Cerrado (solamente para ellos y ellas cuyos vidas han sidos afectado por el deportamiento sexo compulsivo)

[1-857-232-0158](tel:1-857-232-0158), access code 603796

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 9:00-10:15 am

*Sobriety Action Planning Using the Circles*

Workshop with Eleanor S.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 9:00-10:15 am

*The Serenity Prayer As a Guide to Step Work*

Workshop with Kerry M.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0158](tel:1-857-232-0158), access code 603796

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 10:30-11:45 am

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

Workshop with Rob E.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 10:30-11:45 am

*Maintaining Serenity: Living with a Non-Recovering Addict*

Panel with Debra G.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1:05-2:00 pm

*Saturday Lunch Speaker*

Introduction by Sherry S., Speaker is Jennifer C.

Closed (only for those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

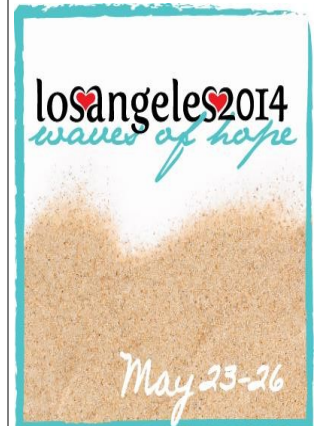
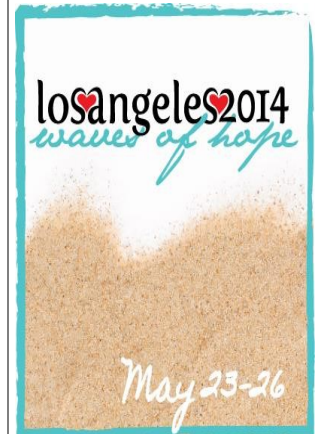
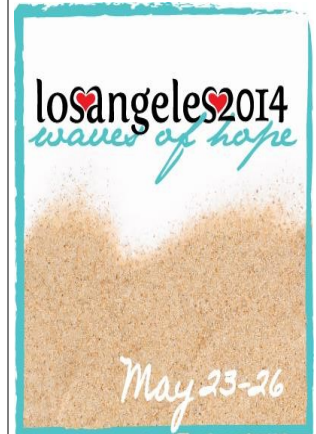
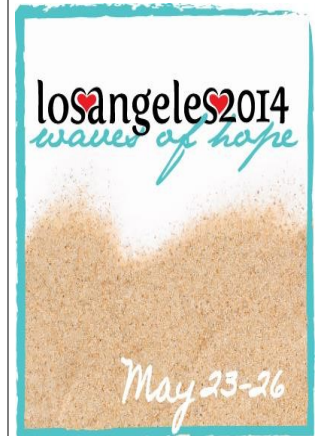
### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2:45-4:00 pm

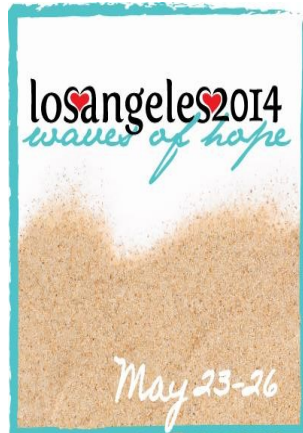
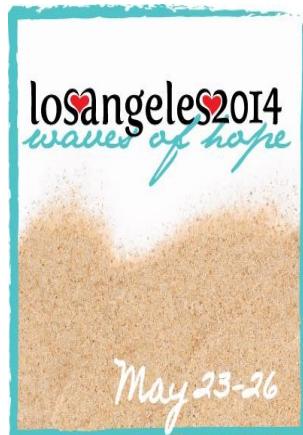
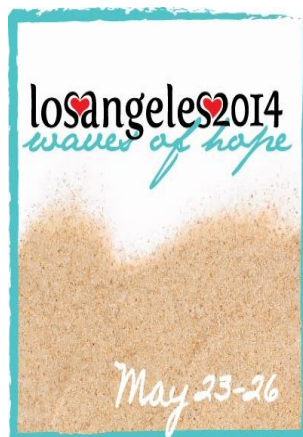
*The Key To Serenity: Deepening Our Recovery on a Daily Basis*

Panel with Linda P.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889





## Teleconferencing Schedule-cont'd.

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2:45-4:00 pm

*Riding the Recovery Wave: Working the Twelve Steps through a Relationship Conflict, Part 1*  
Workshop with Albert A.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 2:45-4:00 pm

*Living without Triggers*  
Workshop with Dani S.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0159](tel:1-857-232-0159), access code 309561, host code 9063

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 4:15-5:30 pm

*Adult Children of Sex Addicts: Breaking the Cycle*  
Panel with Debra G.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### SATURDAY, MAY 24 s 4:15-5:30 pm

