



November/December 2019

Volume 16, Issue 3

Communication and Connection

The secret to connection is good communication. In other words, we want to feel heard and understood, and when we don't feel heard or understood, we don't feel connected. I remember this feeling all too well. After learning of my husband's years of infidelity, I wanted nothing more than for him to hear and understand what I was feeling, which at the time was pretty much limited to extreme anger and resentment. And because I was fully convinced that after all he had done, he owed that to me, I was determined to see that he sit down for as long as I needed him to, and get an earful about how wrong he was and what he needed to do to change. Ultimately, it was my belief at the time that if he "only understood" what I was feeling, then he would change. I quickly learned two lessons: 1) regardless of how much I insist or try to force someone to "listen," some people are simply not capable of hearing or understanding, or are not ready or willing for whatever reason; and 2) that sometimes in order to receive something, I must be prepared to give it first. In the case of my husband, he was not ready to listen to me and I was not willing to listen to him unless what he said was exactly what I wanted to hear, and resulted in his doing exactly what I wanted him to do. This was the dynamic of our relationship for years, which led to a consistent feeling of disconnect for both of us.

The best way to connect is through mindful listening, which rarely involves advising, judging, or sharing opinions on a matter. This doesn't mean that a person is not allowed to advise or to share opinions, but rather that an effective approach to connecting involves "staying on our own side of the street."

What this means for me is that when I speak with my loved ones, I must fight the temptation to prove a point or insist my opinions or experiences are the right ones. Oftentimes this requires me to be open to the possibility that I might not be entirely right, I might not be seeing the bigger picture, and maybe I might even be in the wrong. It also means waiting my turn to express myself or share how I feel, and sometimes it may require not saying anything at all. Having and using such discernment serves two purposes: 1) I know that when I feel accused of something, my defenses naturally go up, and my ears and heart shut down, which automatically puts me in a non-receptive position where communication and connection are impossible, leaving all parties disappointed; and 2) just because I feel I am right, or maybe even justified in feeling the way I do, it doesn't automatically make the other person wrong or obligated to take responsibility for my feelings.

Staying on my side of the street entails an honest internal reflection consider-

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RECURRING DONATIONS

Keeping Updated

Thank you for your donations to the International Service Organization of COSA. Currently, our system is set to automatically update your credit card when it gets a new expiration date. If you need to increase, decrease, or cancel your recurring donations, please contact the ISO of COSA at iso@cosa-recovery.org. Thank you for your support!

ing what my role is or was in the situation at hand. Have I examined how my thoughts, attitudes or behaviors have played a part in the reason why things are the way they are?

Choosing not to say something or even admitting that I may have played a part in the issue at hand doesn't mean that I have to play the martyr and take responsibility for it, nor does it mean that I am condoning it, or taking the blame or "accepting" what has happened. Sometimes by staying on my side of the street, I must have faith that my loved one is doing the best they can with the tools they have. Sometimes staying on my side of the street means focusing solely on my recovery and allowing my partner to do the same. Sometimes, staying on my side of the street means having faith, courage, and patience toward a higher power and finding peace in knowing that all will reveal itself in time.

I remember in my darkest moments, in my first few years of recovery, I told my sponsor, "How can I live like this? There is no way I will ever be able to trust him anymore." My sponsor responded with encouraging words that forever changed my approach to life and communication. She said, "You don't have to trust your husband, but you can and do have to trust the program."

The Twelve Steps, if you work it, works, and in ways beyond our wildest imagination. Lives and hearts change in ways we would have never expected, and most often in ways far better than we could have asked for. The program helped me learn how to effectively communicate with my husband. It also helped me let go and accept the ways in which we were unable to connect and communicate. He had his program and I had mine. We eventually divorced, but today our communication and connection while we work as co-parents to our young child is stronger than ever. We are friends, and both happier than we have ever been. I'm grateful for the program because it helped me understand how to communicate and connect.

Gratefully,
Tamiko



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

Please send your articles to COSACopy@yahoo.com

or by mail to: ISO of COSA, Central Office, 9219 Katy Freeway, Suite 266, Houston, TX 77024 U.S.A.

Phone: 866-899-2672 E-mail: 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.

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.

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.



Letter from the Chair

Greetings COSA members,

As the year end approaches and the work at my “day job” starts to slow down, I have more time to spend with family and friends. I also have time for deeper introspection. I consider all the gifts I’ve received from COSA recovery. COSA gave me hope and a roadmap to get there. My relationships are healthier, my life in general is healthier, and it’s more peaceful and satisfying than I could have ever imagined. Really living the Twelve Steps and the principles in them has changed every facet of my life for the better. I am truly grateful to the COSA program and I want it to always be here for those who need it and are still suffering.

