



Volume 11, Issue 4 New Year Issue January/February 2015

In This Issue

Fifteen months after learning of my then-husband's sex addiction, I finally attended my first COSA meeting. My resistance was not due to a belief that my husband was the one who needed "fixing" but rather due to my intense fear of vulnerability. The thought of sharing my story and my feelings with a group of strangers gave me the heebie-jeebies. I learned in childhood to keep family secrets, so I didn't think twice about keeping some real whoppers during my relationship with my former husband. Not talking about what was really going on in my personal life and in my head allowed me to deny my reality and avoid my feelings. I pretended that my life was perfect because I thought no one would love me if they really knew me. The unfortunate consequence of this façade was that it prevented me from forming truly meaningful connections with others. Thus, even when I finally summoned up the courage to attend my first COSA meeting, I was nowhere near ready to find a sponsor. I needed to take baby steps in facing my fear of vulnerability.

Although I didn't seek out a sponsor immediately, I knew from my first meeting whom I would ultimately ask to be my sponsor. She had the biggest, most welcoming smile on her face when I apprehensively walked into the meeting room and, as a result, I felt unexpectedly safe in that space. She exuded the confidence, grace, and humility that I wanted for myself. I got a phone list at that meeting but knew I would not make any outreach calls—that was way too vulnerable for me! But that welcoming COSA called me and she kept on calling me. I felt undeserving of her attention but also flattered by it. I felt cared for by someone who didn't even know me. It was a familiar but conflicting mixture of both comforting and uncomfortable feelings.

Thanks to that COSA's calls breaking the ice, I eventually took a risk and made my first outreach call to her after a fight with my husband. To reach out when I was fully in my insanity and ask for help was an act of extreme vulnerability on my part. I had never done that before. It was one thing to talk at a meeting about a triggering experience after the trigger had passed but an entirely different matter to talk to someone while actively triggered. She walked me through the panic and pain I felt in that moment and, as we talked, I began to feel calmer and saner.

I still needed more time to commit to being a sponsee, though. After all, having a sponsor would mean starting a new relationship and that would require me to be vulnerable (again, not my strong suit). I would have to call and meet with my sponsor on a regular basis. I would have to put effort into this relationship. And I would feel uncomfortable A LOT. I just wasn't ready for that yet. There was also part of me that

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Sponsorship-cont'd.

thought that maybe I could do this whole Step work business on my own and avoid the vulnerability issue altogether. What a relief that would be! And then there was that pesky little (okay, BIG) fear of rejection that also played a role in my trepidation around getting a sponsor. What if I got up the courage to ask that COSA and she said, "No"? In the end, it all came down to a fear of pain; if I were vulnerable and opened myself up to rejection, I risked getting hurt. And I thought there was nothing more unbearable than feeling raw pain.

As a result of these fears, I worked the First Step on my own, using the COSA literature. It wasn't until I admitted that I was powerless over compulsive sexual behavior and that my life had become unmanageable that I was ready to take that crucial step of "sponsoring up." I shared my First Step with my home meeting and afterwards, through the grace of what I would later come to recognize as my Higher Power, felt compelled to ask that welcoming COSA to be my sponsor.

Of course, I can look back now and see clearly that my Higher Power's timing was just perfect. Although I may have been able to work Step One on my own, as someone who had no relationship with a Higher Power when I came into COSA, I needed the support and experience of my sponsor to tackle what appeared to be a daunting task to me: coming to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity.

And so I took that risk of getting a sponsor, and it yielded huge gains. Once I had a sponsor, I was all in. I worked the Steps as if my life depended on it (and it turns out, it did), and the Steps and my sponsor worked me. With her help, I worked the Steps through an intensely painful divorce involving young children, through going back to work full-time, through moving, through acute anxiety, and through depression. The challenges in my life presented me with an opportunity to slow down and be gentle with myself in working the Steps. And when I couldn't be gentle with myself, my sponsor was gentle with me. There have been lots of bumps along the way and my sponsor has been there faithfully for every one of them.