*Riding the Recovery Wave: Working the Twelve Steps through a Relationship Conflict, Part 2*  
Workshop with Albert A.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 4:15-5:30 pm

*Recovery... In Writing!*  
Workshop with Betsy H. and Amy E.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0159](tel:1-857-232-0159), access code 309561

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 7:00-8:15 pm

*COSA Voices*  
Panel with several COSA speakers telling their stories

[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459

### SATURDAY, MAY 24, 8:00-8:45 pm (ending time approximate)

*Banquet (Other Fellowship)*  
Introduction by Kerry M. and Bill I., Guest Speaker is COSA Sarah B.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 9:00-10:15 am

*What Are We Doing Here? (Carrying the Message!)*  
Workshop with Dani S.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 9:00-10:15 am

*Finding Freedom with the Circles*  
Workshop with Betsy H.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459



## Teleconferencing Schedule-cont'd.

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 9:00-10:15 am

*Becoming Whole as Individuals: A Couple's Recovery Journey*

Workshop with Stephanie H. and John H.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0158](tel:1-857-232-0158), access code 603796

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 9:00-10:15 am

*Romantic Relationships and Recovery: Building Healthy Intimacy*

Workshop with Rob E. and Amy E.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0159](tel:1-857-232-0159), access code 309561

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 10:30-11:45 am

*Sponsors in Short Supply? Consider Co-sponsoring!*

Workshop with Sherry S.

Closed (only for those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 10:30-11:45 am

*A Roadmap to the Twelfth Step*

Workshop with Kerry M.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0158](tel:1-857-232-0158), access code 603796

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 10:30-11:45 am

*What is a Double Winner and Am I One?*

Panel with Sara P.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0159](tel:1-857-232-0159), access code 309561

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2:30-3:45 pm

*The Heart of Recovery: The Sponsoring Relationship*

Panel with Linda P.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2:30-3:15 pm

*The Give-it-to-God Box: Decorate your own God Box and Learn to Use It!*

\*\*\*\*Please note that only the first 30 minutes or so, featuring discussion of working Step Three will be teleconferenced, not the hands-on crafts

Workshop with Sue W. and Sarah S.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0157](tel:1-857-232-0157), access code 182459

### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2:30-3:45 pm

*COSA Service: Get Involved and Make New Friends for Life!*

Panel with Wendy W.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0158](tel:1-857-232-0158), access code 603796

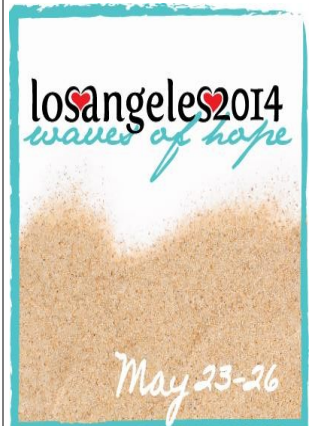
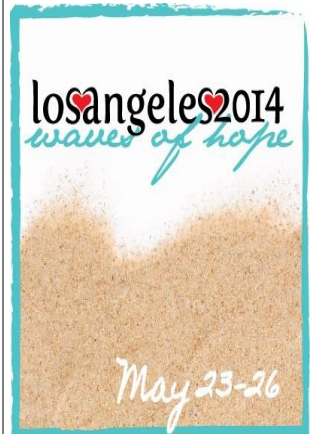
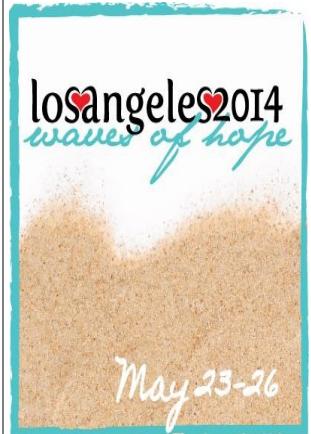
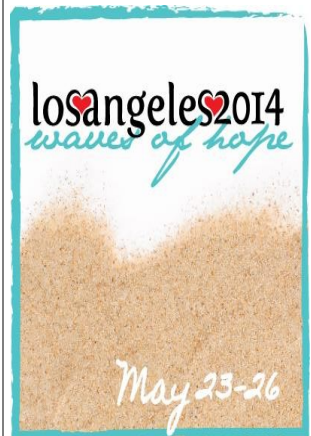
### SUNDAY, MAY 25, 2:30-3:45 pm

