



July/August 2017

Volume 14, Issue 1

## Step into the Sunshine in Review

Reflections from COSAs attending the Convention in Orlando

For all those who stepped into the sunshine in Orlando, Florida, and for all those in recovery elsewhere, stepping and shining, congratulations! Working the COSA program brings healing, hope, and increased happiness. The annual convention is a unique and fabulous opportunity to meet and connect with other COSAs as well as reconnect with yourself and your Higher Power.

Most of the sessions and all of the speaker events are recorded and available for purchase for a mere \$3 each. The entire set of 18 mp3 recordings is available at a 20% discount for \$42.10. What a great way to have the convention experience at your fingertips and within earshot!

Better stated in the words of those in attendance:

This was my first convention and it won't be my last. This experience has enriched my recovery and I look forward to attending next year. I felt cared for and especially appreciated the orientation and the Serenity Send-off. I've made some new friends here and have gained more insight as to where I'd like my recovery process to go from here. - Gabby E.

Just want to let you know that the convention was absolutely wonderful! The workshops, speakers, catering--everything showed a lot of planning and service work that went into this well-organized and successful conference. Please let your local committee know how grateful we are for all of their work. The beautiful care and support identification ornaments, the decorations, the COSA Emblems, --all were beautiful! Thank you! I am grateful that I was able to reconnect with old friends, meet new ones, and put faces to the voices that I hear on the tele-meetings. None of that would have been possible without you

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**Save the Date!**  
 ISO of COSA's 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention  
 Oakland, California  
 May 25-28, 2018



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and all others who helped to put on this conference. Thank you! - Janie A.

I was a walk-in to the convention, and admittedly pretty hesitant at first. I was welcomed immediately by the registration volunteers who answered my questions, showed me the program and offered ways I could participate. From my first meeting that night to the closeout session, I felt like part of the group. The conference was a oasis of support and learning. It was also my first time in classes with SA members. Hearing their teaching and shares expanded my understanding and gave me a more compassionate view of my husband. It helped me respect his recovery and opened up new dialogue between us. The resources offered for continued recovery were helpful as well. I am now listening to virtual meetings and reading conference material. Can't wait to go next year! – Patti L.

Orlando was my second COSA convention. My first convention was a great experience, so I was really excited for Orlando. I wanted to be more a part of the convention this time, so I took on a few volunteer opportunities. That gave me the opportunity to meet more people, and also to see how the convention really comes together. In all aspects of the convention, I noticed how intentional everything was. There was so much attention to making the convention supportive, from the craft room to the generous breaks in the schedule to the visibility of the Care and Support Committee. I want to end with appreciation for the hospitality suite. Obviously, I appreciate the food, but more importantly, it became a gathering place. There was no agenda other than connection and relaxation. We could talk about the convention, COSA or something completely unrelated. It ended up being an important part of my convention experience. – Sara L.

Felt some sadness and resentment towards my SA for not attending convention with me. But as I have learned higher power always has a better plan. I met some amazing COSA members who had so much ESH and shared their stories. A few of the COSAs whom I met in the hospitality room were wonderful and I felt like I was in a safe place. I will always remember Judy, Helen, Gilda and Ila's remark that COSA will always have our back. And most of all spending time with my sponsor who pulled me from despair to the sunshine. This was my gift to me attending the convention and being free to be me. - Candy B.

It's not too early to start planning for 2018 in Oakland! Rooted in Recovery will be held May 25-28.

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

**Seventh Tradition: Financial Report  
March/April Donations**

Walnut Creek, CA (CA-02) .....	\$40.00
Claremont, CA (CA-20).....	\$20.00
Winter Park, FL (FL-11) .....	\$25.00
Palm Beach Gardens, FL (FL-13) .....	\$100.00
Longwood, FL (FL-14) .....	\$130.00
Durham, NC (NC-06).....	\$50.00
Houston, TX (TX-04) .....	\$40.00
Individual Recurring Donations.....	\$1,240.00
Individual Single Donations .....	\$1,844.00
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$3,489.00</b>

When sending donations to the ISO of COSA, please include your meeting number so we can record it properly and post it in the Balance. We thank you for all your donations!

To find your meeting number:

- Go to [www.cosa-recovery.org](http://www.cosa-recovery.org), click on the Meetings and Events tab, and then on Find a Local Meeting.
- Search for your meeting and note the meeting number in parentheses next to your meeting name.