I recently shared with my sponsor that when I think of how I would like to describe her to others, what I really want to say about her (but don't) is: "She's kind of a big deal." I thought it was cute at the time but then, as I prepared to write this, I wasn't sure if that was a healthy way to think of her. "Maybe that's not being in right relationship with my sponsor," I thought. "Maybe that's viewing her as superior to me." But then I thought, "Hey, I'm kind of a big deal, too!" Now, being that self-loathing is one of my character defects, when a thought like that pops into my head, I can't help but smile because it is proof that *working the Steps works*. In the past, I wouldn't have allowed myself to believe—let alone write in an article for others to read (gasp!)—that I am important. I matter. I have gifts and talents given to me by my Higher Power. I am a woman of worth and value. My sponsor saw all of this in me long before I did. She has been my eyes when I have been blind to my reality and to my abilities. She sees my potential and my growth when I can't. As my eyes are gradually opening to the masterpiece that is my spiritual awakening, I am learning to love and accept myself.

Sponsorship-cont'd.

Reflecting back, I realize that my relationship with my sponsor didn't begin on the day she agreed to sponsor me; it began on the day I first met her. As with any healthy relationship, it took time for me to develop trust and to open myself up despite the possibility of getting hurt. Asking her to be my sponsor was a big risk for me at the time but I am so incredibly grateful I took it. I could not have received the miraculous gifts of sponsorship if I had not been willing to take that risk. When I have risked big, I have received big. And now, as I find myself on Step Twelve, I see that my time has come to give big.

~Colleen T.

Sponsorship



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



Seventh Tradition: Financial Report

September 2014-October 2014

<u>Group</u>	<u>Amount</u>
CA-01	\$119.00
CA-08	\$140.00
CA-23	\$25.00
CA-08	\$30.00
Edgewater, MD COSA	\$233.00
FL-11	\$25.00
Madison WI	\$58.00
MN-01	\$50.00
Monday Woodlands	\$100.90
Phoenix, Stillwater	\$15.00
Santa Ana, Orange, CA	\$50.00
St.Louis Monday	\$100.00
Sunday MNPLS COSA	\$108.00
Syracuse, NY	\$30.00
Individual	\$581.61
Recurring Donations	\$2,421.00
Outer Circle Week	\$1,472.00
Indiv. Donation to Board Travel	\$287.00
Total	\$6,254.61

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/PDF/lit_guidelines.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

December was a slow month on the Board. According to our group conscience, we don't have a December Board meeting. Any business we need to conduct gets taken care of by e-mail. So there's time to rest, to reflect, and to rejuvenate. I rather like Decembers.

One of the things I realized recently was how much I have changed in the three years and seven months I've been on the Board. I'm not done yet, but I've come a long way in accepting myself and others as they are and not as I want them to be. I've learned that mistakes are (probably!) not the end of the world, and that "God's Got It."

I've decided to leave the Board at the end of my term this coming May. I will write more about it as we get closer, but I wanted to take some time right now to thank you for letting me be of service. I use the term "wild ride" to describe my Board Service, and indeed it is. Physically, mentally, and emotionally, it can be both exhausting and exhilarating. I've learned more in these past three and a half years than I have in any other period of my life.

I feel good about myself today, in a calmer, deeper, more satisfying way. I read once that if you want self-esteem, do esteem-able things, and I can think of no more esteem-able thing than to serve the fellowship of COSA. I'm very excited because I think I've accomplished what I came to do when I joined the Board in 2011. What I wanted was for COSA to have Step literature for all of the Twelve Steps, and the Literature Committee completed that goal before I moved from LitCom Chair to Board Chair in 2013. Jackie F. asked me what I wanted to accomplish as Board Chair, and I told her that I wanted to work to support a healthier, more sober COSA. She asked what I meant by that. "More people working the Steps, and more people sponsoring and being sponsored", I answered her. I've seen that happening. Keep up the good work, COSA!

