

Balance

Newsletter of International Service Organization of COSA



July/August 2021
Volume 18, Issue 1

ISO of COSA ANNUAL DELEGATE MEETING SUMMARY Zoom Conference May 28, 2021

Attendees:

Registered Delegates:

Alyssa H., ONL-07	Laura M., TX-43
Amy B., SC-01	Lauressa N., ONL-15
Amy MJ., Board Member	Linda P., TEL-11
Beth V., WI-08	Liz G., NY-01
Bobby S., TX-23	Lori M., CT-02
Carmen T., AZ-01	Marlane D., TEL-12
Chris C., Board Chair, CA-02	Martha Jean., Board Member
Eveline S., CA-44	Mary H., Board Member, FL-15
Frankie R., INT-22	Mary P., TX-22
Glenda A., TX-04	Maureen P., ONL-40
Greta B., ONL-13	Nan H., OH-01
Inge H., CA-27	Ruth G., TEL-06
Jean K., INT-31	Sara L., Board Secretary
Jessica S., ONL-41	Sara P., AZ-14
Jo G., Board Nominee, ONL-32	Sarah S., CA-01
Julana., Board Member	Sue B., WI-09
Kathryn WG., TX-13	Susan K., Office Worker
Kerry M., CA-33	Susan M., ONL-07
Kerstin., CA-09	Suyapa W., CA-23
Kim R., CA-13	Sylvan M., CA-46
Kimberly N., ONL-10	Tracy S., Board Treasurer, CO-04
Kymerlee D., ONL-05	Yooni., CA-40
Laura L., ONL-14	

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."

Attendees introduced themselves.

The Annual Delegate Meeting Rules of Order were read.

The Safe Communications Guidelines were read.

Sara L. presented a study of Concept 12: The Annual Meeting shall observe

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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.

There were questions about how to “raise hand” in zoom, and about how to request to speak on a proposal. These issues were clarified.

Explanation of Board Nomination Process & Board Nominee Introductions

Chris 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’ for each person. All of the slate could be voted in. All board members are elected as at large members. The board consensus determines who is chair, treasurer, and secretary.

There were questions about the number of board members called for in the bylaws. The minimum is 7 and the maximum is 17.

There was a question about the costs of bringing the board together for meetings. With COVID, there has been no board travel so costs have been very low. We anticipate returning to traveling for the Board Working Weekend and the Delegate Meeting in the next year, so costs will increase. In the past, the delegates have decided that board travel should be paid by the fellowship in order to address financial barriers that could prevent qualified COSAs from serving.

Board prospects briefly shared with the delegates why they wished to serve. The nominees were: Chris C., Martha Jean H., and Jo G.

All candidates were elected.

2021 – 2022 Budget Review

When Tracy became treasurer, improvements in the accounting system were needed. Those were made, and the last year has been stable.

Tracy shared the year-to-date financial results. Convention income was lower due to COVID, but donations were up. Sales were down due to COVID and offering Kindle literature sales. Board expenses, convention expenses and mailing expenses were lower. Technology expenses were higher due to the new website project. Our net income was budgeted to be zero and we ended up at \$6,000.

Tracy shared the March 31 Balance Sheet. Our cash position is strong. Liabilities are low. There is a designated amount for the final editing and printing of the basic text.

Q: With changes recently, have there been discussions of changing operations?

A: Yes, the board is closing the office.

Q: Is the basic text designation still enough?

A: The Literature committee will address that later.

Q: How have individual donations increased?

A: Overall, it seems to be a Higher Power issue. Susan said that many meetings that have moved to Zoom are asking people to donate to the ISO instead of to the meeting.

Q: Does Amazon Smile violate traditions? How can we expect much money from sales?

A: The board did discuss Amazon Smile at length. The board’s perspective was that Amazon Smile allows COSA to use funds to donate to COSA.

Literature via Amazon was needed because of the pandemic, and it also makes literature cheaper internationally. Amazon sets a minimum of 99 cents per item. We receive 33% of the sale price. There is no expense associated with that for COSA.

Tracy shared the budget versus actual expenditures/income. Tracy has refined the categorizations of donations to capture donations made for retreats and conventions. Wages are lower because Susan was not able to go into the office, and because she donates some of her time.

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Q: How are we serving people who want printed literature?

A: COSAs can still order literature by mail and receive it in paper form. We are looking at specifics around office operations to keep service levels high.