# ISO of COSA

## ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING SUMMARY

### International Service Organization of COSA

#### Orlando, FL

#### May 26, 2017

#### **Attendees:**

*Registered Delegates:* Allison B./San Francisco Saturday COSA (CA), Bridget M./Orlando Step Study (FL), Carrie D./Thousand Cranes (AZ), Cathy P./Tuesday COSA Group Burlingame (CA), Cindy L./COSA Zoom Room Intergroup (ONL), Chelsea D./Saturday Coed Meeting (TX), Cheryl K./Palm Beach Gardens COSA (FL), Connie H./ Wednesday Night Warriors (ONL), Diana L./Daily Tenth Step Meeting (TEL), Glenda A./Sunday Night (TX), Jennifer N./Serenity in the City, (CA) JoAn D./Spanaway Recovery Group (WA), Jodi D./Wednesday COSA Step Study Telemeeting (TEL), Julie B./ Stepping Into Recovery (AZ), Ivy L./Sunday Serenity (ONL), Kristen B./New Beginnings (CA), Linda P./ East Bay COSA & Walnut Creek COSA (CA), Lori M./ Connecticut Love and Hope (CT), Maia P./Phoenix Area COSA Intergroup (AZ), Marlane D./Daily Eleventh Step Meeting (LA), Martha Jean H./COSA Columbus Thursday (OH), Patricia T./COSA East Saturday (WI), Ruth G./On the Path Twelve Step/Tradition Study (TEL), Sandy S./Women's Circle of Hope (CA), Sara L./Sunday Night Grace (MN), Susan K./Saturday Coed Meeting (TX)

*Other COSAs:* Ann Marie V., Incoming Board Member; Jennifer N., listed above — also serving as Delegate Liaison; Susan K., listed above — also serving as COSA Office Manager, guest, Ila P., guest, Sandy C., guest, Eveline S., guest (via Zoom)

*Board Members:* Beth H., Literature Committee Chair; Emily G., Board Chair; Eric C., Member at Large (via Zoom), Joey Z., Convention Committee Chair, Sandy S (also listed above), Vice Chair and Board Secretary; Sara P., Technology Committee Chair; Wendy W., Board Treasurer.

*Shared Roles:* Emily G., Moderator; Joey Z., Facilitator; Sara P., Zoom Facilitator; Beth H., Timer; Sandy S., meeting summary

#### **Agenda Items:**

##### **Meeting Convene and Welcome**

The meeting opened with the “Serenity Prayer”. Participants read the “Twelve Steps of COSA”, the “Twelve Traditions of COSA”, and the “Twelve Concepts of COSA”.

##### **Delegate Orientation, Rules of Order, Concepts Study**

Following delegate introductions, the delegates reviewed the ISO of COSA Safe Communications Procedures. Joey Z. explained the rules of order and the decision-making model. Delegates studied the Concepts of COSA and presented the group with the results of their table discussions, summed up how their assigned Concept pertains to their role as a delegate.

##### **Board Elections**

Emily G. explained the slate and the secret ballot form to the delegates. Board prospects briefly shared with the delegates why they wished to serve. The nominees and their prospective positions were: Ann Marie V., Board Secretary; Emily G., Board Chair; Eric C., Member at Large; Sandy S., Vice Chair; and Nominating Committee Chair, Wendy W., Board Treasurer. The results of the election were announced upon the meeting reconvening after the lunch break.

## 2017-2018 Budget Q & A

Wendy W. gave an overview of the final 2016 budget results; a current snapshot of the budget, balance sheet, and profit and loss statements; and the proposed 2017-2018 budget. She clarified that the convention budget will be separate from the ISO budget (items such as rent and payroll). She highlighted the estimated deficit of \$3,268 for the current fiscal year ending June 30. She also mentioned that we closed the previous fiscal year with a deficit of \$2670.

The following are answers provided during the Q & A:

- Budget shortfall has no impact on prudent reserve. It is set aside.
- Reduced expenses are a result of lower board travel expenses, lower retreat expenses, and decreased literature printing.
- Our current reserves are over \$30,000.00; however, we can't keep operating in the red year after year. We also know some expenses such as rent will increase. We were also billed for a Loss Assessment in our rent this year which is a bill for additional maintenance expenses for the building which are divided among the tenants.
- The prudent reserve is subtracted out of the equity available, which is total equity with all costs taken out. A prudent reserve of \$30,000.00 is appropriate for a group our size, which Wendy would like the Board to consider approving.
- The actual dollar amount of the prudent reserve can be put on a line of its own on the balance sheet.
- The fundraising thermometer on the website is currently updated twice a month.
- Paymentech is part of Chase bank. Authorize.net and Shopify use it to transmit transactions to Chase and Shopify uses it for the COSA store.