I'm really excited about the woman who is going to stand for COSA Board Chair next service year. Her name is Emily G. She's my Vice Chair this year, and the Chair of the Resource Committee. She was mainly responsible for the drive to add recurring donations, which gave COSA the opportunity to become more fully self-supporting. I admire her recovery, and I'm excited about the passion she brings to her Board work.

I am wondering what it will be like when the phone doesn't ring so many times a day; when my e-mails don't get out of control, when there's not a crisis du jour. The strangest thing is happening to me- I am looking forward to that time with anticipation rather than fear or dread. I have no idea what I'll be doing with that time, but I know my Higher Power will have something good for me. That anticipation tells me how very far I have come. I don't always have to be in control of every detail of my life anymore. I can relax a little and let those whirling dervishes whirl- if that's what they want to do. I've also learned to just pay attention to my own responses and reactions to situations. I have more insight than ever into why I do the things I do, and feel the things I feel. A lot of the times I can just shrug my shoulders and think, "That's really interesting!"

So, thanks again for this time serving you. I'll talk more about it in the May-June issue of the *Balance*, but I wanted to let you know how grateful I am.

Hugs,
Claudia

Step One

Originally my perspective about COSA was that it was to support the sex addict in my life. I didn't believe I needed to join if I was no longer in a relationship with a sex addict. I don't think I ever really bought into the fact that my sexual codependency was my disease, separate from that of my husband and any other man with whom I had been involved. After doing my First Step in COSA my perspective changed. My sponsor helped me to see that sex addicts often use approval, validation, and attention to get sex and many COSAs use sex to get attention, validation, and approval. My obsessive need for attention and approval to validate my worth made me a prime target for sex addicts. My compulsion to satiate that craving coupled with my lack of boundaries, denial, and my innate ability to see what I need to see in order to manage in life are a few of the many things that qualify me for COSA. I learned that this drive, if left unaddressed, will move me to continue to attract unhealthy sex addicts. This was confirmed through my First Step which painfully revealed that every man with whom I had ever loved, beginning with my father, had been a sex addict. I started out my life craving attention, affection, and love from Dad and when those needs were unfulfilled, I sought out men like my dad for fulfillment, only to find that they, like my dad, were incapable of delivering.

Going through the history of my relationships and my co-addictive behavior in the First Step helped me to face, understand, and begin to heal from this disease. Most of the men I dated were awful to me. I realized that if these men had never broken it off with me, I would never have mustered up the courage to leave because I never believed that I could do any better. An overarching theme revealed was that I repeatedly settled for whatever man showed interest. I never felt like I had a choice. As a result, I have always tried to give men what they wanted and pretended to be what I thought they wanted for the purpose of getting my infantile deficiency for love and affection met. In the process I abandoned myself. The tradeoff cost me my dignity, self-respect, and further damaged my self-esteem.

The most powerful truth uncovered in my First Step work was that fantasy, denial, and minimization are the by-products of my attention and approval seeking compulsion. It is subsequently this dynamic over which I am powerless and it has caused great unmanageability in my life. I completely ignored the truth and believed what I needed to believe in order to keep my fake world intact. I had convinced myself of the most insane things. I magnified the small insignificant things about the sex addicts in my life and overlooked the major flaws in their characters. When things didn't add up, I would ask for an explanation and close my eyes to the facts. I not only did this in my love relationships, I did it in all of my relationships. Reality was too painful for me because if I faced it, I would be required to change and I didn't have the power to do that on my own.

My First Step work has been an eye opener. I clearly see that the unmanageability in my life as a result of compulsive sexual behavior. I see that on my own I don't have the power to change those character defects that make me repeatedly attract sex addicts, and if I want to have a different experience, I know that I need to come to believe that there is a power greater than me and my disease that can restore me to sanity in this area of my life.

~Terrie



We admitted we were powerless over compulsive sexual behavior – that our lives had become unmanageable.



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.