Tracy shared the budget for Fiscal year 2022. The budget is a template for the next year's expenses. It assumes an in-person convention in Atlanta. The budget keeps convention income the same as had been budgeted in the last few years. The budget assumes sales will be low. Expenses for board travel are higher due to the number and distance of board members. The convention hotel has not been determined, so we do not have firm numbers on that yet. The Outreach committee has a budget for translation work which is in progress right now and has not been paid yet. That committee also has expenses for attending a therapist convention. The budget assumes more of Susan's time will be needed in the next year. The budget results in a deficit of about \$3000. The board did not want to increase convention fees.

Q: Will the translations be done by an official translator?

A: The translations are being done by COSAs. A professional translator who is also a COSA will review their work.

Q: What is Spring Branch ISD? Harris County? Kentucky?

A: These line items are because we have registered to do business in these areas. They are the required local taxes. These will change over the next year with the office changing.

Q: Will next year's convention allow for online or hybrid participation? Is that reflected in the budget?

A: Yes, the plan is for a hybrid. It isn't a separate line item, as the costs for the online portion are very small.

Q: Is there discussion of other ways to collect payments, such as payments by text?

A: The board is starting to look into Venmo. Anyone who is interested or knowledgeable can contact Tracy to help. The board has to balance the costs of the platform vs convenience to the fellowship.

Q: What happened to the Ohio hotel deposit?

A: We cancelled all obligations to the Columbus hotel. That cost us \$5592. There are no further obligations to that hotel. We do not know what the cost of the Atlanta hotel will be.

Q: Has the office moved from TX to NC?

A: At the moment, we still have a lease in Texas, and our lease runs through August. We will be terminating business in Texas this year, and establishing operations in North Carolina where Susan is located.

Q: Will the convention coordinate with SAA for location?

A: Yes, for 2022, we will be coordinating with SAA.

Q: Can donations be designated?

A: Yes. Donors can specify the use of their donations.

Q: Please explain the line items about retreats and conventions.

A: This was a suggestion.

Q: How can we increase interest in donating to the ISO?

A: The board takes this question up annually at the working weekend. This can be discussed further during the open issues portion of the meeting.

Q: In the past, we have offered free postage for orders during the convention weekend. Will that be done again?

A: The board will consider this for the next convention.

Budget Approval Straw Poll: [42 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]

No one wished to speak.

Budget Approval Straw Poll: [42 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]

Budget passes.

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Basic Text Chapters

Sara P. explained the reasons for having a basic text and gave a brief history of the basic text project. Sara P. presented an overview of the process for surveying, writing, collecting fellowship feedback, final draft, and approval of each chapter. Chapters presented to the delegate meeting have been edited for content. After the book is finished, a professional editor will edit for grammar and punctuation and ensure consistency throughout the book.

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 2023. Ten chapters are being presented at this meeting.

Q: Who will look at consistency from chapter to chapter?

A: There are writing guidelines for each section. The professional editor will also address this.

Q: Are there efforts to increase committee membership?

A: The Literature Committee is always looking for new people.

Q: During the voting process, are you still open to feedback?

A: We will follow the normal voting process, except there cannot be amendments to literature. You can speak to specific issues, but the vote is to approve the chapter as submitted.

Step Ten:

Straw Poll to approve Step Ten Chapter [42 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

Comment: This is written more like a narrative. This is OK, but I would like to have either ER or the professional editor see if the sentence says what it means to say. For example there is a sentence, "tools such as writing in a journal or meditation app." The word "app" seems like jargon. This should be phrased as "listening to a meditation on an application."

Second Straw Poll to approve Step Ten Chapter [42 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Step Eleven:

Straw Poll to approve Step Eleven Chapter [43 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Tradition Seven

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

Tradition Eleven:

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

Tools: Writing and Journaling:

Straw Poll to approve the Writing and Journaling Chapter [42 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Concept Five:

Straw Poll to approve the Concept Five Chapter [41 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED].

Comment: There is a comma in the wrong place. "Higher Powers" should be plural.

Amy B. Confirmed that those issues would be addressed by the professional editor.

Second Straw Poll to approve Concept five Chapter [43 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

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Sponsorship

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

Comment: "Sponsors" is plural. Do people have multiple sponsors or need them? This may be confusing to newcomers.

Second Straw Poll to approve Sponsorship Chapter [41 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [1 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Anonymity

Straw Poll to approve the Anonymity Chapter [40 GREEN] [0 YELLOW] [0 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Tradition Twelve

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

Comment: There is a missing "and." On the second page, it sounds singular, rather than conveying group conscience.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Tradition Twelve Chapter [41 GREEN] [1 YELLOW] [0 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Slogans

Straw Poll to approve the Slogans Chapter [39 GREEN] [2 YELLOW] [1 RED].

