



## Recovery Through Service

I believe that many of my character defects grew and flourished in unhealthy relationships with others, so it has been miraculous for me to see that my Higher Power often uses my relationship with others to deal with my defects of character and restore me to sanity. But that does not even begin to scratch the surface of what service in COSA has given to my life and my recovery.

The Twelve Steps are the foundation of my recovery. Next to the Steps, nothing has changed me more than service--although, full disclosure, I personally consider service to be a part of living and working Step Twelve.

I came to COSA with a lot of trust and authority issues. Because "authority" in my family of origin was unstable, chaotic, confusing, and frequently not trustworthy, that became the lens through which I unknowingly filtered and reacted to people in my personal life. And since I trusted no one but myself, I felt that I always had to have the answers for everything. Looking back, I see what a heavy burden that was to carry: that perfectionistic need to create safety by knowing it all, being it all, and standing up loudly and aggressively any time I did not like what was happening. It was a life of insanity, lived in the extremes, which brought me great pain and isolation.

I think there are many ways to be of service, many more than I can list here, from staying after a meeting to talk to a newcomer, taking a service position in a meeting, being a sponsor, and serving at the International Service Organization (ISO) level.

I quite literally bumped my way into my first service position, on the Literature Committee, through a series of serendipitous "accidents" that I attribute to my Higher Power. I say that because I can't say that I came to the committee with any real understanding of what I was doing. At the time I joined, I had a vague

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notion that there was this thing called the ISO and an equally vague idea about what it did. I did not know about board committees, and if someone had asked me to serve on the Literature Committee, I would have thought "no way! I am not a writer or an editor, I have nothing to offer!"

What I didn't understand then that I do today, is that God didn't just have a plan for where I fit in the overall picture of COSA. God also knew that, because of the nature of my character defects, I needed to be in a safe place, where I could learn lessons about trust, mutual respect, appropriate communication, authority, responsibility, transparency, and so many other things. I needed a place where I could stumble, admit my mistakes, and still be accepted. Perhaps most of all, God knew that my belief that I needed to have all the answers absolutely had to go, and then God placed me where I could safely learn that lesson with an amazing group of people as my guides.

Those with whom I have served have modeled safe and appropriate use of authority. They taught me to trust others. They modeled the Twelve Traditions for me. I learned about the power of the group

## Recovery through Service

*continued*

conscience. I needed more than study Tradition Two in order to absorb its lessons; I needed to see it in action, day in and day out. Service gave me that opportunity.

I learned that my voice counted—not more or less than anyone else’s—but that it counted. And service, along with my ongoing Step work, has helped me lay down the burden of thinking that I know best and have to have all the answers. It became clear to me how seemingly unsolvable problems had marvelous solutions when we all listened to one another with an open mind. And because I am not perfect, sometimes it has forced me to learn to let go, by praying every hour, many times a day, for the knowledge of my Higher Power’s will, the power to let go of what I want, and the ability to trust that when I am open, a solution will present itself.

Service has also reaffirmed for me the lesson that I first learned on the Literature Committee: at the end of the day it is not about being right or perfect. It is about being a trusted servant of a fellowship that has given me so much. It is about carrying the message and caring for the continued growth of COSA so that it will be there for the next hurting person who comes into the rooms. It is about being willing to listen to others who think differently than I do, trusting the group conscience, and empowering one another to carry out the work we have been asked to do. It constantly brings me back to the Steps and the Traditions.

To be completely honest, I could spend days talking about the things that have brought me joy, but service has also pushed me to confront many painful and uncomfortable character defects. I say that, not to be discouraging, because to me this is not discouraging, it is simply what is. I am human, I am a work in progress, of course there will be bumps in the road. When I step back and put things in perspective, service, like any undertaking or relationship, will push me to confront

new truths about myself. I see these moments as opportunities for growth.