Step Two

In working Step One, I realized that controlling outcomes only made things worse, and this forced me to rely on my Higher Power. When I reached Step Two, I noticed that the word *came* in "Came to believe" is in past tense--it refers to a process that already happened. Over a period of time certain experiences in my life changed my beliefs. As I worked the steps and attended COSA meetings I have changed and have become healthier. I have gone through a process over time that changed my behaviors and thoughts and brought me to the conclusion and to the belief that my Higher Power could restore my life to sanity. I know this now because any time I let go and let God take over, things work out better for me in my life.

Ever since I was in college for the first time, a spirit has been guiding me: and I get a warm feeling inside at times telling me I am moving in the right direction and everything is going to be okay. That does not mean my life is perfect and I don't have problems, but I have learned over the years that my Higher Power will get me through the difficulties and that in the long run everything will be okay. When I stop pushing my will and pray to know what God's will is for myself and my husband, my Higher Power does a much better job with my life than I could ever imagine. I learned to do this from working the Steps in COSA.

I have trust in my Higher Power because of my past experiences. When I lost my job several times, I always had enough money to pay the bills and eventually I would find a better job with better working conditions. And I would get the feeling my Higher Power just wanted me in a new environment. When I was in Ultrasound school and working part-time, I was short \$200 for the rent. I did not want to ask my parents for the money because they were already helping me. A few days before I paid the rent, a check came in the mail for the exact amount I needed. It was a scholarship award from a radiologist organization, awarded to me for having good grades. I never applied for the scholarship. I was picked out of my class by the radiologist, and it was sent to me in the mail right when I needed it. It is experiences like these that help me to believe my Higher Power is looking out for me.

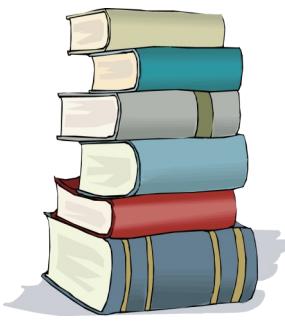
Believing in a Higher Power gives me more hope for the future--the hope that, over time, things will get better. As a result I have a more positive attitude and am more pleasant to be around. It has also helped me to care about myself and to forgive myself for the insanity I caused in my life. By believing that a Higher Power can restore my life, I am able to let go of trying to control my husband and his addiction. I believe my Higher Power can do a much better job of helping him, so I can stop nagging him about his Step work, etc. This results in a more positive and loving relationship between my husband and myself. We are able to love each other instead of trying to control each other, and I am able to accept him for who he is instead of trying to change him.

My Higher Power is kind, loving, forgiving, all knowing, all powerful, and mysterious. So mysterious that I will never fully comprehend His greatness and His power. I pray to my Higher Power regularly and talk to Him throughout the day for strength, guidance, and healing. I believe He will heal the pain in my heart and rebuild my life so that I am whole again.

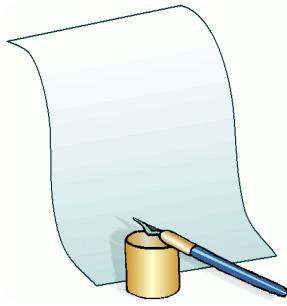
~Barb W.



Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.



Weigh in on the COSA Book



Weigh in on the First Sections of the COSA Book!

Dear COSA friends,

Happy holidays! We want to hear from you. If you have feedback on the first seven sections of **COSA's first basic text**, please send them in. **The deadline for comments is less than six weeks away!**

We want to be sure the book accurately reflects the diversity of COSA perspectives, as well as our common understanding of the COSA program. And that means we need your help.

The documents for your review can be found here <http://cosa-recovery.org/LitInDev.html> as well as on the Delegate website <http://cosa-recovery.org/2015/Delegates/LitInDev.html>

Please be as brief and specific as possible with your input. This will help make the literature-in-review process go smoothly. You are welcome to send input in sections, corresponding with each topic, if that is easiest. It may also be fun and helpful to review the literature with your meeting or group!

Also, please note, regarding the Step writing in the book: we want to produce a book that will be useful and accessible to the greatest number of COSAs. To that end, we do not plan to mandate any one approach to working the Steps in the COSA basic text. However, we do aim to produce a Step Workbook once the book is complete, and in the meantime, the COSA Step Booklets are a fantastic resource. These are available at <http://cosa-store.myshopify.com/>.