Comment: The Step 10 and Step 11 telemeetings are pleased to see the results after the fellowship feedback. They would like to see the slogans verified. For instance, the slogan "honest open willing" is known to some as "honesty openness willingness." Some of the slogans seemed made up.

Q: This piece got longer after feedback. Generally slogans are thought of as simple. What prompted the length?

A: The chapter is longer because of feedback about wanting more slogans. There will be an appendix with the short versions of the slogans for quick reference.

Q: Are there possible copyright issues with slogans from other fellowships?

A: Credit will be given similar to how it is in the meeting Guide. This will be addressed in editing.

Comment: This chapter seems clumsy.

Comment: Instead of the phrase "computer screen" should it say "digital devices"?

Comment: The social media aspect of slogans should be addressed.

Comment: There is a paragraph at the beginning that addresses some of the concerns raised.

Second Straw Poll to approve the Slogans Chapter [37 GREEN] [3 YELLOW] [2 RED]. **Proposal Passes.**

Review of Committees and Service Opportunities

Each committee gave a short description of its work. More details about committees can be found in the Annual Report to the Delegates.

There were breakout rooms for each committee. Delegates had the opportunity to visit one or more breakout rooms to learn about service opportunities.

Delegate New Business, Questions and Concerns

Q: Could we find non-Amazon ways to distribute our literature?

A: The board looked at ways to distribute literature that would also protect copyright. Amazon seemed to be the best way.

Comment: Would like to revisit the distribution of the PDF. We are conscious enough of not sharing PDFs unless they were purchased. It is difficult to copy and paste from Kindle in order to use [excerpts/selections] in meetings.

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Comment: The best we can do for PDFs is to put a notice on the PDF asking people to not copy or distribute it without paying for it.

Comment: Some feel cheated that the book is the only thing being worked on right now.

Q: For meetings that were in person but have moved to Zoom, people from around the world have joined. Are there guidelines or experience, strength and hope about hybrid meetings?

A: There are microphones that are intended for meetings.

A: Some meeting venues have new guidelines.

A: One meeting has an iPad to enable hybrid meetings.

Q: What if a meeting has lost a treasurer and PayPal makes it difficult to bring on a new treasurer?

A: When the ISO changed the person on the PayPal account, it was challenging. There was lots of documentation needed. The retiring person needed to help. The PayPal help line was a good resource.

Q: The DC Delegate meeting had looked at Amazon Smile and decided against it. How does the board manage that?

A: The group conscience can change over time.

Q: How can the board recognize Delegate Meeting decisions over time?

A: The board can look at a way to track and record decisions made over time.

A: A decision was made to not use the word "codependency" but it is still in old literature and old Balance Issues. We have not revised all of the official literature to be in line with this.

A: Marlane has several years of notes from delegate meetings that she would be willing to share.

Comment: Delegate Meeting minutes can be found in the Balance archives.

Q: Is there information out there about the founding of COSA or the early days of COSA?

A: There is a piece buried in the archives.

A: It would be good to capture the knowledge of older COSAs who were members at the founding or shortly after.

Q: How should the board reach out to meetings?

A: During COVID, some meetings have become more connected to the ISO or to COSAs from other locations.

Q: Do we know how many COSA groups there are?

A: Just before COVID there were approximately 120 meetings worldwide. The numbers are fluid.

Comment: It is hard for some potential delegates to make the mandatory meetings in advance. Can we lower the barriers to delegate service?

Comment: It is unrealistic for each meeting to have a delegate.

Comment: Delegates can come from intergroups as well as individual meetings.

Comment: The Outreach committee could take on encouraging each committee to have a delegate.

Q: A member of Literature in Development suggested a version 1 of the text without the Voices. This would enable the committee to get the book out sooner. At this point, they are seeking general reactions. In order to do this, it would have to be approved by delegates next year.

Comment: COSAs in the Know is often just the meditation, so some meetings do not find it valuable.

Comment: COSAs in the Know has a lot of good info, but sometimes they are very long. Is there a way to do shorter segments to make COSAs in the Know easier to navigate?

Comment: Pieces in COSAs in the Know need to be briefer and have more bullet points.

Comment: Some meetings collect emails of members. Is this addressed in the Meeting Guide?

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Comment: Thank you to all of the work of the board.

Comment: The board's priorities are determined by what is brought up at the delegate meeting. In the past, delegates were asked to actually do the prioritization as part of the delegate meeting. Chris suggested that Inge capture the various priorities that have come up today and put them in a survey to send to the delegates after today.