In the last year in particular, because priorities in my life changed, I have had to learn to let go of things that I once loved to do, and I have stumbled with this. I have had to make amends as I have seen my character defects affect others. Because I came into COSA with a flawed belief that I only matter to others when I am making the choices that they would have me make or when I am doing something that pleases them, I have had to work through fears that I won’t be cared about when I make my own choices about what is right for me. But these are lessons that my loving Higher Power clearly realizes I need to learn. It hasn’t been easy. I’ve felt self-doubt. I’ve had my share of growing pains. I’ve struggled anew with parts of myself that still need work. But that is part of this marvelous journey of recovery.

Most of all, for me, service is about being led by my Higher Power. I don’t always see the big picture. Like everyone, I have limitations on my time and energy. There are things that I enjoy, and others that bore me to death. But if I stay open, I will be led where I need to go.

Service has pushed me to grow. It has taught me that when I align myself with my Higher Power’s will for me, the gifts that I receive so far outweigh any of the challenges that it is unbelievable. It has taught me to follow my heart into what gives me joy and to finally understand what someone I admire meant when they said, in effect, that service is love in action. Before recovery, I nurtured and “served” my own self will. Today, I serve something greater than myself that is deeply important to me: the COSA fellowship.

-Anonymous

### Additional Resources on COSA’s Website

NEWCOMER INFO:	<a href="http://cosa-recovery.org/newcomers.html">http://cosa-recovery.org/newcomers.html</a>
MEETING GUIDE:	<a href="http://www.cosa-recovery.org/PDF/The_COSA_Meeting_Guide.pdf">http://www.cosa-recovery.org/PDF/The_COSA_Meeting_Guide.pdf</a>
ONLINE STORE	<a href="http://cosa-store.myshopify.com/">http://cosa-store.myshopify.com/</a>
FREE DOWNLOADS:	<a href="http://www.cosa-recovery.org/freedownloads.html">http://www.cosa-recovery.org/freedownloads.html</a>
WRITING FOR COSA:	<a href="http://www.cosa-recovery.org/submissions.html">http://www.cosa-recovery.org/submissions.html</a>



## Letter from the ISO Board Chair

To our Fellowship,

Let me tell you about my toothbrush.

This weekend, I went on a working retreat with the board of the International Service Organization of COSA.

On the first day of the retreat, I brought my toothbrush into the communal bathroom laying the bristles carefully on top of my travel-size toothpaste. The point of that was to keep it from touching the counter. I am not a germophobe but it seemed like the right thing to do. Every time I went to use it, I found it separated from its toothpaste tube of a pillow, with the brush's drying bristles touching the naked counter.

Talk about powerlessness!

It reminds me of when I was married and there were these hand towels in the bathroom (sorry if you've heard me talk about this before). I would carefully place them on the towel rack so that they were hanging with their hems hitting the same horizontal spot on the wall. These towels sent a message. My life was okay. I had control over something. Anyone who might come over would see that I lived a civilized life with properly-hanging hand towels. These were my actual beliefs, no matter how secretive I thought they were.

If my hand towels were even, all was right with the world, until... the crime. I would return to the bathroom after my husband had been in there and the towels would be hung at different lengths. Or worse, they might be stuffed between the wall and the towel bar, without any fold at all. The horror!

There were months and years of pleading to no avail. Please fold and hang these towels my way! The towel code kept being violated. At the time, my interpretation of this repeated offense was that my husband did not love me because he could not heed this request. I didn't ask for much. All I wanted was a little attention, and not even for me. For my towels! Of course, that's not all I wanted, and that's not all I asked for or expected from him. My silent, seething judgment of many of his behaviors and habits blocked an exchange of love, just as much as my hyper-focus on this small piece of housekeeping did.

At the same time, I could not feel I deserved love or was good enough until my towels were hung with care. Don't you see? my body and mind were saying. Love my towels, and I can love me and then you? It's so simple. Of course, I could never put it in those terms.

