

Balance

Newsletter of International Service Organization of COSA



July/August 2020
Volume 17, Issue 1

ISO of COSA ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING SUMMARY Zoom Conference May 22, 2020

Attendees:

Registered Delegates:

Desha B., AZ-01 Thousand Cranes Monday
Sara P., AZ-14 Miracles in Progress Thursday
Sarah S., CA-01 San Francisco Saturday COSA Saturday
Kerstin H., CA-09 East Bay COSA Monday
Suyapa W., CA-23 New Beginnings Monday
Inge H., CA-27 Santa Rosa COSA Tuesday
Amy S., CA-29 Monday Night South Bay COSA
Pam L., CA-33 East Bay Sunday COSA Meeting
Cherrise S., CA-35 Los Angeles COSA Saturday
Diane L., CA-41 South Bay Health Intimate Relationships (HIR)
Eveline ., CA-44 Sunday LB COSA
Lori M., CT-02 Connecticut Love and Hope Group Tuesday
Mary H., FL-15 Naples Florida COSA
Liz G., NY-01 Syracuse Tuesday Night COSA
Nan H., OH-01 Cincinnati COSA Group
Kymberlee D., ONL-05 COSA Zoom Room Intergroup
Karen R., ONL-07 Tuesday Living The Literature
Theresa D., ONL-08 Cosa Safe Haven Thursday
Kimberly N., ONL-10 Wednesday Night Warriors Wednesday
Brian J., ONL-12 COSA Step TGIF
Greta S., ONL-13 Monday Zoom Anorexia-Avoidance Meeting
Laura L., ONL-14 Tuesday HIR Tuesday
Carolyn S., ONL-15 It Works If U Work It or Step Recovery
Mimi A., ONL-16 Thursday HIR
Jackie M., ONL-20 Thursday 7:00pm EDT
Amy B., SC-01 Upstate COSA Wednesday 7:45 PM
Margaret Z., TEL-02 Thursday Telemeeting
Jodi D., TEL-03 Wednesday COSA Literature Step Study Meeting
Lori D., TEL-07 COSA Recovery Tools for Emotional Sobriety
Linda P., TEL-11 Daily Eleventh Step Meeting Daily
Marlane D., TEL-12 Daily Tenth Step Meeting
Janie A., TEL-13 Saturday Promises Telemeeting
Kathryn W., TX-13 Memorial: Holy Name Retreat Center
Lonna M., TX-22 Houston Sunday Evening
Pat D., TX-23 Kingwood: Kingwood United Methodist Church
Brian (Bobby) S., TX-43 Saturday Coed Meeting
Pat T., WI-08 COSA East

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May, June, July 2020

**Check out COSA's
newly redesigned
website**

cosa-recovery.org

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Other COSAs:

Julana S, Incoming Board Member
Mary H., Incoming Board Member (also listed above)
Amy B., Incoming Board Member (also listed above)
Inge H., Delegate Liaison (also listed above)

Board Members:

Amy M.J., Member at Large
Chris C., Board Chair (also listed above)
Cindy L., Member at Large
Sandy S., Member at Large
Sara L., Recording Secretary
Tracy S., Board Treasurer (also listed above)
Martha Jean H., Member at Large

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."

Delegates and board members introduced themselves.

The voting process was explained.

The Safe Communications Guidelines were read.

Martha Jean presented a study of Concept Twelve: The Annual Meeting shall observe the spirit of COSA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power; that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle; that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government, and that, like the fellowship it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Explanation of Board Nomination Process & Board Nominee Introductions

Sandy explained the slate and the voting process. All candidates, including those who self-nominate, go through a vetting process. The vote is yes or no on each person. All nominees could be voted in. All board members are elected as at-large members. The board consensus determines who is chair, treasurer and secretary. Board prospects briefly shared with the delegates why they wished to serve. The nominees were: Amy B., Julana S., Mary H., Sara L., and Tracy S. All candidates were elected.

2020 – 2021 Budget Review

Tracy S. began by reviewing the balance sheet. There was a question about payroll liabilities. This is related to the one employee who staffs the COSA office.

Q: What is the security risk of our accounts?

A: Our accounts are well under the insurance limits, so we would be covered if something happened to the bank.