Comment: Gratitude that there are so many different efforts going on right now in COSA, and so many ways of carrying the message.

Q: How do the delegates see the results of surveys? How are those shared with the larger fellowship?

A: In the past, we have not shared those. It would be good to reflect those back to the fellowship.

Comment: There are funds now, but scarcity can return.

Meeting Conclusion

Two follow-up surveys will go out. One is about delegate preparation. The second is about the delegate meeting and prioritizing the issues that came up today.

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!

Online 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 ISO of COSA Chair

Hello COSAs,

I am excited to work with you this year! I just became chair after the 2021 delegate meeting. If you are wondering, “Which Sara is this?” I was board secretary from 2018 until the 2021 delegate meeting.

The board just had our annual Board Working Weekend, where we got together for a weekend to discuss almost anything related to COSA and plan our work for the next year. We talked about finances, outreach, convention, and a million other things that came up. You will be hearing more about our efforts in the *Balance* and “COSAs in the Know” throughout the year.

I think of COSA as a plant with great roots. It is constantly branching out, and not always where we expect. In January 2020, the board had some clear ideas, plans and expectations for growing the plant. By March of 2020, with COVID, some of our branches were severely pruned. We focused on our roots—strong meetings, faith in our program, and a commitment to carry the message. The branches that had experience, strength and hope with online meetings supported the previously face-to-face meetings. As a board, we nurtured a few branches that grew to be the online convention and online delegate meeting. Now, we’re looking at a branch called hybrid meetings. We had not paid much attention to it until recently. The board has been asked if we have suggestions for how to run good hybrid meetings to incorporate in-person and online attendance. We do plan to nurture that branch, but we also recognize that some of you are already doing that and have some knowledge to share. That’s just one example of how COSA continues to grow and change, even as we stay close to our roots.

I have deep gratitude for all of the support from COSAs over the last year. You have kept your meetings going, supported newcomers, served as delegates, been on ISO committees and so much more. As a board member, it’s a little mystifying how much time and effort COSAs contribute, and we don’t always see the effort that goes into every branch of COSA. I love hearing stories of how meetings or intergroups are carrying the message in ways I would not have imagined.

One area that we can see very clearly is donations. At the start of COVID, the board was worried about the finances, and it turned out that COSAs came through. Our donations for this last fiscal year totaled \$40,750, which was more than \$7,000 higher than the previous year. I am personally so grateful for this. We recognize that a lot of the increase was because many in-person meetings are not paying rent, which could change in the next few months. We’ll be keeping a close watch on the finances, as always. You will see some fundraising, and also a focus on the wise use of our resources to carry the message.

I want to close with a request. In the spring, there was a survey of the fellowship. In the responses, many of you volunteered to serve on COSA committees or to take on specific tasks. However, some of the volunteers didn’t include contact information or that contact information had typos. If no one has reached out to you, please contact me at chair@cosa-recovery.org. In particular, we are looking for members of the convention committee, which you can contact at convention@cosa-recovery.org.

Yours in Service,

Sara L.
ISO of COSA Chair

STEP 1·2·3·4·5·6· 7 ·8·9·10·11·12

HUMBLY ASKED GOD TO REMOVE OUR SHORTCOMINGS.

Step Seven is a favorite Step for me. When I did my first Step Seven, I really started to see the miracles I'd been promised since my first meeting. "There are miracles out there with your name on them," I'd been told. I was finally now seeing them.

My sponsor had prepared me for this step with some assignments from Step Six, in which I became entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. I wrote about the character defects I identified in the previous steps, and I spent a lot of time praying and imagining what my life would be like without those character defects.

With that preparation done, I was ready when it was time to look at Step Seven. My sponsor had me read as much as I could about the Step, and then we dissected the Step. I looked at each of the words, and "humbly" confused me. I thought I knew what humility was. I believed I was humble, since I never accepted a compliment and I thought very little of myself.

Together, we did some work on the word. She told me that for her, humility was thinking about herself less not thinking less about herself. It made sense to me that it might be healthier to admit my shortcomings and be aware of my strengths at the same time.

With some more work on humility, it was easier for me to humbly ask my Higher Power to remove all my shortcomings that weren't serving me or others.

When I did, the miracles started happening. Over and over, there were opportunities to pick up a character defect or a tool of COSA. And there was what I call a "Seventh Step Pause"; I didn't react. I responded, and I was more likely to pick up a tool. My Higher Power removed the shortcoming, and I simply cooperated.

Years later, I still have shortcomings. But the ones that remain don't seem quite so awful as they did when I first asked my Higher Power for his help. Maybe it's humility.