Now back to our retreat, and my delicate toothbrush. The first time I noticed it had migrated I saw it as a mistake, though not one I thought too hard about. The third time it happened as we neared the end of our retreat I smiled and began to see its transformative message. (The fact that I needed something to write about for this newsletter helped bring it quickly into focus.) I came to see I didn't need the toothbrush to stay put to be okay with myself. Of course, I had a number of choices about how to handle it, including getting a new toothbrush, keeping it in my room, asking for sensitivity around its placement and on, and on. And even though I had plenty of options, I am surprising myself with the honest admission that I didn't need any of them.

Why? It's because I am letting myself feel genuine acceptance of my fallible self from our board, from my higher power, and from me. Believing that I am okay comes in moments. A few seconds here and there. Sometimes an entire hour. I am about seven percent full of acceptance as I shared at one of our Twelve Step meetings at the retreat. Maybe when this letter is published, I'll be at 15 percent.

I don't know what I am going to do with the toothbrush when I get home from the retreat. Maybe toss it in the trash. Maybe frame it. Maybe I'll lose it before I ever arrive at my doorstep.

What I do know is that I am being healed through my service work. And I wish that for you and for everyone who contributes to the International Service Organization of COSA.

Keep brushing.

In Service,

Emily G.  
International Service Organization of COSA Board Chair

# Looking for a few good COSAs...

COSA's Annual Convention is a time when many of us get a glimpse of COSA beyond our local group meetings. One way to get started early on forging new COSA connections and friendships is to lend a hand to help coordinate the event.

The Convention Committee for Orlando 2017 is comprised solely of volunteers and it takes a lot of us to coordinate and organize this event! Be part of this fun and diverse group while learning from, and working with, other COSAs from across the continent.

We've got all kinds of jobs – big and small. Even if:

**You aren't able to attend the convention?  
That's OK! We have positions for you.**

**You can only commit to a small project?  
That's OK! We have positions for you.**

**You can only spare time closer to the convention date?  
That's OK! We have positions for you.**

Several committees do not require you to attend the convention, but give you some of the convention experience by encouraging you to interact with COSAs from other cities. Please consider service in one or more of the following areas:

**Banquet Committee:** This is a new committee. We need people to make our COSA banquet pleasurable and elegant. If you are a party-planner kind of person, this would be right up your alley.

**Bookstore Committee:** Helps our ISO office manager to set up, manage, and pack up the ISO bookstore at the convention and helps to train the Bookstore volunteers (who will work in shifts at the convention).

**Care and Support Committee:** This team coordinates the Orientation Workshop, Meet and Greets, and mentorship program for the convention, as well as being available to any COSA needing care and support at the convention.

**Facilities Committee:** Interacts with the hotel to make sure the needs of the convention are met.

**Finance Committee:** Responsible for keeping track of the budget, expenses, and other financial matters related to the convention. We have a convention treasurer and we are looking for someone to assist her at the convention with the tracking of funds that come in and are spent.

**Hospitality Suite Committee:** Plans and coordinates the purchasing of food items for the hospitality



## 2017 Convention

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suite and organizes the staffing and upkeep of the suite at the convention. Stocks up food, snacks, and beverages for our hospitality suite; makes sure supplies are replenished as needed throughout weekend; helps to manage the room and supervise volunteers periodically throughout the convention. We like to offer healthy food that is an alternative to expensive hotel fare as well as a welcoming place for COSA fellowship. We are looking for a chairperson as well as another person to share this service opportunity.

**Media Committee:** This team is responsible for creating the brochure, schedules, forms, and other documents needed for the convention. They also coordinate the submissions for the *Balance* newsletter. Computer and/or writing skills are particularly helpful for this committee.

**Outer Circle Activity Committee:** Plans and coordinates activities that are fun and inclusive during the convention. Some of the activities we are planning include a recovery crafts table, yoga, and other fun possibilities.