The Literature Committee will consider all feedback received. Please send your comments and suggestions before January 18, 2015.

E-mail: cosacopy@yahoo.com

Or mail to: ISO Central Office, Attention: Literature Committee, 9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 212 Houston, TX 77024

We appreciate your help and we hope you are as excited about this project as we are!

Yours in service,

The COSA Literature Committee

P.S. Do you like to edit? To read? Do you like to compile and organize? On the Literature Committee, you can pursue any one of these passions while also benefiting your own recovery and our precious fellowship! We invite you to join us. Please e-mail us at cosacopy@yahoo.com.

Reunión Telefónica en Español

You are invited to attend COSA en Español Telemeetings

Since early November COSA has held telemeetings in Spanish. For those of you that feel more comfortable expressing yourself in Spanish this is a great opportunity to help your recovery, connect and have fellowship with other Spanish-speaking COSAs. Join the weekly telemeeting of COSA en Español on Tuesdays from 5:30 to 6:30 PM Pacific Time (8:30-9:30 PM Eastern Time).

Call-in information:

1-712-432-1500 Password 1057988#

This meeting is open to all COSAs around the world. The only requirement to attend this meeting is that your life has been affected by compulsive sexual behavior. Join the call and share your experience, strength and hope with other Spanish speaking COSAs.

If you would like more information you can send an e-mail to cosaenspanol@gmail.com or Maritza_i@ymail.com

Convidamos a usted a participar de las reuniones telefónicas de COSA en español.

Desde principios de Noviembre 2013, COSA ha ofrecido reuniones telefónicas en español. Para todos aquellos que se sienten más cómodos expresándose en español esta es un excelente oportunidad para conectarse y entablar compañerismo con otros miembros de COSA.

Nos reunimos semanalmente los días Martes desde las 5:30hs a las 16:30hs horario de los Estados Unidos, zona del Pacífico (8:30 a las 9:30hs horario del Este).

Llamar al número:

1-712-432-1500 código1057988#

Estas reuniones están abiertas para cualquier miembro de COSA sin necesidad que resida en los Estados Unidos, las llamadas pueden hacerse desde cualquier parte del mundo. El único requisito para participar de estas reuniones es que usted haya sido afectado por el comportamiento sexual compulsivo. Únase a nuestra llamada y comparta su experiencia, fuerza, y esperanza con otros miembros de COSA de habla hispana. Si usted precisa de mayor información puede enviar su email a cosaenspanol@gmail.com o a Maritza_i@ymail.com

COSA en Español

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 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.

COSA's Online Store Has New Recordings Available. 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 recordings.

All of the recordings from Los Angeles 2014 are currently available in CD or MP3 format. 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@yahoogroups.com

In Service,
The COSA Technology Committee

Four COSA Pamphlets 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:

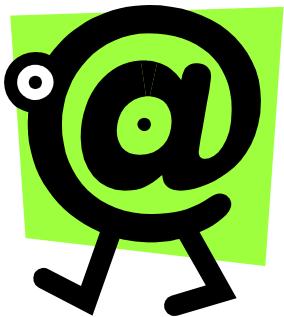
- Welcome to the Sunlight
- COSA FAQs
- COSA Tools
- Defining Co-Sex Addiction

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.

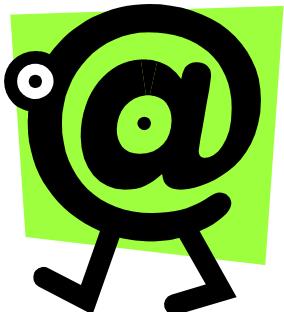
You can find these great resource here:

<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>



Meditation

Turning it Over and Taking it Back

I woke this morning feeling I've learned nothing. I knew I needed to change that thought quickly or the rest of the day would be at risk. I thought about what my piano teacher drilled into me for years: when you make a mistake don't stop and correct it, just keep moving forward. That was hard for me to do when I was a kid and it's still hard for me to do today as an adult.