Our mission is one of my top priorities. I give of my time and talents to COSA in my service work. I also give financially. For COSA to flourish we need both the spiritual fuel of volunteerism and financial fuel to carry our message. We have many ways for our members to help out in tasks small and large. For example, those with less time to give, can perhaps give financially. Every bit helps!

The ISO is always looking for ways to carry our message further. This service year the ISO was able to move the Central Office to a much smaller space, thus reducing our rent significantly. We are also investing in upgrades to our website to make it easier for all of us to navigate and for newcomers to quickly and easily find the help they need.

Additionally, we’re working to select a print shop in England. I hope by the time you read this we will be printing our literature in the UK for our international members. This will save a great deal of shipping time and money for those members, and will help us share our message even further.

Would you like to give a donation to COSA? Please click here: [COSA Donation Page](#)

Would you like to volunteer your time? Please email me at: chair@iso-recovery.org

With a joyful heart,

Sandy S.
ISO of COSA Board Chair



Workshops and Speakers Call for Proposals closes **NOVEMBER 30th**

The 2020 convention Program Committee is accepting workshop proposals and speaker nominations through November 30.

Connecting in Columbus anticipates offering an array of topics, presented by willing COSAs who are ready to share their Experience, Strength, and Hope. There is only one month to submit your workshop proposal or speaker nomination.

Call for Workshop Proposals

Please consider presenting a workshop on a recovery-related topic from the Twelve Steps to the Traditions to the Concepts to using the many tools and resources of the COSA program...to receiving the gifts and promises.

We encourage you to consider sharing about your experience and the growth you have realized through service in COSA. We encourage you to share about the gifts of being sponsored and sponsoring, both valuable aspects of COSA recovery.

Perhaps you would be willing to share your ESH on our day-to-day struggles with forgiveness, anger, vulnerability, using the Traditions as a family, wisdom and discernment, shame, anonymity, compassion and sympathy, avoidance, expectations, boundaries, and more.

And we welcome your new ideas and innovative proposals for workshops or panel discussions. If you have an idea, please submit it. It may be a topic or approach we could all use, and you're the first person to think of it. We welcome the opportunity to work together in offering fresh opportunities for recovery-based learning to our fellow COSAs.

Call for Speaker Nominations

Perhaps the time is right for you to tell your story and share your ESH as a speaker at the convention. Self-nominations are welcome.

If you would like to hear more from a strong, recovering COSA who is part of one of your meetings, ask them if they would consider serving as a convention speaker. If they are willing, please nominate them to speak during Connecting in Columbus.

After November 30, the convention committee will carefully consider all nominations for speakers and workshops, and create a program of choices to deepen the recovery experience of everyone who participates in the convention.

Before November 30, please go to the Connecting in Columbus convention website and click on the link to submit workshop proposals and speaker nominations. We look forward to receiving your proposals and, with your help, creating a valuable recovery experience for everyone at the convention.

Connecting in Columbus
Program Committee

Literature Committee Update on Basic Text

Dear COSA friends,

The Literature Committee has been steadily working on the newest sections of our COSA basic text. This book will be a valuable resource for all, including newcomers. It will offer insights into the COSA Steps, Traditions, and Concepts, and will include a variety of tools and also COSA stories illustrating the miracles of recovery. In order to ensure the book accurately reflects the diversity of COSA perspectives, as well as our common understanding of the COSA program, we present draft chapters to the fellowship for feedback.

Feedback for the following sections of the book can be submitted via email **September 18, 2019, through December 19, 2019:**

- [Tradition Three](#)
- [Tradition Seven](#)
- [Tool: Boundaries](#)
- [Tool: Prayer and Meditation](#)
- [Tool: Service](#)
- [Tool: Sobriety](#)

Feedback for the following sections of the book can be submitted via email from **November 6, 2019, through February 5, 2020:**

- [Step Eight](#)
- [Step Nine](#)
- [Tradition Eight](#)
- [Tradition Nine](#)
- [Tradition Ten](#)
- [Tool: Detachment](#)
- [Tool: Acknowledging Grief](#)
- [Tool: Sponsorship](#)

Please read through each draft and send us your comments and suggestions. It may also be supportive and helpful to review it with your meeting or group! We will consider all feedback received and final editing decisions will be made by the Literature Committee. We have included feedback guidelines below. Utilizing these feedback guidelines will allow us to apply the feedback received in an efficient manner.