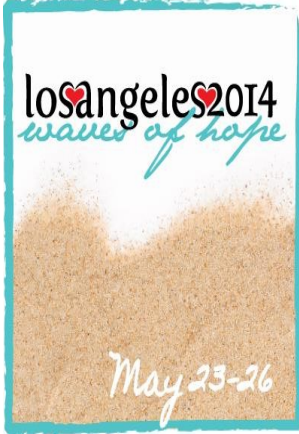
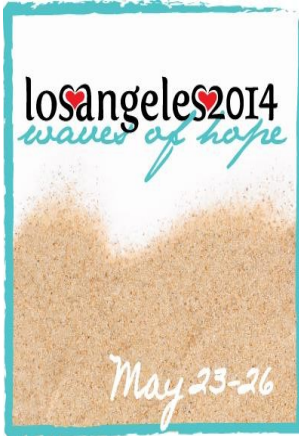
*Sexual Sobriety in Recovery: Discovering and Developing our Authentic Sexuality*

Workshop with Amy E.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)

[1-857-232-0159](tel:1-857-232-0159), access code 309561





## Teleconferencing Schedule-cont'd.

**SUNDAY, MAY 25, 6:40-8:10 pm (approximate end time)**

*COSA Banquet*

Introductions by Linda P., Guest Speaker (from another fellowship) is Carole D., COSA Speakers are Dani S. and Annie G.S.

Open (for anyone interested, not just those whose lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior)  
[1-857-232-0156](tel:1-857-232-0156), access code 321889

For those wishing to phone in via teleconference, the phone number to use is provided with each listing. **Times listed are in Pacific Time.**

Please consider **supporting COSA**. There will be a **Seventh Tradition donation opportunity** for those participating by phone. We will be also asking for feedback on this program. Offering it will cost money going forward. We want to make sure its the right place to spend precious COSA dollars!

## 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](mailto:silentauction@cosa-recovery.org).

For additional information, consult the website at [www.cosa-recovery.org/2014](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/2014) or contact the COSA Convention Committee at [convention@cosa-recovery.org](mailto: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)**

- Early Bird payment by April 1 .....\$130
  - Pre-registration payment by May 15.....\$150
  - Walk-in registration .....\$160
- Day Rates (Saturday or Sunday only):**
- Pre-registration by May 15 ..... \$80
  - 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](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/2014)  
 Payment by credit card only  
 (via website interface)

## Online Meetings/Online Message Boards

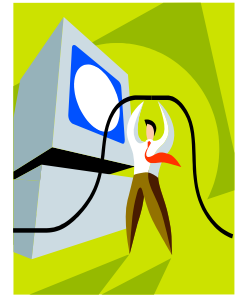
<http://www.cosa-recovery.org/online.html>

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

For call in numbers for each Telemeeting, check the [www.cosacall.com](http://www.cosacall.com) website.

<b>DAILY</b>	Daily Tenth Step	Noon (PT) (1 MT, 2 CT, 3 ET)
	Daily Eleventh Step	9:00pm (PT) (10MT, 11 CT, Midnight ET)
<b>MONDAY</b>	Step/Tradition Study	9:00am (PT) (10MT, 11 CT, Noon ET)
	Recovery Tools	5:00pm (PT) (6 MT, 7 CT, 8 ET)
<b>TUESDAY</b>	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)
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	COSA Tools	4:00pm (PT) (5 MT, 6 CT, 7 ET)
<b>THURSDAY</b>	Serenity	6:00pm (PT) (7 MT, 8 CT, 9 ET)
<b>FRIDAY</b>	Step/Tradition/Concept Study	6:00pm (PT) (7 MT, 8 CT, 9 ET)
<b>SATURDAY</b>		5:00pm (PT) (6 MT, 7 CT, 8 ET)
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Men's Only COSA Mtg.	10:00am (PT) (11am MT, 12pm CT, 1pm ET)
<b>SUNDAY</b>	Eighth/Ninth Step Mtg.	11:00am (PT) (12p, MT, 1pm CT, 2pm 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 ( <b>New 2012!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Boundaries in Recovery .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Caretaking .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Parents in Recovery .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Triggers ( <b>New 2012!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
COSA Twelve Traditions .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Healing Power of Giving ( <b>New 2013!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Men in COSA ( <b>New 2013!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Sobriety in COSA .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Sponsorship Guide ( <b>New 2013!!</b> ) .....	\$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! ( <b>New 2012!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Seven, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! ( <b>New 2012!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Eight, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! ( <b>New 2012!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Nine, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! ( <b>New 2012!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Ten, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! ( <b>New 2013!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Eleven, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! ( <b>New 2013!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Step Twelve, w/COSA Voices and Questions included! ( <b>New 2013!!</b> ) .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____
Using the Twelve Steps to Work Through any Conflict .....	\$2.50 x _____ = \$ _____

<b>Collection of English COSA Literature</b> (9 Pamphlets & 24 Booklets) .....	\$60.00 x _____ = \$ _____
<b>Simple Newcomer Welcome Packet of Literature</b> (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](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 <sup>th</sup> Step at <u>Every</u> 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](mailto:ISO@cosa-recovery.org)

Literature Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CD Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

S&H \$ \_\_\_\_\_

DONATION: \_\_\_\_\_ Group \_\_\_\_\_ Individual

GRAND TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_