Tracy presented the March 2020 Profit and Loss statement. This statement does not reflect refunds for convention registrations. Both donations and sales have been lower this year. Salaries have been lower as the employee is not able to go to the office due to COVID-19 restrictions.

Q: Does the ISO have Venmo?

A: The board has not considered it.

Q: What is the convention profit in a typical year?

A: The goal is to break even, but it is very hard to budget for that because there are so many variables that change each year.

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Tracy presented the final 2019 financials.

Q: Where will we see 2020 convention expenses?

A: Those would be reflected in the final 2020 statements.

Q: Why did the rent expense decrease?

A: We moved to a smaller space with lower square footage.

Budget Approval Straw Poll: [40 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED] 2020 – 2021 Budget passes.

Basic Text Chapters

Sara P. gave a brief history of the basic text project. She presented an overview of the process for surveying, writing, collecting fellowship feedback, final draft and approval of each chapter. Because each chapter has gone through such an extensive process, including the incorporation of the fellowship member's input, the delegate meeting vote is to approve or not approve each chapter. In order to honor the fellowship feedback, there can be no amendments made at the Delegate Meeting. The goal is to have the basic text ready in 2022. Fourteen chapters are being presented at this meeting. There will be 15 chapters written and delivered to the fellowship in the coming year.

Q: Will the basic text include a history of the fellowship?

A: A brief history will be included in the introduction.

Amy B. presented an overview of the Literature in Development Committee's process. A survey is sent to the fellowship to determine what the fellowship wants each chapter to cover. Chapters are written by a writer working with an editor. The chapter is then edited by the committee as a whole and re-written. After approval by the committee, it goes to a 90-day review by the fellowship. During this time, COSAs can provide feedback on the chapter. The committee reviews the feedback and makes changes. The final version is then brought to the delegates for a vote.

Q: How are surveys distributed?

A: They are distributed to COSAs via the "COSAs in the Know" weekly email.

Q: How are comments incorporated?

A: The writer and editor of each chapter consider each piece of feedback to determine how to meet the desires of the fellowship.

Q: There are still proofreading errors in the documents. How should we address these?

A: The book as a whole will be professionally edited. Also, COSA uses the Chicago Manual of Style, so some style elements may be different from what people are used to.

Q: Could chapters be sent to 90-day review in smaller batches?

A: That is the intention for the upcoming year. There will be three sets of chapters. The committee needs to balance the demands on the fellowship with the complexity for the committee.

Q: Could chapters be posted to the delegate page in batches as well?

A: That is the intention going forward.

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

Straw Poll to approve Step Eight Chapter [41 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [1 RED].

Comment: There are grammatical errors.

Second Straw Poll to approve Step Eight Chapter [40 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [1 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

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

Straw Poll to approve Step Nine Chapter [41 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [1 RED].

Q: What is the editing process for the final version?

A: It will go to professional editing and will not return to the delegates for further approval.

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Second Straw Poll to approve Step Nine Chapter [41 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [1 RED]. Proposal Passes.

Tradition Three: The only requirement for COSA membership is that our lives have been affected by compulsive sexual behavior. The members may call themselves a COSA group, provided that, as a group, they have no other affiliation.

Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Three Chapter [40 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

There were no comments.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Three Chapter [38 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [2 RED]. Proposal Passes.

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

Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Seven Chapter [37 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [3 RED].

Comment: The chapter focuses on monetary contributions and does not address service.

Comment: There is a separate chapter on service. Content has to be broken up and not duplicated in multiple places.

Chapter: There should be a paragraph addressing individual service between the last and second to last paragraph.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Seven Chapter [29 GREEN] [6 YELLOW] [6 RED].

Comment: Individual service is important enough to bring in here and it needs to be reviewed by the delegates again.

Comment: Concern that the chapter as is gives the impression that service is not part of this tradition.

Comment: This seems like a small re-work.

Q: Does the committee get just the results of the vote, or does it also get the feedback?

A: The notes from the meeting will include the comments on each chapter. The notes are published in the *Balance* where they are available to the entire fellowship, including the committee.

Q: How would the committee handle a chapter that is not approved?

A: It would have to go back into the queue. This would be the first time, so the exact process has not been determined.

Comment: Service is addressed elsewhere. Monetary support is important and deserves the focus.

Final Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Seven Chapter [26 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [14 RED]. The proposal does not pass.