After the feedback has been applied to these drafts, final revised versions will be posted on the COSA website for all fellowship members and delegates to review by April 21, 2020. These proposed chapters will then be voted on for approval by the delegates at the 2020 Annual Delegate Meeting.

Feedback Guidelines

- Feedback or questions can be submitted to cosacopy@yahoo.com
- Please submit your feedback by **the appropriate deadline of December 19 or February 5**
Please try to get your feedback in as early as possible. You can submit feedback on one or a few chapters when you have it, and then later submit the rest. It helps us when feedback comes in at a steady rate instead of all at the end. If you can send some in one or two months before the deadline, that helps a lot. Even one week before the deadline is helpful. We are so grateful for your collaboration as we work on making sure

everyone’s voice is heard in the process of writing COSA’s basic text.

- Please communicate your thoughts in a respectful manner.
- Please reference a page and line number for each piece of feedback.
- Please do not insert comments or suggestions into the document or into a copy of the document; instead, as requested above, please just reference the line number and then state your specific suggestions and comments:
- See Table:

| Line # | omit | add | because | so it would read |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|
| 28 | the phrase <i>abc</i> | <i>def</i> | It would be clearer and gentler | “ __ def__ ” |
| 48 | | also | It would be clearer and more specific | “ __also__ ” |
| 68 | | This is just an example | This is an important and relevant idea which is not found elsewhere. | “ __. This is just an example. __ ” |

- Please do not submit a rewritten document [one that does not show the brief original text and identify what you’d like changed].
- Please explain any changes you are suggesting. For example, “On page 2, line 34, I would like abc changed to def because xyz.” We want to ensure that when a change is made, it will produce the desired result. For more examples of feedback, see table above and written sentences below.
- Types of feedback include grammar (spelling, punctuation, sentence structure, verb tense, etc.), content (principles and presentation of the Tradition, Concept or tool, paragraph structure and placement, flow, etc.), and overall opinion (please include your opinion on paragraphs or sections that you like or relate to as well as those you would like to see changed).

Examples of possible feedback in written form:

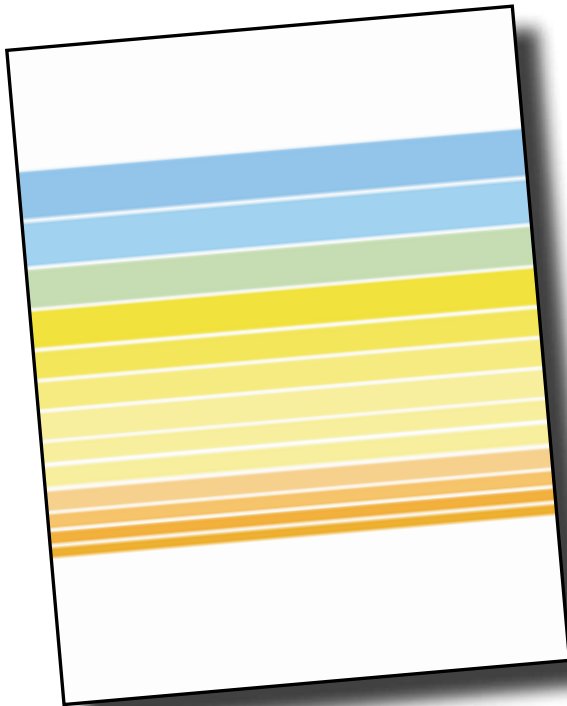
- On Page 1, Line 28, please omit the phrase abc and substitute def because [e.g., it would be clearer and gentler.] So it would read ‘ __ def __.’

- On Page 2, Line 48, please insert the phrase “ __ ” between the words “ __ ” and “ __ ” because I feel it is clearer and more specific [or whatever your reason is]. So it would read “ __ __ __.”

- On Page 3, Line 68, please insert the following sentence because I feel this is an important and relevant idea which fits well here and which is not found elsewhere in this document. Sentence to be inserted between the words “ __.” and “The...”: _____. So it would read “ __. _____. The...”

Thank you,

Your COSA Literature Committee



The ISO of COSA is pleased to announce a **new literature offering!**

Get all of our Twelve Step booklets under one cover!

- Have all the booklets together in one place.
- Use it as a workbook – plenty of space provided.
- Take it anywhere – it has an anonymous cover!

