

1 **Concept Twelve**

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

9 Each year, COSA delegates from around the world join the International Service Organization
10 (ISO) of COSA board for the Annual Delegate Meeting. During this event, the board and
11 delegates elect incoming board members and facilitate any other fellowship business that is due
12 for discussion or resolution. With many individuals coming together for a short time during the
13 meeting of the board and delegates, it is vital that those present adhere to the Traditions and
14 Concepts that guide our groups and service work. No principle can be overlooked when COSA
15 unity is at stake.

16 Generally, the rotation of service positions and the guarantee of traditional rights of decision,
17 participation, and appeal will prohibit unqualified authority from developing. As Tradition Two
18 reminds us, "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern." Even those individuals
19 who prepare for the Annual Delegate Meeting and facilitate it are not in positions of ultimate
20 authority over anyone in attendance. The meeting is a level playing field where all voices,
21 especially those voices in the minority, are valued.

22 Conducting the Annual Delegate Meeting requires human, technical, and financial resources.
23 Because any costs associated with holding the meeting are almost certainly greater than the
24 registration fees collected, the risk of perilous wealth is nearly nonexistent. However, it is very
25 important that adequate funds be held in reserve to ensure future meetings. Because the work
26 of the fellowship is ongoing, any amount of money over the prudent reserve can be directed
27 toward fulfilling COSA's primary purpose of sharing the message with those who still suffer.

28 Concepts One and Two remind us to seek unity and a group conscience whenever possible. In
29 addition, the board has adopted a detailed decision-making process that helps to ensure
30 unanimity and avoid hasty decisions. The traditional rights of decision, participation, and appeal

31 suggested in Concepts Three, Four, and Five also work to keep the balance of power evenly
32 distributed. All delegates and board members who are present for the annual meeting have
33 equal rights in the process of reaching a group conscience on behalf of our fellowship.

34 As members of the COSA fellowship, we need only the guidance offered in the spiritual
35 principles of the program. There is no need for discipline or judgment during the Annual
36 Delegate Meeting, even when emotions are intense and the discussion is passionate. We each
37 know the value of keeping our own side of the street clean and making amends when we are
38 wrong. We keep the focus of the meeting on COSA and issues affecting the fellowship, while
39 respecting our personal and communal anonymity, so that both personal and public conflict are
40 naturally avoided.

41 The COSA Traditions remind us that “personal recovery depends upon COSA unity” and “our
42 leaders...do not govern.” The inverted triangle that illustrates our service structure emphasizes
43 the democratic, self-governing framework of our fellowship. Whether we are gathered in a local
44 meeting or the Annual Delegate Meeting, we are all equals with no experts present. Regardless
45 if one is a newcomer or an old-timer, the principles of our fellowship apply to all with uniformity.
46 Much of our service work is accomplished via committees or groups that are led by trusted
47 servants who do not dictate or manage the tasks at hand. We focus on our common experience
48 and we find hope and healing in COSA, one day at a time.

49 While it is especially important that the tenets expressed in Concept Twelve be observed at the
50 Annual Delegate Meeting, the real power of this Concept is found when it is honored
51 consistently at all times by the board, our board committees, local groups, and ultimately, by the
52 fellowship as a whole.

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