~Claudia M, Reprinted from *Balance*, Volume 6, Issue 8, July/August, 2010



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 and questions to: Balance@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.

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.

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 amends in person? How will all these people react to my amends? With the help from 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 that 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 poorly. I had never 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 HP, 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, a journey of facing reality head-on. It was worth making the list, becoming ready and willing to forgive myself, and taking responsibility for my actions of the past. Step Eight was the prerequisite for Step Nine; I needed to become willing before I could take the action of making amends. For me, “willing” was the key to Step Eight, and with my HP’s help, I found the freedom I was seeking.

~Connie, Reprinted from *Balance*, Volume 5, Issue 1, July-August, 2008

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 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 worldwide organization, we need to be able to support ourselves first.

Before I came to COSA I used to put my will on others, and I 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 others 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 of 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, we learn how to make decisions, we learn 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 with his help. When I think of COSA and what might happen if we accepted charity or donations from our 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. I love when I hear Tradition Seven in every meeting I attend!

~Beth, Mesa, AZ, Reprinted from *Balance*, Volume 12, Issue 1, 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 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 H, Reprinted from *Balance*, Volume 6, Issue 7, July/August, 2011

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

August 2020-July 2021

August 2020

AZ-03 (Tempe).....	\$ 60.00
CT-02 (Trumbull)	\$ 50.00
Individual Donations	\$ 1147.37
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1385.00

August Total..... \$ 2642.37

September 2020

CA-08 (El Cerrito).....	\$ 170.97
Individual Donations	\$ 1177.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1287.00

September Total..... \$ 2634.97

October 2020

AZ-03 (Tempe).....	\$ 80.00
INT-32 (UK)	\$ 270.00
WI-08 (East Madison).....	\$ 100.00
Individual Donations	\$ 2082.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1445.00

October Total \$ 3977.00

November 2020

CA-07 (Northern CA Intergroup).....	\$ 1785.55
CA-23 (Long Beach).....	\$ 100.00
CA-26 (La Canada)	\$ 138.75
OR-05 (Portland).....	\$ 100.00
Individual Donations	\$ 1162.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1451.00

November Total..... \$ 4737.30

December 2020

AZ-02 (Tempe).....	\$ 20.00
CA-13 (Irvine)	\$ 467.00
CA-29 (South Bay/Monday).....	\$ 36.00
TX-23 (Houston Kingwood)	\$ 10.00
TX-51 (Austin)	\$ 1044.41
Individual Donations	\$ 1575.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1747.00

December Total..... \$ 4899.41

January 2021

CA-02 (Alamo).....	\$ 132.50
NC-06 (Durham).....	\$ 125.00
Individual Donations	\$ 1305.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1390.00

January Total \$ 2952.50

February 2021

AZ-03 (Tempe).....	\$ 100.00
TEL-12 (Step Study).....	\$ 92.21
Individual Donations	\$ 1921.80
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1381.00

February Total..... \$ 3495.01

March 2021

CA-27 (Santa Rosa).....	\$ 20.00
CA-46 (Palo Alto).....	\$ 100.00
CO-04 (Boulder/Monday)	\$ 150.00
MI-02 (Ferndale).....	\$ 383.50
TN-03 (Memphis).....	\$ 100.00
TX-04 (Houston/Thursday).....	\$ 50.00
INT-23 (UK)	\$ 275.00
Individual Donations	\$ 1167.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1800.00

March Total..... \$ 4045.50

April 2021

CA-02 (Alamo).....	\$ 200.00
Individual Donations	\$ 530.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1506.00
Convention Donations	\$ 950.00

April Total..... \$ 3186.00

May 2021

CA-26 (La Canada)	\$ 30.00
CA-27 (Santa Rosa)	\$ 92.00
PA-07 (Doylestown).....	\$ 50.00
TEL-08 (Telemeeting Intergroup).....	\$ 12.00
INT-23 (UK)	\$ 140.00
Individual Donations	\$ 450.00
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1651.00
Convention Donations	\$ 4380.33

May Total \$ 6805.33

June 2021

AZ-03 (Tempe).....	\$ 75.00
CA-13 (Irvine)	\$ 185.50
CA-23 (Long Beach).....	\$ 200.00
ONL-05 (CZR Intergroup).....	\$ 135.00
Individual Donations	\$ 900.36
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1527.00

June Total..... \$ 3022.86

July 2021

TEL-08 (Telemeeting Intergroup).....	\$ 1500.00
Individual Donations	\$ 622.53
Individual Recurring.....	\$ 1461.00

July Total..... \$ 3583.53