The book is a new, convenient format so you can enjoy all our Step booklets in one place.*

It's a beautifully finished 8 ½" x 11" format, glue-bound book of 108 pages. It features a glossy, color cover that is anonymous—no title or logo. Only the colorful stripes behind our logo are shown.

Get your copy now at the introductory price of \$15.00 each at the COSA Store on our website. Quantities are limited.

Working the COSA Twelve Steps

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Step One:
We admitted that we were powerless over compulsive sexual behavior--that our lives had become unmanageable.

When the majority of us came to COSA, we were in varying stages of collapse, from an inability to eat, sleep or do routine daily tasks, to a white-faced trembling stage of nausea and fear, to feeling driven by vengeful anger at the betrayal we felt by the addict. The realization of how deep our loved one's problem went and of its power to debilitate us as well left us stripped and in some cases, unable to go on. At our worst, we thought of suicide and murder at the same time, yet a part of us cried incessantly to somehow stop feeling completely, whether by leaving or by helping the addict and/or hanging on to him or her. We thought maybe things would be okay if we could be enough.

Some of us believed the addict, while others felt outraged when the addict implied, hinted, or said it was our fault, that the pressures we exerted on them were overwhelming or that if we would just do more, be more, everything would be okay. Some of us were adamant that we had no part in any of the issues we were dealing with, and some of us thought it actually was our fault. We also blamed the addict. We had our own shame, and may have been used to taking blame. In any case, we took on the responsibility to be enough—to be capable enough, patient enough, attractive enough, responsible enough, easy enough, silent or outspoken enough, to be a super hero in some or all respects, in order to help this person we loved. In doing so, we hoped to gain the respect, love, attention and/or fidelity we felt we deserved or needed. When these attempts to control or fix the addict failed, we found hopelessness, anger, despair, apathy, desperation, or all of these.

Somewhere in our backgrounds, we felt abandoned and we learned survival and control tactics. Now, these were our defenses of choice. When we applied these control tactics to the relationship with our addict,

many of us started snooping, checking bank records, odometer readings, endlessly psychoanalyzing the addict; all the while looking to separate the truth from the lies we were being told, yet denying the reality of our lives. When we applied our avoidance or fantasy tactics, we ignored the outbursts of anger over nothing, blaming ourselves as the cause of the treatment we received. We let pass the silences that sometimes went on for days, hoping if we were quiet, cheerful or sullen, our loved one would notice and take interest again in us, our family, and their relationships. We were afraid to ask questions we had a right to ask: "Where were you?" "When will you be home?" "What happened to the money?" "Do you want to be here?"

Some of us matched how messed up the addict was with our own out-of-control behaviors, or became scapegoats to shift the focus. Fearing abandonment or worse, we often refused help as we fed our own addictions, or we somehow crippled ourselves so we could not leave. We hurt ourselves by overeating, quitting our jobs, obsessively spending or hoarding, drinking alcohol, using illegal or prescription drugs. We gave up on ourselves and our abilities. We reacted by disappearing, being nice, caretaking, or by arguing, being a slob, getting depressed, and acting like a baby. With varied responses, we looked like exhibitionists, sex addicts, saints, model citizens, wallflowers, or a mixture, in order to remove ourselves from the pain of reality.

Distancing from other people and things we loved, we sucked the joy out of our own lives to focus more on the addict and the problems in our family and our parents and our kids, our friends, and to ourselves. We told everyone or no one, but in any case, we pulled away into our own shell of hurt and distrust. As we grew more and more isolated, we hoped things would turn out alright given just a little more time, while we,

page 1 • Step One of COSA

***This book is a compilation of our existing Step booklets, not to be confused with the forthcoming basic text.**

STEP 1·2·3·4·5·6·7·8·9·10· 11 ·12

SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD GOD, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.

In the process of working Steps One through Ten, I have learned to turn to and trust a Higher Power of my understanding. It is such a relief to know that I don't have to struggle through my life fueled only by my own self will! Step Eleven gives me the opportunity to deepen this spiritual connection. I practice this Step every day, often many times a day, and it has changed my life.

As with all of the Steps, Step Eleven helps me determine what is mine and what is not mine. This helps me let go of my fruitless efforts to have power in situations where I don't have any. I can catch myself now--when I am spinning my wheels, trying to play God—attempting to “make” people and circumstances behave as I would like them to. I can immediately remember Steps One, Two, and Three and release my mental/emotional grip, and then I can turn to Step Eleven for peace and “good orderly direction.” I may have to do this several times before I completely let go and let God, but I can practice. I can make progress.