I know it's the perfectionist in me that wants to play a complicated piece on the piano without any mistakes, just as it is that same part of me that wants to live my life without any mistakes. Of course I know this is completely unrealistic, but today I feel like I am a slave to my mind and there is no one standing over me, threatening to rap me on the hands with a ruler if I screw up or go back to tidy up my mistakes. In my morning practice readings, everything I read was about trusting my Higher Power. I'm in a pickle. I want to trust in my Higher Power that I'm not slipping into a depression on a day like this, that my HP can restore me to sanity, and yet my will is so resistant to trusting anything beyond my own grabby reach.

Fortunately, I can see my character defects of pride and fear that stand in my way and keep me from peace and serenity. And while I'm relieved to turn those character defects over to my Higher Power, barely two minutes pass and I snatch them back. It's a fast game of ping-pong with my character defects bouncing quickly between me and my HP until I'm a bit dizzy. Finally, a half a day has passed when it occurs to me that I can choose to put that ping-pong paddle down altogether. And then I am able to rest. I also note that I remembered to put the paddle down a half a day faster than the last time this happened!

~Anonymous

As seen in Volume 8, Issue 5 of the March/April 2012 *Balance*.

Tradition One: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon COSA unity.

The Steps have given me a set of spiritual principles on which I can build the best possible life for myself. While I have no doubt that my commitment to living in accordance their principles benefits my relationships with others, they are first and foremost for my own well-being and spiritual development. The Traditions invite me to consider what healthy relationship looks like in my COSA group, service work, with my fellow members, and by extension, in every other relationships in my life.

When I was new to COSA, I would read the Traditions, and my understanding of Tradition One was basically "COSA as a whole is more important than I am". While I don't think that this understanding is lacking in truth, this Tradition has taken on a richer meaning for me over time. The first word of this Tradition is "our", I am certainly a part of that "our". The long form of the First Tradition assures me that while the wellbeing of COSA as a whole *must* come first, personal welfare follows closely afterward. I still count.

The first Tradition does not ask me to give up my beliefs, needs, limits, or desires. In fact, I can relate to those around me from a far healthier place when I am aware of these things. It does not ask me to give up my personal truth. It does ask that I consider your needs, wants, and limits too. It asks that when I speak my truth, I am equally willing to consider yours. It asks me be cooperative rather than divisive, and to seek the common good. To let go of having it "my way" all the time. It reminds me to take my inventory and not yours. Above all this Tradition asks me to practice humility--right relationship--with others, and with my COSA group in my daily interactions.

Tradition One reminds me of what right relationship with my fellow COSA members is. My personal recovery is the most precious treasure I have, but I cannot recover alone. I need COSA. Therefore I need to take the welfare of the group into consideration in my actions and my attitude. It invites me to seek a balance between what I want and need, and what will be good for the unity and welfare of all involved.

Almost daily, I can find opportunities to practice this Tradition in my relationships with my family and friends. I get to practice by asking myself what will best serve the relationship. I can speak my truth and let go of having to be right or having all the answers. I practice when I refrain from gossiping, triangulating, and "fixing" others. When it is about "we" and not just "me", I am practicing Tradition One.

And the irony is, in my experience when I consider the common welfare, I actually serve my own wellbeing too.

I love that this Tradition offers me a beautiful spiritual reminder to practice humility. It teaches me to balance my truth with what will best serve the whole. Every day I can choose unity, or my way. I pray that I'll keep focused on unity.

~Anonymous

Traditions

Traditions

Tradition Two: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Walking into my first COSA meeting in 2013, I had no idea what the structure would be or what to expect. The leader started the meeting and I assumed, through past experience with various types of groups, that the leader was the “Leader” of the group. On attending my second meeting, when someone else was the leader, I took a moment afterwards to ask a member what was going on. Why was someone else the leader, when the person who led last week was also at the meeting?

