

1 **Concept Eight**

2 ***The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance.***
3 ***They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active***
4 ***services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.***

5 At the founding of COSA, our Steps, Traditions, and Concepts were adapted from those of AA.
6 Because there are organizational differences between the two fellowships and COSA does not
7 have any separately incorporated services, it is sometimes helpful to draw parallels between the
8 corresponding entities. The *trustees* referred to in Concept Eight are the International Service
9 Organization (ISO) of COSA board members; the *constantly active services* are the board
10 committees like the Convention Committee, Literature Committee, Technology Committee, etc.
11 and the *services rendered* refer to the annual convention, program literature, the COSA website,
12 etc. *Custodial oversight* refers to a caring, guardian-like stewardship instead of a hierarchical
13 task-based management. The board approves the appointment of each committee chairperson,
14 thus exercising a custodial oversight and ensuring appropriate leadership at the committee
15 level.

16 The ISO board's attention is required for matters relating to the overall direction, policy, and
17 financial health of the fellowship. The board's administration and management of these tasks
18 guides both the fellowship and its service to those who still suffer. So they are not overwhelmed
19 by minutiae or distracted from matters of overall policy, the board members rely on committees
20 to carry out the more active functions such as maintaining the website, providing meeting
21 support, planning the annual convention and delegate meeting, publishing literature, and
22 collecting Seventh Tradition donations. Once the board has approved leadership at the
23 committee level, it humbly steps back and allows the committees the autonomy to manage
24 themselves.

25 Within each board committee, this same protocol is practiced. Subcommittees may be formed to
26 fulfil the committee's responsibilities and carry out planned service. The committee chairperson
27 provides gentle oversight while encouraging all members to focus on carrying out their own
28 duties, each to the best of their ability. Again, we are reminded that our leaders are but trusted
29 servants; they do not govern.

30 With too much authority at the top, the COSA organization would be top-heavy and easy to tip
31 over. The foundation could weaken under the pressure. By distributing power and influence

32 among the members of the fellowship, we keep the foundation strong and stable. This Concept
33 helps to prevent the board from exercising too much direct authority over the service work of the
34 fellowship, which in turn makes the jobs of the board members less demanding. It allows both
35 the board and the board committees freedom to use their unique talents and gifts to do their
36 best service.

37 In our daily lives we learn to recognize that we are sometimes obliged to focus on overarching
38 topics and delegate more routine tasks to others. If we are involved in a big project at work, we
39 may need to reach out to an associate for assistance in managing our daily responsibilities. We
40 can depend on our families to help with household chores when we are occupied with a job like
41 doing the taxes or focusing on a career path. Discernment around our need to ask for support
42 helps those around us as well. We can be more accountable and dependable when we are not
43 overburdened by the misconception that we can do it all. When we practice the principles of the
44 Twelve Steps, Traditions, and Concepts in all areas of our lives, we have more energy to share
45 with others, and our friends and family members notice our peaceful demeanors.

46 Our ISO of COSA board members know that they cannot focus on both overall policy and the
47 minutiae of providing the myriad of services offered by the fellowship. They give careful
48 consideration to the approval of chairpersons who will oversee the board committees and then
49 encourage those chairs to safeguard the work of the committees. This application of Concept
50 Eight helps ensure that the planning and administration of COSA works best for everyone.