Budget Approval Straw Poll: [31 GREEN] [1 YELLOW].

**Amendment:** Show the prudent reserve amount on its own line on the budget.

Wendy W. accepts the amendment.

Budget Approval Vote: Unanimous [32 GREEN] Budget approved.

## Technology Improvement

We discussed the changes underway to better collect online donations. COSA currently collects recurring monthly donations online using PayPal. However, that is time-consuming and expensive. We have paid to have code written to allow us to collect recurring monthly donations without using PayPal. That work will cost about \$1900 to have done. It should be up and running on our website shortly.

## Meeting Inventory Addition: Beth H., Literature Committee Chair

Beth provided the context for why the additional inventory item was proposed, to raise awareness about the need for meetings to make regular a Seventh Tradition donation to the ISO if their meeting finances allow. The proposed addition is as follows:

“Is our group honoring the Seventh Tradition and supporting our meeting group financially? Do we also donate to the ISO of COSA which provides our materials, literature, support, etc.?”

Straw Poll: [31 GREEN] [1 YELLOW]

**Proposed Amendment:** strike the word “etc.”.

**Proposed Amendment:** include the words “and convention” to the list of support and services that are provided by the ISO.

Beth H. accepts the amendments.

Straw Poll: [32 GREEN] proposal passes as amended.

The addition now reads, “Is our group honoring the Seventh Tradition and supporting our meeting group financially? Do we also donate to the ISO of COSA which provides our materials, literature, support and convention?”

The meeting adjourns for lunch at 12:00. The meeting reconvenes at 1:00.

### **Board Election Results**

Delegate votes are tallied: All nominees are elected.

### **Vote on Step Five Section of the Basic Text: Beth H., Literature Committee Chair**

Beth H. provided an overview of the process for developing this chapter for the basic text. First, the Literature Committee asked the fellowship to submit writing about their experience working the Step. Their input was considered as the draft was written. The draft went out to the fellowship for 90-day review period, in which the fellowship was invited to provide feedback on the draft. Once the 90-day review process was completed, the Literature Committee considered the additional feedback gathered in the review and revised the draft. The document presented for the vote is the culmination of the input and feedback received throughout the process. Because the document had already been through the review process with the fellowship no amendments can be made from the floor. It is a pass or no pass vote.

Step Five Section Approval Straw Poll: [29 GREEN] [2 YELLOW] [1 RED]

Round one discussion:

- One delegate noted a potential error that referred to Step Four and thought it should be Step Five instead. Also wanted further clarification on with whom COSAs may share our Fifth Step.
- One delegate felt the flow of the past and present tense usage was confusing. Also, using only the word “wrongs” felt triggering.
- One delegate shared that her meeting group found it helpful to replace the word “wrong” and wished to soften it.
- Using past tense was confusing.
- The word “wrongs” needs to be addressed.
- One delegate pointed out that the tenses are in line with the Steps as they are in past tense. Would like to reframe the word “wrong” with something shame-reducing.
- One delegate wishes to revisit the use of the word “wrongs”.

Beth H. reiterated that this is a pass/no pass vote and no substantial editing can be made now, but any typos or grammatical errors will go back through editing. Tenses will be checked so that it flows consistently and any substantial edits can be addressed in final editing.

Step Five Section Approval vote: [28 GREEN] [3 YELLOW] [1 RED] **Proposal passes.**

### **Vote on the Revised Welcome: Eric C.**

Eric C. provided the history and context resulting in the proposed new Welcome. This document was written by committee and was submitted to the fellowship for a 90-day review period, so it is a pass or no pass vote. No amendments can be made from the floor. The purpose of the new Welcome is to be in line with our Third Tradition and be more inclusive.

The proposed Revised Welcome reads as follows:

“We welcome you to the COSA fellowship and extend to you our support and friendship.

COSA is a Twelve Step recovery program for spiritual development, no matter what our religious or philosophical beliefs. Through working the Twelve Steps, we seek to achieve serenity, one day at a time.

The only requirement for COSA membership is to have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior.



When dealing with the effects of this behavior, many of us experience profound trauma, pain, powerlessness, and unmanageability. Often we turn to unhealthy behaviors of our own to manage our pain or try to control the behaviors of others.

In the long run, our efforts fail. The consequences leave us in despair: our self-esteem, personal boundaries, and values are seriously compromised. Our health and our lives are at risk, and we may feel our identity has been lost. We realize our need to reach out for help.