**Program Committee:** Help to interview prospective workshop presenters and speakers (using existing questionnaire) and help to determine how to arrange the program schedule of workshops, speakers, fellowship times, and Twelve Step meetings (using existing templates). We anticipate that the work of this committee will be done well in advance of the convention. This committee is a great place for anyone interested, regardless of whether you will be able to attend the convention or not.

**Recording Secretary:** Records minutes of our monthly telemeetings and uploads them to the convention online group.

**Registration & Information Committee:** This team is responsible for maintaining the list of registrants for the convention and delegate meetings, putting together registration packets, helping with roommate matches, and working with the other committees. Volunteers are needed for work at the convention.

**Silent Auction and Serenity To-Go Store Committee:** Obtains donations from COSA groups and individuals, creates fliers, and organizes the on-site bidding. The Silent Auction is the primary fundraiser for the seed money for the following year's convention and the Convention Scholarship Fund.

**Volunteer Committee:** This committee coordinates our other volunteers! This committee is a great opportunity to reach out to other COSAs.

If you can volunteer or perform service in any minimal or large way, or if you would like more information, please e-mail [concom@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:concom@cosa-recovery.org). We guarantee we will have a position that fits your skills and interests!

Thank you!

Convention Committee  
International Service Organization of COSA

**A**re you working with a long-distance sponsor or sponsee? We would love to hear from you about your experience, so that your share can be included in an upcoming *Balance* issue. Contact the *Balance* coordinator at [cosacopy@yahoo.com](mailto:cosacopy@yahoo.com)

## Step Nine

*Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.*

### Share #1

Working my way through the first eight Steps, I heard the same advice repeated time after time: "Trust the process." Step Nine seemed like a huge undertaking and the only way to begin was to simply begin. Since I had put myself at the top of my list of the people I had harmed, it seemed reasonable to make amends to myself first. So, I wrote. I wrote to myself until I had poured out all of my remorse and regret, the shame I felt about the pain I had caused myself, and my fear that I could never be healed. Then I focused on the specific COSA tools I had learned that would help me practice good self-care and keep my recovery strong. By really working through Step Nine with myself, I found hope for my future and a peaceful acceptance of my past that I had never felt before. There was clearly relief and healing available to me when I trusted the Steps, and the process of working through them, to guide me.

I was energized and eager to continue making amends to everyone on my list. At the same time, I felt overwhelmed by the thought of the many strangers who had suffered as a result of my controlling and fear-driven behavior. There was no way I could account for the many daily violations of common courtesy I had committed. My sponsor helped me to understand that a living amends is sometimes the healthiest approach to a situation. I believe I make a living amends to those injured people from my past each time I show compassion for a stranger, kindness over a sales counter, or patience in traffic. I'm paying forward what I can never pay back.

Many of the family members to whom I owed amends were so dysfunctional or codependent themselves that a direct amends would surely have caused more harm than good. My sponsor taught me the value of writing letters to these folks and then following up with a living amends. Most of the letters I wrote were never delivered, but the act of putting the words on paper demonstrated my willingness to take responsibility for the damage I had caused and gave me a concrete plan for changing my behavior. It may be a mystery to some of these people when they discover that our relationship is changing, but this change is an intentional, and ongoing, living amends for me.

From childhood through early adulthood, I had caused financial damage to a large number of businesses by pilfering from my employers and taking things that didn't belong to me. Many years had passed since then and I had no way of accounting for the exact damages, so I needed to be creative with this amends. Again, talking honestly with my sponsor helped me to turn my chaos into clarity. I decided to make a large donation to a charitable organization affiliated with my first employer. In the years since that first donation, I've continued contributing to their fundraisers, volunteering my time in their facilities, and donating items needed by the families who are served by the organization. What started as making amends has become a way for me to share love and hope with struggling families from around the world.

Having resolved these situations that could not be handled with direct, face-to-face amends, I was ready to get down to the business of working my way through the rest of my amends list: those amends that could be made directly. I wrote about each amends I owed until my hesitation and confusion cleared. When all I had left was a sincere and sober motivation to set right the wrongs I had committed, I knew I was ready to take action.