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

Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Eight Chapter [41 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

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

Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Nine Chapter [43 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

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

Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Nine Chapter [44 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

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Boundaries

Straw Poll to approve the Boundaries Chapter [43 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

There were no comments.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Boundaries Chapter [[43 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

Detachment

Straw Poll to approve the Detachment Chapter [43 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

Comment: Some paragraphs seem to talk about the past, but in the present tense. Paragraph 5 is in subjective past. This should be consistent.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Detachment Chapter [42 GREEN] [2 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

Grief Awareness

Straw Poll to approve the Grief Awareness Chapter [42 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

There were no comments.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Grief Awareness Chapter 43 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

Prayer and Meditation

Straw Poll to approve the Prayer and Meditation Chapter [44 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

Service

Straw Poll to approve the Service Chapter [43 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

Comment: There is an awkward sentence, starting with "Service gives us the chance..."

Second Straw Poll to approve the Service Chapter [43 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]. Proposal Passes.

Sobriety

Straw Poll to approve the Sobriety Chapter [42 GREEN] [2 YELLOW] [0 RED].

Comment: Would like to have a visual of the circles included.

Comment: The committee intends to include a diagram of the circles.

Comment: Newcomers have read the chapter without the circles and it was clear to them.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Sobriety Chapter [43 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [1 RED]. Proposal Passes.

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Sponsorship

Straw Poll to approve the Sponsorship Chapter [36 GREEN] [3 YELLOW] [5 RED].

Many comments were about the sentence, "Because of the close nature of the relationship and the openness of COSA to all gender identities and sexual orientations, we are careful to seek sponsors with whom we would not develop a romantic interest."

Comment: It implies a causal link between openness and romance.

Comment: That sentence may be unwelcoming. Concerned that it conflicts with COSA's diversity statement.

Comment: That sentence can disparage or belittle.

Comment: Appreciate the attempt to not be black and white, but this sentence needs to be re-written.

Comment: This sentence would be confusing or traumatizing to newcomers.

Comment: One suggestion to improve the sentence is to remove the word "gender." Also, instead of "romance," use "attraction." Elsewhere in the chapter, the word "meeting" should be "meetings."

Comment: The sentence puts responsibility on the newcomer. It could be scary to a newcomer.

Comment: The idea of attraction does need to be addressed.

Question: Should the sentence put the responsibility on the sponsor?

Second Straw Poll to approve the Sponsorship Chapter [16 GREEN] [14 YELLOW] [14 RED].

Comment: Need to be clear about "attraction" in a romantic sense as opposed to "attraction and promotion."

Comment: All ulterior motives should be addressed, including romantic interests, business interests, etc.

Comment: The sentence is trying to address two issues, diversity and romance.

Comment: Literature should be written so that as many people as possible can feel comfortable.

Comment The sentence is worded in such a way that bisexual people could be excluded from sponsorship.

Q: Could this be sent back to just delegates instead of the whole fellowship?

A: Sara P. is considering how to address this and reach consensus.

Final Straw Poll to approve the Sponsorship Chapter [9 GREEN] [14 YELLOW] [22 RED]. **The proposal does not pass.**

Delegate Agenda Item

Julana S. presented the proposal that was submitted by the Houston Intergroup.

Straw Poll [22 GREEN] [12 YELLOW] [10 RED].

Q: What authority does the Service Guide have?

A: It carries the past will of the fellowship to the current board.

Q: Which mechanics would change?

A: A separate committee to determine location and dates.

Comment: The Service Guide is not the right place to make this change.

Comment: There are gains from having conventions together with SAA. The proposal misstates tradition five. We should consider asking SAA for a

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seat at the table before separating conventions.

Comment: This year demonstrates that we do not need to follow SAA as we are having a convention.

Red: This proposal would result in loss of bottom-up decision making. The idea of two committees is confusing. There are lots of “double-winners” who attend both conventions.

Comment: The bylaws already give the board the authority to set the annual meeting.

Comment: There is benefit from cross-participation. We should push for more inclusivity in planning.

Comment: It seems like bad precedent to have delegates updating the service guide. It should be the purview of the board.

Comment: This should be discussed at the board level.

Comment: Currently, there is no other place to make this change other than the Service Guide. Following SAA is not autonomy.

Comment: The Service Guide includes the Delegate Business Item form.