Step Eleven helps me respond in a constructive and healthy way to challenging situations, rather than to react out of fear or anger. With Step Eleven I can begin to see new possibilities and choices.

I used to think that I didn't have time for prayer or meditation. Now, experience has shown me that when I take a little bit of time to realign myself with my Higher Power, it saves me hours that would have been wasted on frustration, despair, and heartache. I can pause when I am feeling agitated and fearful, and ask my Higher Power for clarity and guidance. There are very few decisions that need to be made in a split second.

When I pray now, I no longer ask for things out of pure self-interest. I simply ask for awareness of the bigger picture, the greater good, the ethical behaviors that will bring me in line with God's will. I express my willingness to align myself with the guidance I receive. And, when I ask for this guidance and the power to carry it out, I have access to wisdom and strength far beyond anything I could muster on my own. I have experienced peace, calm, and clarity in circumstances that would have been chaotic and destructive for me in the past.

Step Eleven also keeps me away from the temptation to criticize, forecast, judge, or blame. When I am committed to practicing Step Eleven, these are no longer part of my thinking. Instead, I have surrendered to the flow, like a leaf floating easily down a gentle stream. I am reminded to have quiet humility, and to simply attend to my own actions and words to the very best of my ability.

Nowhere in the COSA program am I asked to fix myself, change myself, or heal my life all by myself. I don't have to claw and struggle my way through anymore. I have my Higher Power to turn to, and I have a Higher Power as expressed in the support I get from precious COSAs who share this journey with me. I am so grateful.

~ Anonymous

Reprinted from *Balance* Volume 10, Issue 3 (November/December 2013)

STEP 1·2·3·4·5·6·7·8·9·10·11·12

HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE TO OTHERS, AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL AREAS OF OUR LIVES.

Wow, what a relief to be walking through Step Twelve for the first time! Does this mean that I have arrived? Am I finished with my work? After many months of analysis, learning, and thoughtful action, with the help of my Higher Power, sponsor, and recovery friends, I now live in a spiritually awakened place, which allows me to view the world with awe and a new perspective.

However, rather than finality, I find myself repeating all Twelve Steps around various conflicts that arise in my life. I have learned the tools to recognize and surrender the insanity, look at how my own behavior contributes, share it out loud, humbly ask for help and let it go, make amends where needed, and work maintenance on it. I hope that my modeling this recovery (all of the Twelve Steps) carries the message to others that still suffer. In this state of spiritual awakening, I realize that in actuality, it is my Higher Power working through me that carries the message to others.

The Steps are in the order they are in for a reason. Each Step brings its own incremental spiritual awakening and ultimately leads us to a place of serenity in which we can carry the message to others. I feel immense gratitude for those that came before me and passed along the wisdom of working the Steps as a way of living.

I am also very grateful to those in long-term recovery, who still come to meetings and share the way they are practicing these principles in their lives. They continue to come to meetings to stay strong in their own sobriety. In doing so, they are providing a service to those that are struggling, as we all continue to do from time to time.

Step Twelve is also the “service” step. The best way for me to keep serenity in my life is to share it with others and give it back to the COSA fellowship as a whole. I do this through sponsoring, by serving in various positions in my COSA home meeting group, and by volunteering to assist the larger COSA fellowship in ways that I feel led to help.

My being spiritually awake comes primarily from the humility I learned from working the Steps. I recognize that I do not have all the answers, and also that it is OK that I do not understand all of the complexities of life, even of my own behaviors. I take great comfort in stepping back, letting go, and letting my Higher Power work. My Higher Power does for me what I cannot do for myself. When I use the Steps as tools for better living and allow my Higher Power to work in my life, I am practicing the COSA principles in all areas of my life. I am spiritually awake and aware and modeling this lifestyle for others. It is in this way that I carry the message.

~ji

TRADITION 1·2·3·4·5·6·7·8·9·10·11·12

OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY IS BASED ON ATTRACTION RATHER THAN PROMOTION; WE NEED ALWAYS MAINTAIN PERSONAL ANONYMITY AT THE LEVEL OF PRESS, RADIO, FILMS, TELEVISION, AND OTHER PUBLIC MEDIA OF COMMUNICATION. WE NEED GUARD WITH SPECIAL CARE THE ANONYMITY OF ALL PROGRAM MEMBERS.

Tradition Eleven expresses a core idea for me personally as a codependent and co-sex addict—that of attraction versus promotion. When I have cared a lot about the outcome of a situation, the difference between attraction and promotion has seemed pretty muddy to me. Hey, if I want my husband to get into recovery (and I do), why shouldn't I use all my powers of persuasion and essentially insist he do as I say?