My objective was to say what I had to say to each person in two minutes. As opportunities appeared, I made amends whenever I could. I admitted to each person how I believed I had caused them harm, took absolute responsibility for the damage I had caused, and expressed my regret. Then, I explained how I was changing my behavior, and shared my hopes for healing between us and for a healthy future. With each one I felt an increasing sense of accomplishment, and serenity began to settle over me.

While we all say the same words when we read the Twelve Steps, we are individuals and we each experience a unique journey through those Steps. I found the path through Step Nine that was right for me by trusting the process that had worked for so many people before me. Very simply, I "made direct amends wherever possible." I found courage and strength that I never knew I possessed. Today, I live with hopeful acceptance of my past, and of myself.

-Nan

## Share #2

I had worked the Steps thoroughly because I felt my life depended upon reaching a better place. I finally found myself on Step Nine. I felt I could do these amends; in fact, I had to do these amends. I wanted to grow, clear up old hurts and start afresh, and achieve calmness. With lots of support from my sponsor, I started working on the list of people to whom I would make amends and the work places where I had been dishonest.

I wanted to do Step Nine really well and make it special. I wrote out my amends to my family members first. It all poured out from the heart. I had to think of how they would receive it; it was not all about me. This was not a clearing out session for myself; it was a reaching out session. A fresh start can only be achieved if the past is faced up to and the wrongs owned up to.

I kept it simple. I took cards with prompts with me to make sure I left nothing out. I told my family I wanted to be a good mother, a good daughter, and a good person. I made my amends, each one unique to the person I was apologising to. I carefully chose my time to do it. I did not want to be rushed, interrupted, or flustered. I wanted to end on a positive note and let my family know they are valuable to me. I found that some people said sorry to me for the way they had behaved. I received lots of hugs. That was beautiful. Some listened and nodded their heads. Some said there was nothing to say sorry for as far as they were concerned. I cried with my husband as he said his amends to me and I said mine to him. Sadly, our relationship did not survive, but we still speak and try to help each other. I think it is because of the amends that we still manage to stay in contact. I gave each person in my family a small bunch of yellow roses after making my amends to them, because yellow roses convey joy, friendship, and new beginnings.

The most difficult amends was to my son. He, like me, was really shocked at the extent of his father's acting out. He did not want to be reminded of it. I had to say that the amends was about me, not his father. I was the one who needed to come clean, I was not perfect, and I had been dishonest. My son understood once I started to explain. I gave him the flowers and we embraced. It was an intimate mother-and-son moment, never to be forgotten.

One company that I worked for supported a particular charity. I thought that I would make a donation to that charity, because the people I had worked for were long gone. I made my amends in this indirect way for my wrongs.

I feel lighter and freer since my Step Nine work. I try to stay honest, and I am much better at apologising if I do make a mistake. I am more aware of my behaviour and of certain situations where I might want to control or give advice when it has not been asked for.

My Higher Power and I are working well together, and we are growing. I see my Higher Power in nature, in the birds that fly around, in beautiful sunsets, and in the rain as it splashes down. My amends to those I have wronged was important in my process of growing and developing. I thank my Higher Power, COSA, and my sponsor for all the help and support I receive from them. I shall always be grateful for my Step work.

-Rosemary from Bristol, UK

### International Diversity in Writing Statement

As the *Balance* receives more articles from our members from around the world, you may notice different spelling and word usage. We want to maintain the original voice of each author, so that we can benefit from COSA's beautiful diversity.

## Step Ten

*Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*

I had finally arrived at what I heard was a maintenance Step...hooray! I made it past Step Nine! I had made some amends, not all, but I was well on my way to understanding how to forgive myself and make amends as well. Yet I wondered, how do I now notice it sooner when I harm someone?