Comment: Currently, there is no room for compromise. We are limited on location, cost and timing of convention.

Second Straw Poll [16 GREEN] [9 YELLOW] [20 RED].

Comment: The Service Guide is a board document. Delegates should not be re-writing it.

Comment: Concern with regard to the fifth tradition.

Comment: We should work with SAA earlier on in the process.

Comment: This proposal removes the current location selection process and does not replace it.

Q: Does the board think this is the right way to raise the issue?

A: Yes, the current board discussed that.

Comment: Supports the intention of the proposal. The board could take the discussion forward, possibly at the next delegate meeting.

Comment: The proposal provides options, but not a requirement, to change the current process.

Comment: The proposal increases options, especially if there's a year when coordinating with SAA does not benefit us financially or in terms of hotel availability.

Comment: We can ask SAA for more influence, but we cannot insist on it.

Julana presented revised wording for the proposal:

We propose the COSA Service Guide be reworded to state that, while acknowledging how the COSA annual convention location, time, schedule, and duration was established in the past, it emphasizes that these decisions are the responsibility COSA, independent of other organizations, and should be made by COSA to best serve the fellowship.

Final Straw Poll [28 GREEN] [7 YELLOW] [10 RED]. **The proposal does not pass.**

Delegate New Business, Questions and Concerns

Q: Could there be a single Kindle book that includes all Twelve Steps?

A: The board's intention is to have more literature on Kindle.

Question from Sara P. about the sponsorship chapter. Would removing gender from that sentence be a sufficient fix? The sentence would read: Because of the close nature of the relationship, we are careful to seek sponsors with whom we would not develop a romantic interest.

Non-binding poll: [33 GREEN] [8 YELLOW] [2 RED].

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Q: What are the profits on our Kindle literature?

A: At this point, \$169.

Comment: There should be a streamlined process for dealing with the two chapters that did not pass.

Comment: Concern about Kindle literature profits being lower than what we would make from physical sales.

Responses: The office is currently closed, so there are no physical sales. Kindle enables overseas sales that are normally slow and costly. The current price is introductory and could be increased.

Comment: The concerns raised about the sponsorship chapter were focused on romantic attraction and did not address ulterior motives in general.

Meeting Conclusion

The meeting concluded with the "Serenity Prayer".

The Outreach Committee Needs You!

Do you love or loathe committee meetings? Do you love or loathe working on a project alone? Either way, the Outreach Committee has a way you can share the message. If you are willing to "carry the message to those who still suffer" (the primary purpose of COSA) and ready to put Step Twelve into action, simply contact the Outreach Committee to share your personal passion or check to see which current projects might grab your attention. Contact us at outreachcommittee@cosa-recovery.org!

Video Meetings

The **COSA Zoom Room** is offering those COSAs affected by the coronavirus to continue their recovery journey via Zoom video meetings. Zoom meeting times are posted on the CZR website: cosazoomroom.org

If your face to face meeting would like to see if a room is available, please contact the CZR via cosazoomroom@yahoo.com for available meeting times.

Phone Meetings

Go to our website home page: cosa-recovery.org. Then click on the Meetings tab. Next, follow the drop down menu options and click on the Phone Meetings menu option, then click the option for the Meeting Schedule and the list of meetings will appear. When you find a meeting you'd like to attend, simply click the title of the meeting and you'll be taken to the dial-in instructions. Dialing in consists of calling a "free conference call" number followed by an access code. You can also go straight to the phone meeting schedule by going to cosacall.com.



Letter from the Chair

COSAs are amazing! Calm! Powerful! The power of the We of the program has never been so clearly demonstrated to me as in this COVID-19 crisis. On March 15, the ISO of COSA convened the first of what we titled, "COVID-19 Management Meetings." The sitting board, the board candidates, the convention chair, and the delegate liaison participated.

It tickles me, writing this now, that the word "management" worked its way into the title of the meetings, because despite the name, the group conscience in word and action reflected the Serenity Prayer. We worked to discern in a disorienting and unprecedented situation to know what we could change, and what we needed to accept. Calm prevailed. This situation was enough to defeat any one of us singly, but the We of the group provided the strength and wisdom needed. Sometimes action, sometimes patience, the We of the group brought the best of each of us to the fore and allowed the group to make the best choice we could in the circumstances. I will forever be grateful to have been part of this group and to have been of service in this way!