Oops. That's controlling. That's the kind of codependent behavior I am trying to recover from. And, as I have found when I've stepped over that line it doesn't work. It turns people off, sometimes permanently. That type of pushy behavior certainly turns me off when I'm on the receiving end of it. I want to get as far away from that person as I can. I certainly would not feel inclined to join a group they are in, or do what they say to do. Why would I want to be like them?

Attraction versus promotion is about my behavior in the world: what I say, when I say it, how I say it, and what internal stance I am coming from.

Promotion is me trying to control the outcome, manage other people's lives, figure out what would be best for them, advertise what I think will solve their difficulties, and co-opt their freedom of choice as human beings (like if I tell my husband he needs to be in recovery).

Sometimes promotion is my use of controlling behaviors with myself: pushing myself; demanding I do everything right now, or just one thing more than I feel able to handle; or not allowing myself to rest when I need to. Promotion can also be someone else setting themselves up as knowing better than I do, and having more authority to tell me what to do. Perhaps the other person is just making a suggestion, but I am "promoting" them in my mind and acting like they are above me and have more authority to make decisions for me than I do. Even my employer should only have authority in the work realm, not in my personal or spiritual life.

Attraction, on the other hand, is spiritual. When I feel attracted, I feel so inspired by the transformation I see and hear and feel in others, that I am powerfully motivated to do my own work. I want what they have. I ask for and am guided by others' experience, strength, and hope. I can take what I like and leave the rest. I am my own person, in partnership with my own Higher Power. I am free, and we are all equals.

When I want to attract others, I allow others their own space and feelings. I own my own feelings and quietly embody my own recovery, yet I can openly share my own excitement. I keep my ego out of it and only offer possibilities if asked. I avoid promotion: persuasion, charisma, demand, nagging, and being attached to the other person doing what I want.

Attraction is using the tools of the Program to light myself up from the inside—my heart shines like a light, and others can see it and move toward it if they wish. Attraction allows people to retain their power of choice—feeling and acting equal to everyone else, being part of a circle in recovery, and part of the circle of human beings in the world.

~Ruth G.

Reprinted from *Balance* Volume 10, Issue 3 (November/December 2013)

TRADITION 1·2·3·4·5·6·7·8·9·10·11·12

ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF ALL OUR TRADITIONS, EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.

At my first COSA meetings, I was very grateful to know that my confidentiality would be protected by those in attendance. It helped me feel safe to share my innermost thoughts and feelings around the effects of the compulsive sexual behavior in my life. Three years later, I continue to know almost all of my COSA sisters and brothers only by first name. There is something very special about that.

In pondering Tradition Twelve, I see now how this confidentiality is actually a spiritual foundation. Anonymity allows us to be spiritual beings rather than individuals with a specific worldly identity. It allows us all to come together at meetings on an even plane and share as sisters and brothers in the presence of our Higher Power. It gives us safety and makes our meeting rooms a place of serenity and acceptance. There is no judgment.

If we meet each other unexpectedly in the outside world, we have a common knowledge that we are bonded in anonymity and in an inherent respect for the workings of each other's lives. We float along as spirits, above the turmoil of everyday life, with the shared knowledge that we are no longer alone.

In my years of attending meetings, I have seen COSAs come from many walks of life, many creeds and colors, many nationalities and backgrounds. All of that is left at the door when we enter the COSA meeting room. Personalities are no longer relevant. We are there to share together and learn the COSA Steps, Traditions, and Promises. We are reminded at each meeting that we are in a special safe space, protected by anonymity, and governed by principles that recognize our spirituality, not our personalities.

~ji

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

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 <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.

Seventh Tradition: Financial Report August/September 2019 Donations

| | |
|--|------------|
| Boulder (CO-04) | \$ 32.00 |
| Mankato (MN-01)..... | \$ 50.00 |
| Memphis (TN-03)..... | \$ 100.00 |
| Houston (TX-43)..... | \$ 80.00 |
| Individual Donations (August)..... | \$ 1180.00 |
| Individual Donations (September) | \$ 1219.00 |

Total \$ **2661.00**

International Donations

Our international groups and members can now use the "Donate" button on our website to contribute as a group or as an individual or make recurring donations to COSA. The technology required to make this change has been challenging, but our Technology Committee's talent and dedication has paid off. This opens new opportunities to honor our Seventh Tradition and fund our mission to carry the COSA message even further.