I reached out to several other COSAs to find out how they do a Step Ten inventory, and I tried several different methods. I tried a nightly inventory, asking myself several questions, such as:

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## Step Ten

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- Do I feel that any situation today did not sit well with me?
- What was my part in this, and did I harm myself or others?
- Do I feel I owe an amends, and what words do I want to use?

I made it part of my nightly routine, and smiled at how wonderful and healthy my days were. I stayed out of other people's business and talked about my own feelings most of the time. But I knew I wouldn't be perfect, and I could only strive to be honest with my feelings each day. Changing my old habits meant reflection and awareness--I can change when I am more aware. It was a good Step for me, and if I noticed I didn't like how something was handled, I made a note to talk to the person--again figuring out what words to use. It started to become so easy, but it didn't happen quickly.

Now, after much practice, I can just sense if something is wrong during a conversation. I have gained so much insight. Since I'm more focused on me and how I feel, versus focused on reacting to what the other person is saying, admitting my wrong is becoming second nature! Again, the words are important and I want to do it promptly. So I practice with my loved ones--my adult children who know I am in recovery. I say, "hey, I just said something I don't like and feel that I may have offended you, and I want to make amends." Many times they laugh and say, "Mom, you didn't offend me," and out of this come wonderful conversations about the particular situation and how I want to be healthier, more aware, and living more respectfully. It has certainly brought us closer.

I love my new awareness and quick assessments, and getting things resolved sooner. I am seeing my life change dramatically--there's less unmanageability in my life. It's very freeing! My life feels more balanced, and I embrace who I am and the mistakes I make.

I love Step Ten and all that it has shown me. I no longer live in a world of regrets and wishes for handling things differently. I obsess less. This Step reminds me that if I have regrets or need to make amends, then I can also have patience with others who harm me. I can choose to wait and give them time to realize it, or if it's important I can approach them more humbly.

I want to thank all those COSA members who have shared their personal Step Ten practices--I like learning new ways to practice my recovery!

-Anonymous

## Tradition Nine

*COSA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.*

Early in my recovery the wording of this Tradition seemed confusing and contradictory. How are we supposed to get the business of the fellowship done if we're not organized? Over time and through my service work I came to realize the beauty of COSA's democratic process and group conscience approach. We don't operate the way businesses are run. COSA runs on spiritual principles instead of a hierarchy of bosses. No individual is in charge. All members are equals, all voices are heard and valued, and many hands are entrusted to share the work. Another of our strengths is that those who step forward to serve are motivated by a sense of gratitude and a desire to carry the message to those who still suffer. It's incredibly moving when I attend a retreat or convention and see this in action through the efforts of our volunteers.

This leads me to the very real fact that to accomplish any of our fellowship's objectives, we need teams of people willing to focus on particular areas; like maintaining our website, planning our convention, paying our bills, producing our literature, etc. For that, we democratically elect a board of trusted servants who are responsible for carrying out that work and reporting back to the fellowship. To help accomplish all that work, we create committees focused on specific areas. This same approach applies not just to the International Service Organization Board of COSA, but to the way each COSA group operates, no matter how large or small. [Small groups also elect trusted servants to fill needed roles.]

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## Tradition Nine

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Rotation of service is another important principle within Tradition Nine. It ensures responsibility is shared and passed on, and that no one person is seen as an expert or as having authority over others. Rotation of service allows opportunities for anyone willing to grow in their recovery by being of service.

I can also take the principles of Tradition Nine home into my personal life. My old, flawed coping mechanism of having to do everything myself to make sure it was done "right" caused havoc in many of my personal relationships. Now I can let go of my expectations and the need to control, which makes room for seeing that there are many right ways to do things—not just my way. Tasks become chores and resentment develops when any of us feels bossed around. But when we as a family engage in a spirit of cooperation and collaboration, we joyfully achieve more. I no longer care if my husband folds towels differently than I do. I focus on the fact that he's folding towels for our family. Appreciation now blooms in the place where controlling once was. Letting others be responsible for their portion of responsibilities gives them dignity, allows them to contribute and grow, and frees me to do just my share. This shift in family dynamics is a gift I received in recovery and from practicing Tradition Nine.