A mere eight days after the board had decided to cancel this year's face-to-face convention, a group from the Convention Committee presented an on-line "Un-Convention," complete in every detail with speakers lined up, technology sorted, everything! The love for the fellowship this group showed has touched me deeply and I thank them for their beautiful efforts!

Many of us experienced the fabulous result of the loving efforts of the "Un-Convention" Committee, as Higher Power gave the fellowship a lesson in finding the silver lining of a situation. Never has the COSA Convention been more accessible to COSAs in need worldwide! We found that technology was not a roadblock to the healing power of the COSA fellowship. This experience will change the COSA Convention for the better, as we have seen the good it manifested. If you want to be part of what the COSA Convention becomes in the future, please contact me at chair@cosa-recovery.org or contact convention@cosa-recovery.org.

And now, to a different subject: my procrastination! From the beginning of the on-line meetings due to COVID, I listened to the suggestion to go to the website to make a Seventh Tradition donation but did nothing. I knew I had the money. After all, I hadn't seen a real Seventh Tradition basket in 10 weeks, so my usual \$5/week was still in my pocket. But I still didn't take action. "I'll do it later," I said to myself.

The arrival of the convention finally became my "later," and I made my donation. Apparently, the convention was "later" for other COSAs, too! Since the convention, 64 COSAs have made donations on the website totaling \$3,599. WOW! A total of \$7,267 was donated in May from all sources for a total for the year of \$31,055, which is \$1,500 over our goal for the year! As a result of your generosity, the fellowship is stronger. Thanks.

Yours in Service.

Chris C, ISO of COSA Chair

INVITATION

2021 ISO of COSA Columbus Convention Committee

invites you to be part of the 2021 experience by joining in and helping to create a unique convention experience for all COSAs.

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

Date of Convention: Friday, May 28–Monday, May 31, 2021

Would you like to be included in the 2021 COSA Convention Committee experience? All COSAs are welcome to participate.

Convention Chair: Mary H. Please send your questions or notes of interest to: mary.2021COSA@gmail.com

The 2021 COSA Convention Committee is ready to begin coordinating the Columbus, OH convention as well as a Virtual Convention experience to take place in conjunction with the face-to-face weekend. The virtual event will be designed and presented by a Virtual Convention Planning Committee. The 2021 Convention Committee invites COSAs in different world time zones to participate in developing this virtual experience and supporting the inclusion of virtual events in different time zones. Please send an email to Mary H., Convention Chair, if you would like to be included in the planning and development of this exciting virtual experience for COSAs around the world.

Collaborating with COSAs from around the world, whether planning the face-to-face convention or a virtual event, is an invaluable experience received through Convention Committee experience. Our COSA network of support expands, our personal recovery strengthens, and we realize a larger or more spiritual purpose in the responsibilities we are carrying out. Convention participation, in any form, is a growing experience; it inspires the continuance of carrying the COSA message to those who still suffer.

If you would like to be included in an email invitation to our first Convention Committee Zoom meeting later in August, please contact Mary H., 2021 Convention Chair, at mary.2021COSA@gmail.com. We will send an initial email asking what times are best to meet, to get a consensus.

From Mary H., 2021 Convention Chair

Having served on the last three Convention Committees, including the first ever Virtual Convention Committee in May of 2020, my COSA support system has morphed into a worldwide network through the collaborations and connections I've made with COSAs from around the world. I have more clarity in my personal recovery and a better understanding of the Steps and Traditions. Therefore, when I carry the COSA message, I better represent the true meaning of the Steps and Traditions of our program.

From the Literature Committee

Feedback Requested on COSA's Basic Text

The Literature Committee presents four draft chapters to the Fellowship for feedback. In response to the delegates' request for more time to review chapters, we have three timeframes for chapter feedback. In each timeframe, there will be between four and seven chapters for review:

- Group One: July 15-October 15
- Group Two: September 15-December 15
- Group Three: November 15-February 15

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. Written feedback guidelines are included below. Utilizing these feedback guidelines will allow us to apply the feedback received in an efficient manner. We are also holding two Zoom meetings for those who would like to provide verbal feedback on the draft chapters for Step Ten and Step Eleven.