COSA offers hope, whether or not there is a sexually addicted person currently in our lives. In COSA, we begin to experience relief from our isolation in the safety of an anonymous gathering with others who share our stories. Everything that is said in the group meetings and between members must be held in confidence. This promotes open and honest sharing of our experience, strength, and hope, creating a trust level that many of us have never before experienced.

By working the Twelve Steps in COSA, we gain a new perspective on ourselves and our lives. The loving interchange of help among members and daily use of program tools make us ready to receive the priceless gifts of serenity and freedom.”

Revised Welcome Approval Straw Poll: [29 GREEN] [2 YELLOW] [1 RED]

Round one discussion:

- The new version doesn't include other types of partnerships.
- One delegate's meeting has mixed feedback, and acknowledged that their autonomy could allow them to adapt it to their needs.
- The wording needs to be re-ordered.
- One delegate's group was not comfortable with it, but felt better about being able to make changes.
- One delegate would like a side by side comparison of the old and new.
- Seems wordy.
- Eric said that some language had been removed because comments reflected that the Welcome was too long.

Revised Welcome Approval vote: [30 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [1 RED] **Proposal passes.**

### **Third Tradition Working Group Report: Eric C.**

- Eric C. reported on the findings of the Working Group, now in their second year of the examination our Third Tradition. He said that the group, which meets via Zoom, has recently begun exploring options to propose a change to the Bylaws that could potentially pave the way to propose a change to the Third Tradition to more accurately fit the fellowship, as we have grown and developed a better understanding of ourselves as a fellowship. In the process of drafting a structured proposal to present to the delegates, the group reached out to former members of the Working Group to get more history. Several of those members returned to the group and became an important minority voice. Some within the group are opposed to changing the Bylaws and Traditions, while others see value in the change. The proposal to change the Bylaws failed to get enough approval, and now, although the Working Group does not have unanimity, they have a much more rounded view of the situation. The Working Group will continue to explore the subject and hope more people will join in the monthly meetings and share their views. Eric invites all to attend the Third Tradition panel in which multiple perspectives will be shared. He encourages all to ask questions of any of the panelists and other Working Group members.

Results of Q and A:

- One delegate and member of the Working Group said that the report did not reflect her view.

### **Vote on the Confidentiality Statement: Emily G.**

Emily reviewed the context and purpose of the proposed Confidentiality Statement.

The proposed Confidentiality Statement reads as follows:

“Though COSAs are asked not to repeat what others share at meetings, it is important to remember that sponsors and meeting members are not bound to, or protected by, a legal confidentiality agreement, as a lawyer might be. Sadly, due to the ways in which some COSAs are affected by certain sexually compulsive behaviors, members may find themselves in ambiguous territory. In matters where threats of suicide or intimations of ongoing child abuse are present, a COSA member may feel personally or morally compelled to contact authorities even if she or he is not required by law to do so. Individual members are encouraged to consider this reality when sharing in their meetings and with sponsors. Groups may want to add something to their meeting scripts letting newcomers know the concept of confidentiality may have its limitations among COSA members.”

Confidentiality Statement Straw Poll: [20 GREEN] [8 YELLOW] [4 RED]

- One delegate suggested removing the last sentence. Also felt strongly that anonymity was a very serious matter between the member and their Higher Power.
- One delegate who had been a mandated reporter said that she was only a reporter in her profession, not in her personal life. Felt this muddied the waters between confidentiality and anonymity. Everyone at a COSA meeting is a private citizen.
- This may be scary to members and sponsors.
- One delegate said the use of the word “sadly” seemed like taking other people’s inventory. A number of members in her group are mandated reporters and this may be a concern for newcomers.
- It conflicts with the Twelfth Tradition.
- A newcomer in one delegate’s meeting was reported by another member who was triggered. Trust issues developed with the group.
- Confusing as to how to implement it. Suggests taking out the mention of suicide and removing the last sentence.
- A member in one delegate’s group was reported and their children removed from them for a suspected, yet not confirmed issue.
- We are not a medical or social work community. Needs to be tabled and re-worded.
- Scary. Different laws from county to county, state to state, country to country. This requires more investigation and softening of the language.
- Wordy and it contradicts the new Welcome, seems to almost encourage reporting. Is it necessary, and if so, simplify it.
- One delegate offers to write a more compassionate version.
- The statement is for the meeting guide, not just about the script. This is a reference tool.
- As a reference it’s a good tool. Mandated guidelines are different and a separate issue than when personal boundaries are triggered.
- Violates the Eighth Tradition of being non-professional. We leave our professions outside the meeting.
- Agrees that we should not be professionals during our meetings. Each member must take personal responsibility of how we report and be mindful that we can’t judge another person’s reality.
- One delegate is a mandated reporter and it puts her in a rough spot in her meeting. It could risk her career.
- Needs to be more specific between anonymity and confidentiality. Can have potentially devastating consequences if misused.