-Sandy S.



*COSA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the COSA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*

Tradition Ten keeps COSA focused and united. COSA is an anonymous fellowship and its purpose is to carry the message of COSA to others who still suffer. This means that COSA does not take a stand on outside issues of politics, world events, religion, or sports teams because it would divert us from that purpose. In addition, Tradition Ten promotes COSA unity and protects COSA from splitting into factions. When I applied this Tradition to my own life, I found it to be a valuable guide for sobriety during a turbulent year.

As I write this, there is an upcoming national election in my country. Every time I open a newspaper or go online, I feel overwhelmed by the volume and tone of comments on the candidates and issues. I also see news of violence, injustice and widespread suffering. I want to be informed and objective, but I find myself forming opinions based solely on emotions. Instead of focusing on how I can be of service, I get distracted by my feelings of helplessness, and my resentment towards people, places and things increases. I tense up when I overhear people at the grocery store rant about politics. I look for bumper stickers in my neighborhood to support my judgments about neighbors who have opinions different from mine. It's a challenge for me to be patient and kind.

Reading more on Tradition Ten has helped me to deal with this challenge and to stay sober in my program out in the world. I see how Tradition Ten keeps our meetings focused on the Twelve Steps and on our recovery. We follow Tradition Ten by keeping our script, literature, and shares free of commentary on matters outside of COSA. We are careful to focus on our primary purpose: to carry the message. This has enabled our COSA fellowship to maintain its unity even though individual members may have different opinions on outside issues. Many organizations take a stand on issues by endorsing candidates or ballot measures. It may be tempting to throw the weight of a group of people behind a public issue. Yet doing so would divert us from our primary purpose, and it could splinter the fellowship.

Because COSA adheres to Tradition Ten, I feel safe attending my COSA meetings. COSA's Tradition Ten ensures that COSA is a safe place and a haven from the conflict and noise that surround us outside of meetings, and that this will always be so.

Tradition Ten has also helped guide me in my personal and professional life. Before recovery, I believed that all of my opinions were right. I might try to convince someone that basketball is better than baseball, which is insane. I resented those who disagreed with me. Now I am able to listen more carefully and accept that my opinion is just an opinion, not a fact. I also offer fewer opinions. I try not to share my thoughts on subjects that are outside my sphere of knowledge. This has helped me to be more patient and less judgmental at work and at home. And now I can see that baseball is cool too!

-Elisa, San Francisco



# Help COSA and Expand Your Personal Recovery! (At the Same Time!)

The International Service Organization of COSA has several service positions available. But wait! Don't stop reading. Here's how service work can be rewarding:

- The warm fuzzy feeling of giving back to the fellowship that supports you
- Working alongside people committed to following the same principles you hold dear. (Have you ever been able to share that you were triggered with a co-worker? You can when you are doing service...!)
- And, befriending COSAs you would never ordinarily rub shoulders with

At this May's Annual Delegate Meeting, delegates asked for more clarity about what jobs are available. Here you go:

## Convention Committee Needs

The committee planning our Orlando convention is hard at work. You don't need to live in Orlando to be part of the committee. You can live anywhere.

- **Secretary.** This volunteer attends the Zoom video conference meetings once a month, creates a brief summary of the meeting, and keeps the list of action items current. It's very fulfilling, joyful work (I know, because I did it for two years!).
- They are also looking for a **Media Coordinator** to write announcements and e-mails to keep the fellowship updated about the convention.
- Perhaps you'd like to be the **Hospitality Chair** or the **Banquet Coordinator**?

All positions are very well defined so they are easy to jump into. In addition, volunteers will receive all the training and support they need. If you'd like to be part of the Convention Committee or get more information, please e-mail [concom@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:concom@cosa-recovery.org).