Tuesday, September 22, 2020

8:30 PM Eastern Daylight Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2399938352>
Meeting ID: 239 993 8352

Sunday, September 27, 2020

3:00 PM Eastern Daylight Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2399938352>
Meeting ID: 239 993 8352

Group One Feedback due October 15, 2020 OR BEFORE

[Step Ten](#)

[Step Eleven](#)

[Tradition Seven](#)

[Sponsorship](#)

- Feedback or questions can be submitted to cosacopy@yahoo.com
- 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 example on website)
- 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).

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. These proposed chapters will then be voted on for approval by the delegates at the 2021 Annual Delegate Meeting.

COSA literature now available on Amazon!

In addition to **all Twelve COSA Step booklets**, the following booklets are available for purchase as ebooks!



Boundaries
Sobriety
Sponsorship
Triggers
Using the Twelve Steps to Work Through Any Conflict
Men in COSA
52 Questions

- In the US, use the link: <https://bit.ly/cosa-us-lit>
- In the UK, use the link: <https://bit.ly/cosa-uk-lit>
- In other regions, search for “COSA Step” on your regional Amazon website.

We recognize that finances are tight for many right now, so in response to the crisis, we have set an introductory price at the minimum possible of **\$.99 US per booklet** (with equivalent minimum pricing in other regions).

We would also like to remind you that we have many wonderful resources online in the form of MP3 recordings from past conventions—2020 was just added (<https://cosa-recovery.org/product-category/mp3/>), as well as free downloadable literature, including over 25 years of back issues of our *Balance* newsletter (<https://cosa-recovery.org/balance/>).

We are grateful to share in the gifts of recovery that help us work through these times together.



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: <https://cosa-recovery.org/service/write-for-cosa/writing-guidelines-for-cosa-literature/>

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

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STEP 1·2·3·4·5·6· 7 ·8·9·10·11·12

HUMBLY ASKED GOD TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS.

This Step sounds pretty simple. Assuming I did a very thorough Sixth Step and I am entirely ready for my Higher Power to remove my shortcomings, now all I have to do is ask. The part of this Step that tripped me up though was the word “humbly.”

When I first entered COSA, I was not all that humble. I associated humility with humiliation and thought it meant that I was weak and maybe subservient. In my family of origin, my dad was the boss. Growing up, I watched my mom do contortions to keep him happy. She, along with us kids, seemed to me to be a second-class citizen. I sensed that my dad didn't value my mom and that he thought himself superior.

I vowed to never be secondary to my partner. I did not want him to treat me like my dad treated my mom. The only way I knew to prevent that was to work hard to be better than, or more accurately, to appear superior. I needed to pretend I was strong, brave and infallible. No way was I going to appear vulnerable or show my underbelly. Humility didn't mix well with my armor. But my ego did.

Without humility, my ego runs the show and my ego is clothed in self-will. It separates me from my Higher Power. My arrogance, which for me is the opposite of humility, gives me the false sense that I'm in charge; I can do it all without help from anyone, even my Higher Power. When I think that I'm invincible, it's not possible for me to humbly request that my Higher Power remove my shortcomings.

I'm learning in recovery that there are very few things over which I truly have control. I do have choices around some of my actions. But when it comes down to it, I am powerless over my character defects. And to think otherwise can take me to a dark place. After all, if I really have power over my shortcomings, I should be able to remove them any time I want. If that were true, then why am I still a perfectionist, and judgmental, self critical, etc.?

It's when I can shed my ego and look at myself, honestly and purely, that I admit that I can't correct my shortcomings on my own. My character defects have been ingrained in my very being for a long time. Without humility, my request to my Higher Power to remove my shortcomings is a hollow one. For me to do a true and honest Step Seven, I need to accept that I really do need help from my Higher Power.

Knowing this motivates me to humbly sit before my Higher Power and make the request. When I am able to ask with humility for the removal of my defects, my request is made cleanly, authentically, purely, and without ulterior motives.

As my co-sponsor and I finished our Seventh Step, and before we moved onto Step Eight, we wrote our own Seventh Step Prayer:

*Dear Higher Power, here I am. All of me. Help me find the awareness of my gifts as well as my impediments to be fully useful to you. Please take from me those flaws that keep me from truly living the richest, most fulfilling life that you have provided for me. Today, give me the strength and tools to find my highest self as I go out from here.
Amen*

I don't have to force things. I just ask. And then if necessary, I ask for patience, trust, humility, honesty and courage. I've witnessed that little by little God does for me what I cannot do for myself. Miracles are happening as I follow through with the Steps steadfastly and humbly.