Discovering Tradition Two, that there isn’t any one of us in charge of the others, was freeing; being part of a fellowship of equals gave me a sense of belonging beyond what brought me to COSA. We might be new to the meeting and to recovery, but we are equally accepted and our voice cherished. The concept of “the group conscience”, and our ultimate authority of a loving God, was welcoming in a way I had not experienced before. It gave me the courage to lead my first meeting, just a couple months into recovery.

The fear, the pain, the shame and the many feelings we have in our lives that bring us to COSA are shared and no one is better than or less than because of Tradition Two. We are all welcome to be part of the group conscience and to turn our power over to God, as we understand God. There is safety and support in that concept that was previously unknown to me.

Tradition Two also assures members that when we meet for our monthly group conscience meeting, they are equally welcome to express their ideas, to weigh in on group matters and to be heard, no matter their service position or their time in the program. Tradition Two allowed me to volunteer for a service position less than a year into recovery, where, in a different structure, I might have hesitated, not feeling experienced enough, or, even, good enough.

As a member of so many different groups in the past (charity organizations, work committees, book clubs), I had only known a group structure with an authority at some level. Someone had always set the purpose, made the decisions. Getting to a leadership position in the groups I had known typically required tenure and experience. In some cases, of course, you can’t make progress without that type of leadership. But COSA isn’t about one group moving forward or progressing as a whole to a specific goal. It’s about our own pace, our own program, our own recovery. No one else can lead this but our loving God.

~Katie L.

2015 ISO of COSA Annual Convention

Welcome to Washington, DC

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 recovery topics. Special functions will feature speakers who share their recovery stories. There will be a variety of COSA Twelve Step meetings, a hospitality room, a meditation room, and many opportunities for fun and fellowship. Please join us!

2015 Program

Workshops will cover a range of topics, including many recovery tools and working the Steps. Some workshops will have a 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 in which he or she shares his or her experience, strength, and hope. The first speaker is part of the Friday night convention opening. On Saturday, a luncheon will also include a COSA speaker. On Sunday evening there will be a dinner event featuring a COSA speaker as well as a guest speaker. The Sunday night COSA Banquet is open so members may purchase additional tickets in order to bring a guest(s). On Monday, the convention wraps up with a brunch, followed by a speaker, and a re-entry activity. Those who purchase meals in advance when registering for the convention will be seated at tables for the meals and speakers. Other registered convention attendees who do not purchase group meals may attend the speaker meetings and will be seated in additional chairs. When COSAs purchase convention meals, we help the fellowship save a great deal of money by fulfilling our contract with the hotel to purchase a minimum number of meals – and we give ourselves another fellowship opportunity.

Hotel & Convention Location

This year's convention will be held at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, 2500 Calvert Street NW, a central location overlooking Rock Creek National Park. Our contracted nightly rate, including tax, is \$147/night (single or double occupancy). The parking fee at the Omni is \$35/day. It is critical that you reserve your room under the COSA group block name, ***Reflections of Grace***, so you get the discounted rate and COSA is not charged for unused rooms. To ensure you receive the special rate, go to www.cosa-recovery.org/2015/index.html and use the reservation link, or call the dedicated Group Reservations phone number, 1-800-THE-OMNI (1-800-843-6664). You must ask for the ***Reflections of Grace*** rate and book prior to **April 23, 2015**.

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 apply for a scholarship, mail-in registrants should check the box indicated for a scholarship request and indicate whether a 50% or 100% scholarship is required. Also, please include a brief statement describing your need. Online registrants, please check the box indicated for a

Washington, DC

Reflections of
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May 22-25, 2015

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May 22-25, 2015

2015 Convention: Supporting the Silent Auction

scholarship request and include a brief statement describing your need in the box provided. Service scholarships are provided in exchange for service hours at the convention (4-hour minimum) and are limited. A nonrefundable \$25 administrative fee is required for every registrant requesting a scholarship. Please include this in your total registration payment.

Care & Support

Part of the convention experience is receiving recovery support. Convention mentors are available to attendees to guide them through the convention process. Indicate your need for a mentor or willingness to serve as a mentor on your registration. COSA members also provide support to attendees throughout the convention.