## Literature Committee Needs

- **Balance Coordinator.** The volunteer in this role keeps the *Balance* newsletter team members aware of deadlines, and organizes and maintains the *Balance* schedule, ensuring reminders are sent out to writers. They're looking for someone who is organized, has at least minimal knowledge of Excel and e-mail, as well as the ability to reach out to the fellowship to obtain new writers. Interested? E-mail [resources@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:resources@cosa-recovery.org).

## Technology Committee Needs

- **Website Maintenance.** Training and support will be provided. This position is unique because the knowledge and experience you gain in it can also translate directly to some of our careers, hobbies, and other outside interests! If you've already got HTML code language experience, even better! Just a few hours a month will make a huge difference. Please e-mail [TechCom@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:TechCom@cosa-recovery.org).

## Central Office Needs

- **Central Office Assistant.** The International Service Organization of COSA central office is looking for a volunteer to work with our office staff to fill literature orders and assist as needed with other office functions. This may include filing, sending correspondence, or answering e-mails. This position would require about 5-10 hours per month (hours are flexible). The office is located in Houston, Texas, in Spring

*continued on next page*

## Open Service Positions

continued

Branch near Katy Freeway and Echo Lane. Getting our literature into the hands of those who still suffer is a very important service to the fellowship. It's also a very rewarding way to do Twelfth Step work for your own recovery.

Sobriety Requirements: This position requires the volunteer to have one year in COSA, have a current home meeting, have a sponsor, and have worked through Step Five in our program. If you are interested in this opportunity for service work please contact Emily, ISO Board Chair, at [chair@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:chair@cosa-recovery.org)

**Even a few minutes of service work here and there adds up to make a positive impact and keep COSA moving forward.** With the exception of one part-time staff member, our organization depends entirely on volunteers to help us continue our primary purpose of carrying the message to those who still suffer.

**Will you step forward and help make a difference?** Please contact [resources@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:resources@cosa-recovery.org) to volunteer or for more information.

Yours in service,  
Sandy S.  
ISO of COSA

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

### Seventh Tradition: Financial Report

May/June 2016

Winterpark, FL (FL-11).....	\$ 35.00
Longwood, FL (FL-14) .....	\$ 75.00
Madison, WI (WI-08).....	\$ 40.00
Indianapolis, IN (IN-04).....	\$ 100.50
Laguna Hills, CA (CA-13).....	\$ 44.50
Palm Beach Gardens, FL (FL-13).....	\$ 100.00
Duluth, MN (MN-19).....	\$ 60.00
Long Beach, CA (CA-23) .....	\$ 75.00
Bay Area Intergroup for Convention (CA-07).....	\$ 430.00
Convention Scholarship Donation from Individuals .....	\$ 600.00
Individual Donations .....	\$ 85.00
Authorize.net .....	\$ 1,065.00
PayPal .....	\$ 1,315.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$ 4,025.00</b>

## Basic Text Survey Deadline extended – October 1st

We, the Literature in Development Team, want to thank you for all the wonderful feedback received from our recent survey on Steps Six through Nine. It's been an amazing response!

Based on your request for additional time, we will be extending the survey.

Please share your COSA experience, strength, and hope (ESH) in working these Steps by October 1st. Please follow the links below.

[Step Six](#)  
[Step Seven](#)  
[Step Eight](#)  
[Step Nine](#)

Gratefully  
Your Literature in Development Team



## By the Fellowship - For the Fellowship

We encourage every group, intergroup and member to submit articles that share your ESH (experience, strength, and hope). Also, articles and announcements that share up-coming 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://cosa-recovery.org/PDF/lit\\_guidelines.pdf](http://cosa-recovery.org/PDF/lit_guidelines.pdf)

Please send your articles to [COSACopy@yahoo.com](mailto:COSACopy@yahoo.com)

or by mail to:

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

ISO of COSA

Phone: 866-899-2672

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

*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.

### 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.