~ Liz G

STEP 1·2·3·4·5·6·7· 8 ·9·10·11·12

MADE A LIST OF ALL PERSONS WE HAD HARMED, AND BECAME WILLING TO MAKE AMENDS TO THEM ALL.

Step Eight is called an action Step, although at first I had a hard time taking any action. Make a list of all those I'd harmed? I didn't relish the idea and wasn't even sure I had the courage for this. How could I sit across from someone I had harmed and own up to some pretty bad behaviors? Prior to recovery, I would have been inclined to minimize or even deny that I'd done anything wrong. But now it was really important for me to be honest but to not get ahead of myself. The actual making of amends was Step Nine. My only task in Step Eight was to make my list and become willing.

I first reviewed my Step Four character defects. I considered how each defect played out into harmful behaviors and who might have been harmed in their wake. I ended up with a list of a few people.

I then made a list of people for whom I was holding resentments. At that point it was easier for me to look at the harms others caused me than the harms I had caused. I was familiar and comfortable with being a victim. For the most part, though, if I'm holding a resentment against someone else, there's probably a good chance that I contributed harm to the relationship. After making my resentment list, I took a long, hard, and sometimes painful look at myself and what was my part.

If I wasn't sure that someone belonged on my list, I wrote their name down anyway. That way I could mull things over and share it with my co-sponsor. There were a couple of people on my resentment list for whom I realized I had caused no harm. But for most of them, yeah, I had a dirty side of the street I needed to clean.

My list consisted of four columns for each person I had harmed with the first being their name. I made sure to include my name on my list. Next I listed a description of my behaviors that caused the harm. The third column delineated my character defects that were in play and the fourth what I would do differently if I were able to go back and rewrite history.

It turned out that making my list was the easy part. Becoming willing to make amends to them all was where I found my challenges.

Becoming willing was a process for me. I had an especially hard time being willing to make amends to my husband. When I looked at the harms his acting-out behaviors had caused me, I saw a deep cavernous hole of sheer unimaginable pain. My actions, in contrast, were a tiny drop in the bucket, at least from my perspective.

It was helpful for me to categorize the people on my list into three sections: 1) people I was ready, willing and able to approach with my amends; 2) people I was not quite willing to approach, but it wasn't out of the question; and 3) those people I was absolutely no way, no how, not ready to approach. My husband was in category number 3.

And as in Step Six, if I wasn't willing, well, I was willing to become willing. I had trouble becoming willing to make amends to the people in my third "no way" category. I found that to complete Step Eight and be completely willing, I had to do what I call the Step Eight and Nine dance. I started to make Step Nine amends to the people for whom I was ready. By the time I got to my husband, I was willing. I was able to truly see my part in the dysfunction of my marriage without any kind of comparison. I was willing to show up with a compassionate spirit, and Higher Power helped me to be ready to move closer to peace and serenity.

~ Liz G

TRADITION 1·2·3·4·5·6· 7 ·8·9·10·11·12

EVERY COSA GROUP OUGHT TO BE FULLY SELF-SUPPORTING, DECLINING OUTSIDE CONTRIBUTIONS.

I used to look at this Tradition and think “wouldn’t it be wonderful to get outside contributions and help to support members of COSA”. Why not publicize and look for help or outside contributions? But as I learn what it means to be a healthy individual and recovering COSA member, I see the intent of this Tradition. If we are a healthy individual, meeting, group, family member, co-worker, and world wide organization we need to be able to support ourselves first.

Before I came to COSA I used to put my will on others, and thought if they just did what I said their lives would be ok, and I would get frustrated when they didn’t. I learned in COSA that if someone can help themselves, let them, it might just be their way to grow or come to learn from their situation, or maybe they have a different goal than I do. As an individual in COSA I look to first support myself and when I have difficulty I can reach out, learn how to ask, and not feel shame. I don’t leave my issue with for to fix. And I have always grown from this.

As a COSA group, family member, or work team, I learn to do the same. We look to support ourselves, yet learn how and where to reach out. We do not leave our issues with others to make all the decisions, as we may not get the answers that are right for our group. If I think about my own work projects and our team issues, we don’t abdicate decisions to others, we don’t ask others to take over and run the project. We reach out for others’ experiences and skills to guide or support us. In this way we keep in line with our mission and goals.