**Proposed Amendment:** Add the following language: “Anonymity is not a legal right and we offer no legal protection for any share which mentions a crime which may be punishable by law”.

**Proposed Amendment:** Delete the words: “In matters where threats of suicide or intimations of ongoing child abuse are present” and “personally or morally”.

The board met briefly to consider the proposed amendments. The board announced that they would table the

item for further development and consider giving the fellowship a 90-day review period for additional feedback.

### **Delegate New Business and Questions, Concerns and Comments**

A sign-up sheet was made available for delegates' additional questions or concerns that were not on the agenda. Emily reminded the delegates that Delegate Business Forms can be filled out and submitted at any time prior to the established convention deadline.

The following are results from the Q & A:

Q – How do the Welcomes and readings for the telemeetings get changed on the website? Who approves them?

A – Any changes go through the Telemeeting Intergroup, then to Expedited Review in the Literature Committee, and then to the Technology Committee to post the changes on the website.

Q – Our group is not seeing many new members. With our Tradition of attraction, not promotion, how do we get new members?

A – We've done a phone book search and sent letters to counselors, therapists, colleges and OB/Gyn doctors.

A – When practical and affordable, the board has sent representatives to the SASH conference.

A – Educating SAA spouses. Accompany newcomers to the meeting so they don't have to go alone. Leave information at Certified Sex Addiction Therapist's offices.

A – Encourage the use of our Zoom Room options and direct them to our website.

A – Our group has done mailers, and has asked therapist's offices to put info in their waiting rooms.

A – There is a fact sheet for professionals on our website that you can print. The Literature Committee is currently reviewing it to ensure that it meets all COSA writing standards.

Q – The Meeting Guide mentions "Safe Communications Guidelines" but where is it?

A – In The Meeting Guide.

Q – We are a small group and we need sponsors. How do we get sponsors?

A – There is an email address on the website for more information about sponsors at: [sponsorshiphelp@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:sponsorshiphelp@cosa-recovery.org).

A – Co-sponsors help. Telemeetings are a good source for sponsors.

A – Step Study groups are a good source for sponsors. There is information on the website as well as MP3s of actual meetings.

Q – When registering for the convention, some people may have difficulty with technology. How do they register? Is there a phone number they could call for help registering?

A – There is a phone number on our literature. A volunteer answers calls and routes them accordingly.

Q – Addendum to the summary of the Third Tradition Working Group; the Group needs broader representation and there needs to be an effort to improve communications between the ISO and local groups.

A – To clarify, the Working Group had total unanimity until January, 2017.

Q – I called the COSA phone number and got no answer.

A – The volunteer checks the messages regularly, but is not answering live calls.

### **Review of Available Literature: Susan K.**

Susan K. highlighted our booklets and reminded us that there is free shipping during the convention. She will be able to fill those orders in five to ten days after the convention.

### **Review of Committees and Opportunity to Sign Up**

Time was allotted for delegates to meet with committee chairs to get more information on groups and to volunteer for committees and other service positions.

### **Delegate Evaluations**

Time was given for delegates to complete evaluations of the delegate process.

### **Meeting Conclusion**

The meeting concluded with the "Serenity Prayer".



ISO COSA Budget vs Actuals July 2016 - April 2017				ISO COSA Proposed Budget July 2017 - June 2018	
	Total		Anticipated through June		Proposed Budget
	Actual	Budget			
<b>Income</b>				<b>Income</b>	
Convention Income	11,425.00	28,156	19,920	Convention Income	22,350
Delegate Registration	1,767.00	2,625	2,625	Delegate Registration	2,625
<b>Donations</b>				<b>Donations</b>	
Automatic Recurring Donations	12,613.00	16,000	16,000	Automatic Recurring Donations	16,000
Group	8,106.00	9,500	9,500	Group	11,852
Individual	4,223.00	4,000	4,000	Individual	4,500
Board Scholarship	\$200.00		200	<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>\$32,352</b>
COSA basic text	\$200.00		200	Interest Income	10
<b>Total Donations</b>	<b>\$25,342.00</b>	<b>29,500</b>	<b>29,500</b>	Sales	10,100
Interest Income	4	10	5	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$67,437</b>
Sales	8,981.00	18,000	11,000		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$47,519.00</b>	<b>78,291</b>	<b>63,050</b>		