Volunteering

Our convention is run entirely by volunteers. Please consider helping with registration, hospitality, Twelve Step meetings, the silent auction, sound recording of meetings, or in other ways. Indicate your willingness to help when registering and 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 you can bring or ship 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/2015 or contact the COSA Convention Committee at convention@cosa-recovery.org.



REGISTRATION
2015 ISO of COSA Annual Convention
Reflections of Grace
May 22-25, 2015
Washington, DC

Please complete the following:

Name _____

City, State/Country _____

Phone _____

E-mail _____

Name tag (suggested format is first name, last initial, city, state, country if outside USA):

Registration Fee (Does not include meals)

<input type="checkbox"/> Early Bird payment (by April 1 st)	\$135
<input type="checkbox"/> Preregistration payment (April 2 through May 7)	\$155
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk-in weekend registration	\$165

Day only; please circle which day: Saturday / Sunday

<input type="checkbox"/> Preregistration (April 2 through May 7)	\$ 80
<input type="checkbox"/> Walk-in registration	\$ 95

Meals must be ordered & paid by May 15

<input type="checkbox"/> Saturday Luncheon with speaker	\$ 40
<input type="checkbox"/> Sunday Dinner with speaker	\$ 50
<input type="checkbox"/> Extra Sunday Dinner Tickets @ \$50/each	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Monday Brunch with speaker	\$ 32

Indicate special dietary requirements/preferences:

- Dairy-free
- Fat-free
- Gluten-free
- Sugar-free
- Vegetarian

Continued on page 20

- Vegan
 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 will be a "Convention Mentor" to COSA convention attendees.

Additional Information

- I am a Delegate for my home meeting (please note, Delegate registration is done separately).
 I attend teleconference/telephone meetings (a phone icon is included on your badge).
 I attend online meetings (a computer icon will be included on your badge).

I will volunteer (shift lengths will vary) to:

- Work the registration table.
 Help in the hospitality suite.
 Lead Twelve Step COSA meeting(s) (materials provided).
 Work with the Silent Auction.
 Work in the Bookstore.
 Be a Room Host.
 Assist with recordings of workshops or speakers.
 Assist with teleconferencing of workshops or speakers.
 Provide Care & Support.
 Help with scheduling other volunteers.

Arrival Date: _____ Circle one: Morning Afternoon Evening

Departure Date: _____ Circle one: Morning Afternoon Evening

The ISO of COSA Annual Convention is a 100 percent volunteer effort and we need your help!

Silent Auction Donation: I will donate _____ (Someone will contact you with further details)

Payment (required at time of registration) amount enclosed \$_____

If you are requesting a service scholarship, please complete the following:

I am requesting a service scholarship.

I require a 50% scholarship

****OR****

I require a 100% scholarship

I acknowledge that as a scholarship recipient I am required to pay the nonrefundable \$25 administrative fee and volunteer for a minimum four hours at the convention.

Complete this form and return it with your check or money order, in US\$ and payable to ISO of COSA, to:

ISO of COSA- Convention Registration

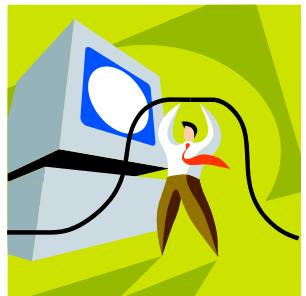
9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 212

Houston, TX 77024

Or you can register online at www.cosa-recover.org/2015. Payment is 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)
	Men's Only COSA Mtg.	6:00pm (PT) (7 MT, 8 CT, 9 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	Eighth/Ninth Step Mtg.	11:00am (PT) (12p, MT, 1pm CT, 2pm ET)

cosA Online & Telemeetings



COSA Literature and CD Order Form

REV 06/13

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 _____ = \$_____

ISO of COSA Literature is written by the members of COSA groups around the World.

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 <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

.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

Literature Total \$ _____

CD Total \$ _____

S&H \$ _____

DONATION: _____ Group _____ Individual

GRAND TOTAL \$ _____

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.

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