As a COSA group, we strive to do the same. We can reach out to another group or the ISO of COSA to find out what others have done or how they might handle it, yet we do not abdicate the decision to another group. We follow what is in our best interest, in line with our mission and COSA overall as only we know what is best for us. In this way, we remain healthy, learning how to make decisions, learning when to reach out, and when to lean on our HP.

When I think of the last part of this Tradition “declining outside contributions” it reminds me of those adolescent years when my Dad said “well since I am paying for it, I get to tell you what I want you to do”. I couldn’t wait for my independence to pave my own way. I used to think that I couldn’t survive without his help. When I think of COSA and what might happen if we accepted charity or donations from outside members - it could certainly impact our mission and strategy. It could impact us as members even if it influenced us only in the slightest of ways. Since we strive to be independent and learn what is best for us, we avoid this influence.

Tradition Seven is so critical to our health and happiness, and it is such a wonderful reminder that we are striving for both, and love when I hear Tradition Seven in every meeting I attend!

~ Beth
Mesa, AZ

Originally appeared in *Balance* issue July/August 2015

TRADITION 1·2·3·4·5·6·7·8·9·10·11·12

COSA SHOULD REMAIN FOREVER NON-PROFESSIONAL, BUT OUR SERVICE CENTERS MAY EMPLOY SPECIAL WORKERS.

I recently had the opportunity to study the Eighth Tradition with some fellow COSAs. We have been studying the Traditions and I have been learning and growing so much as a result of this, however, I must admit I was skeptical about studying the Eighth Tradition; it sounded kind of boring.

I tried to keep an open mind and knew I would benefit from whatever learning there was to learn as I had from the other Traditions we have been studying. As it always happens, exactly what I needed to learn was right there for me.

In studying the Eighth Tradition I made the connection that I will never be a COSA professional. In fact, there are no COSA professionals. One of the gifts of our fellowship is that we are all non-professionals.

Imagine if some of us were considered professionals and others weren't, how would we ever truly achieve COSA unity or find our group's conscience? Who would decide who qualified as a professional or who was labeled a non-professional COSA?

The gift of our fellowship remaining forever non-professional is that I am of equal standing with all of my fellow COSAs. I am no better or no worse than anyone else in COSA. I believe we are all equals in COSA and equal in the eyes of God. We are all perfectly imperfect, beloved children of God.

I have struggled often over the years with my character defects of comparing myself to others and believing I am either "better than" or "less than". When I was new in COSA I often felt "less than" because I had less recovery or I thought I was more messed up than others in the fellowship. Sometimes I felt as though I had nothing to offer the group if I hadn't completed the Step we were discussing. I have struggled at other times with my ego, judgment, and "stinking thinking" that I have the right answers or know what is best for others.

While I continue to use the Sixth, Seventh, and Tenth Steps around these character defects as they come up, here was a great reminder, built right into the Traditions, of humility and equality. A lesson for me in how to remember we are all experts in where our COSA disease has taken us and we are all we are all new to learning more deeply about this disease, how we have been affected, and the God of our understanding.

Shares from those who attend their first meeting are just as valuable for my recovery and growth as shares from those who have been in COSA many more years than I have. And, no matter how I may feel about myself on that day, my share is just as worthwhile a gift as anyone else's. My service is just as valued and my voice is just as important.

~Sarah S.
Oakland, CA

Originally appeared in *Balance* issue July/August 2013

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 *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.

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!

Seventh Tradition: Financial Report

May 2020

CA-29 (South Bay)	\$ 302.00
ONL-05 (CZR Intergroup).....	\$ 600.00
TEL-08.....	\$ 1000.00
Individual Donations	\$ 3878.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1487.00
May Total	\$ 7267.00

June 2020

FL-15 (Naples).....	\$ 200.00
TEL-12.....	\$ 50.00
TX-23 (Houston).....	\$ 30.00
Individual Donations	\$ 1032.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1475.00
June Total.....	\$ 2757.00

July 2020

ONL-05 (CZR Intergroup).....	\$ 885.00
TX-04 (Houston).....	\$ 50.00
Individual Donations	\$ 1258.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1490.00
July Total	\$ 3683.00

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.