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## Additional Resources on COSA's Website

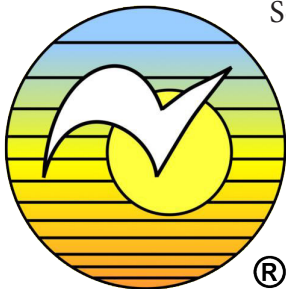
NEWCOMER INFO: <http://cosa-recovery.org/newcomers.html>  
 MEETING GUIDE: [http://www.cosa-recovery.org/PDF/The\\_COSA\\_Meeting\\_Guide.pdf](http://www.cosa-recovery.org/PDF/The_COSA_Meeting_Guide.pdf)  
 ONLINE STORE <http://cosa-store.myshopify.com/>  
 FREE DOWNLOADS: <http://www.cosa-recovery.org/freedownloads.html>  
 WRITING FOR COSA: <http://www.cosa-recovery.org/submissions.html>

<b>Expenses</b>				<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Annual Delegate Meeting Expense</b>		2,625	2,625	<b>Annual Delegate Meeting Expense</b>	2,625
<b>Board Expenses</b>				<b>Board Expenses</b>	
Board Convention Travel	700	13,125	9,000	Board Convention Travel	11,125
Retreat Meeting Expenses	3,239.20	5,000	3,239	Retreat Meeting Expenses	3,750
Supplies	92.68	110	93	Supplies	110
<b>Total Board Expenses</b>	<b>\$4,031.88</b>	<b>18,235</b>	<b>12,332</b>	<b>Total Board Expenses</b>	<b>\$14,985</b>
Convention Expense	12,122.00	17,760	19,920	Convention Expense	15,482
<b>COSA Products</b>	485		485	<b>COSA Products</b>	
Literature Committee Exp	175	325	175	CDs	50
Postage/Shipping	1,604.00	2,350	2,000	Literature Committee Exp	175
Printing	1,622.68	4,800	2,000	Postage/Shipping	2,000
<b>Total COSA Products</b>	<b>\$3,886.68</b>	<b>7,475</b>	<b>4,660</b>	Printing	2,500
<b>Office Expenses</b>				<b>Total COSA Products</b>	<b>\$4,725</b>
Bank Fees		50	0	<b>Office Expenses</b>	
Foreign Exchange Fees		64	0	Bank Fees	20
<b>Total Bank Fees</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>0</b>	Insurance	2,200
Insurance	2,036.24	2,100	2,036	Office Equipment	304
Licensee fees		550	0	Office Supplies	750
Office Equipment	173.95	304	174	Phone/Fax Line/Internet	500
Office Supplies	790	662	790	Postage	89
Phone/Fax Line/Internet	281	500	340	Rent	7,000
Postage		89	0	<b>Total Office Expenses</b>	<b>\$10,863</b>
Rent	4,727.04	6,000	6,479	<b>Payroll Expenses</b>	
<b>Total Office Expenses</b>	<b>\$8,008.23</b>	<b>10,319</b>	<b>9,819</b>	ADP/ QB fees	850
<b>Outreach Committee</b>	1,000.00	500	1,000	Taxes	950
<b>Payroll Expenses</b>				Wages	9,500
ADP/ QB Fees	689.3	850	830	<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>\$11,300</b>
Taxes	482.99	950	650	<b>Professional Fees</b>	750
Wages	6,313.50	9,500	8,500	Spring Branch ISD	75
<b>Total Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,485.79</b>	<b>11,300</b>	<b>9,980</b>	Staff Travel Expenses	800
Professional Fees		3,000	0	Staff Rooms	800
Spring Branch ISD	49.94	75	50	<b>Total Staff Travel Expenses</b>	<b>\$1,600</b>
Staff Travel Expenses	175	800	800	State of Kentucky	20
Staff Rooms		600	600	Taxes Harris County	275
<b>Total Staff Travel Expenses</b>	<b>\$175.00</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>1,400</b>	<b>Technology Fees</b>	
State of Kentucky	15	20	15	Authnet Gateway Fee	170
Taxes Harris County	203.2	275	275	Getsyl/ Fetchapp	132
<b>Technology Fees</b>				Mail Chimp	360
Authnet Gateway Fee	120	170	150	Paymentech fees	2,200
Getsyl/ Fetchapp	100	132	132	PayPal Fees	875
Mail Chimp	300	400	360	Shopify Fees	750
Paymentech fees	1,163.71	2,500	2,000	Website Fees	150
PayPal Fees	659.89	875	800	ZOOM	100
Shopify Fees	494.3	900	700	<b>Total Technology Fees</b>	<b>\$4,737</b>
Website Fees		230	0	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$67,437</b>
ZOOM		100	100	<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Total Technology Fees</b>	<b>\$2,837.90</b>	<b>5,307</b>	<b>4,242</b>		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$39,815.62</b>	<b>78,291</b>	<b>66,318</b>		
<b>Net Operating Income</b>			<b>-3,268</b>		

# Letter from the ISO Board Chair

To our Fellowship,

Every year, I experience anxiety leading up to our Annual Delegate Meeting and convention.



So many unknowns weigh on me. Will we break even on the convention? Will people enjoy it? Did I forget anything on the agenda for the delegate meeting? Will I be able to stay present and engaged while leading the meeting? And on, and on.

When I can remember to, I work my program, asking my Higher Power to give me the power to carry out what I am supposed to. I also ask for the freedom to let go of the rest.

Our meeting and convention in Orlando this year went beautifully. I saw so many COSAs working together to make decisions through a group conscience and to create an impactful experience for their fellows.

This time of the year is when I get to see the “we” part of the program come to life. It is undeniable. Everything from the registration packets to the astonishing banquet decorations to the people volunteering to provide nourishing food in our hospitality suite is done by COSAs practicing the principles of the program. Their contributions of service help carry the message over that weekend in such a simple yet remarkable way.

I was bowled over yet again by our amazing speakers sharing their stories. If you weren't there, you can order the recordings of the banquet talks as well as most of the workshops that were held this May.

<https://cosa-store.myshopify.com/collections/cosa-convention-mp3s>

During the weekend, I and about 70 or so other COSAs stepped out of our comfort zones to learn and to give, and to learn by giving. That was more than worth the time and effort it took to get there.

I've said this before, but service is a teacher like no other. Right now, I think the most pressing lessons for me involve letting others shine in their roles, and allowing myself to make mistakes. This year, I have discovered that “oops” is a prayer I have needed in my life for a long time. And service gave that to me.

I hope you'll consider letting service be your teacher in recovery, perhaps by stretching to fill a service role in your local meeting that you've never done before. Or maybe by joining one of our committees that do the work of the International Service Organization of COSA.

Get in touch if you want help brainstorming on what you might feel called to do. You can email me at [chair@cosa-recovery.org](mailto:chair@cosa-recovery.org).

Hope to see you next year at our annual convention in Oakland, California, if not before!

Emily G.  
International Service Organization of COSA

# Step Seven

*Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.*

When I began my Seventh Step I could see how my character defects had caused harm, muddied waters and created problems for myself and others and I was anxious to have them (well, most of them) removed. I was ready for change.

In spite of my excitement, at first, my experience was anything but positive. Today I understand that this was because I was not humble and I was not truly asking. Instead I was working my own special Seventh Step, which went something like this: Arrogantly persisted in attempting to remove my own shortcomings.

Prior to Step Seven, I had trusted in the process of recovery. I attended meetings, where I shared and listened. I worked the Steps with the guidance of my sponsor. As I worked each Step I did my best to be thorough and honest and trusted that what I needed to learn would come. I did not try to manage the process. God and I had cooperated beautifully up to this point: God was the guide and the source of truth, and my job was simply to be open and willing to do the work.

In contrast, when it came time to take the Seventh Step, my willfulness decided that I needed to take charge. The result was miserable. Daily I became agonizingly aware of my boundary failures, bad temper, tendency to procrastinate, perfectionism and love of guilt, to name just a few things. In my frustration, I simply tried harder to do better. The harder I tried, the more I failed to effect change.

My sponsor had suggested that I ask at least three people whom I trusted about their Step Seven experience. I received the last piece of feedback one night as I was grappling with how incredibly stuck I felt. My trusted friend shared that for her, Step Seven was much like Steps Two and Three. She too had tried to change herself, but it was only when she admitted that alone this was not possible that she was empowered to change. I went to bed that night with her words in my head. It was precisely the tap on the shoulder from my Higher Power that I needed. Her words broke through my blindness.

My frustration was self-induced. Some of my shortcomings had been with me since I was very young; indeed, some had once served to protect me. And I had arrogantly lost sight of the fact that I needed to rely on God's power, not my own. I had been trying to force Step Seven into my life, and it was not working. I was not humble. I had choked the life out of this Step trying to use willpower to change myself.

The truth was actually quite simple. Alone, I was not going to change these long-ingrained patterns. Alone, I do not always see the truth. Alone, I sometimes lack the courage or wisdom to change. I needed the help of my Higher Power and I needed to be willing to admit that need. Once I truly grasped that, all I had to do was ask.

That afternoon I humbly asked God, for the first time since I had begun Step Seven, to remove my defects of character.

Step Seven presents me with daily opportunities to change, to grow into all that I can be. But I have discovered that while the footwork is mine, this Step works precisely to the degree that I am open, teachable and willing to ask.

~Amy E.

Reprinted from *Balance* July/August 2012

## Step Eight

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

I will never forget the day I sat down to make my list of those I had harmed. There it was in black and white. There was no denying it now. I was face to face with the reality of my wreckage of the past. All the names of people I had harmed were staring back at me. I remember being so high and mighty about my husband having to make a lot of amends, and now it was my turn. I realized I had a lot of repairing to do in my relationships.

It took me a while to become ready and willing to make amends to everyone on my list. I had so many questions about this process. What will I say? Do I have to make the amends in person? How will all these people react to my amends? With the help of my sponsor she walked me through all of my questions.

When I presented my list to my sponsor she said, “You forgot the most important person.”

She explained I should put myself on the list first. I realized how much I needed to place myself on the list. Through all my years of codependency I had treated myself very poorly. I always put my needs and wants above everyone else's. I spoke unkind words to myself and professed many hateful statements toward myself. I expected perfection out of myself and berated myself for being unable to achieve it. I thought of all the times I believed lies and denied the truth I was living in. I understood that I had to be first on the list and I had to become willing to forgive myself and make amends before I could proceed down the rest of the list. It was a process, but with much prayer and help from my Higher Power I finally became willing.

With my list in hand I was finally ready to face my mistakes and make the amends I had needed to make for so long. I had fear about the process but I knew others had done this before me and if they could do it so could I.

Step Eight is a process, a journey of facing reality head on. It was worth making the list and becoming ready and willing to forgive myself and take responsibility for my actions of the past. Step Eight is the prerequisite for Step Nine; I needed to become willing before I could take the action of making amends. For me willingness was the key to Step Eight and with my Higher Power's help I found the freedom I was seeking.

~Connie

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### **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.



# Tradition Seven

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

When I first attended a meeting, the Twelve Steps and Traditions were read. I immediately became aware of the Seventh Tradition when the words were read “self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” I thought about money \$\$\$\$ . I was barely getting the bills paid. I do not have a lot of extra cash just floating around. I knew in that first meeting that God led me to COSA for a reason. I just did not understand the “why. “ So, I decided to attend every meeting anyway even though I could not “contribute” financially. It took me about year and a half to realize that I was contributing in another way. I was actively working the program and sharing my experience, strength and hope. I received courage and strength from my Higher Power and my sponsor to do a First Step during the group meeting. As the second year approached, I would participate in running the meeting or do mini presentations.

Another year went by and I asked my sponsor if I could return my medallions that I had. She said, “Of course, and you could do this instead of money for the Seventh Tradition. This way the group would not have to buy more medallions.” In the same year, I went to the national convention. I totally spaced the Seventh Tradition. I did not bring any cash with me since this was sparse. I was ashamed and embarrassed that I did not think of this. Being three years in the program, I should have known better. I wondered to myself how could I give back. Somehow, I heard God say to me, “Do not be concerned; an opportunity will present itself.” I shared my story during the “Forgiveness Workshop.” On the last day of the convention, I offered to give my time to the bookstore in which I began to be aware of what literature was available. In comparison to the SAA literature table, the COSA literature table was half the size. So, I put this information in the back of my mind.

When I became aware of my strengths and gifts, I let myself be open and began to listen to all the possibilities that my Higher Power guided me to. In my sixth year, I volunteered my time with the Literature Development Committee. It is truly amazing how God provides opportunities to enhance yourself. You just never know who will be more affected by these experiences: yourself, others, or both. When you give, you receive so much more. I have found this to be very true and humbling. I am feeling very rich from these experiences. Be open and listen to your Higher Power; you just never know how your life will be transformed. Let the transformation begin.

~Bunny

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## 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.

# Tradition Eight

*COSA should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.*

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

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

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

~Betsy

Reprinted from *Balance* July/August 2011

## 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)

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