

EA CONNECTION—JANUARY 2016

YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM ISC



FROM YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

The energy from the Fall Convention has carried through with many new efforts being made by members, Trustees and staff to continue to move EA forward. Our biggest announcement is that our new website will be launched very soon. I think you will find it easy to navigate and filled with useful information! It will be a work-in-progress for a little while, so if you get to a page still under construction, just check back later on. The other big announcement is that 2016 is *the Year of Sponsorship* in EA. You will see more information on finding, having, and being a sponsor as we add this important element of the program to the forefront of our efforts. Regardless of whatever is different in the coming year, one thing remains the same: the key driver of this organization is you, the member. Without your support – both financial and your personal efforts—EA can't function. I would ask each of you to think of one thing you might do differently in the coming year to assist EA as a whole. Could you put up meeting flyers in your neighborhood? Invite a friend to attend a meeting with you? Start a new meeting? Find a sponsor? Could you volunteer to join one of the committees of the Board? Organize a Public Information Meeting in your area to attract new members? This organization is ultimately about each and every member and their own personal recovery program—how can you join in the effort to share this message and grow the membership?

Elaine Weber Nelson, Executive Director

JANUARY TOOLS:

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over our emotions - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Promise 1: We realize a new freedom and happiness.

Slogan 1: Let go and let God

Just for Today 1: I will try to live through this day only, not tackling all of my problems at once. I can do something at this moment that would discourage me if I had to continue it for a lifetime.

Tradition 1: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on EA unity.

Helpful Concept 1: We come to EA to learn how to live a new way of life through the 12-step program of Emotions Anonymous which consists of 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, concepts, the Serenity Prayer, slogans, Just for Today's, EA literature, weekly meetings, telephone and personal contacts, and living the program one day at a time. We do not come for another person - we come to help ourselves and to share our experiences, strength, and hope with others.

OF IMPORTANCE TO GROUPS: WE NEED YOUR HELP!

1. The Outreach Committee has developed several radio spots to highlight EA's program. We would like help finding radio stations willing to play the finished 30 second spots as well as topics that the spots would highlight. Email Vicki at EA4RadioSpots@hotmail.com if you're willing to call a few stations and find out if they would play them for us!

2. The Book & Literature Committee is looking for a few additional members! If you are interested, contact Lynne S. at lynnsmith50@hotmail.com. The group meets on the first Friday of each month at 11 a.m. by phone. We expect to publish a Spanish version of the *Today* book soon thanks to a group in Mexico who translated it!

MEMORIALS AND SPECIAL GIFTS:

Memorials are usually in remembrance of an EA member or loved one who has passed on. Special Gifts encompass a whole variety of things all the way from honoring a special person in your life or EA who has made a difference to a celebration of your number of years in the program. These memorial and gifts not only recognize something or someone special in your life but also provide funds to EA so it can continue to carry the message to those who still suffer from emotional problems.



STEP 1: WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER OUR EMOTIONS—THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

I am working Step 1 and my sponsor had me fill out a worksheet as best as possible. It was not as difficult as I thought, but I gave myself several sessions on different days to work on it. There is clarity and no real big surprises. I hope to keep moving forward in working the steps. I sometimes want to speed through tasks in life, but I am being patient and more careful with this process. I am grateful for a sponsor who "has what I want" and who is very busy but also kind, insightful and supportive. I waited a bit to find/ask someone and I am glad. I hope everyone gets to work with a great sponsor or sponsee in their lifetime. Am I a great sponsee? Ummh, I do not think so just yet, but I am trying and it seems to be working...**Cynthia**

I am powerless over my emotions. But, still today as I prayed and meditated I felt empowered by a power greater than myself. When I am weak I am strong, when I lack direction I am shown the way, when all seems lost I can count my blessings. Thankful always for the hand of EA and the hand of God that seems to make all things right. Blessings to all...**Randy**

I am working Step 1 and am having a hard time admitting that I am powerless over my emotions. It makes me feel weak and like a failure if I accept that. I am fully accepting that my life has become unmanageable basically because it has. If I answer the questions in the 12x12 book, will that help me to accept my powerlessness? I am also scared about all the work I have to do to get better. My old way of doing things doesn't work and it's time to make some

changes. I am hoping by working the program those changes will come about if I am willing to do the hard work to get there. My 12-step friend tells me to pray and develop a relationship with my HP. That will take some time but it might help me let go of my Step 1 reservations...**Melodie**

SLOGAN 1: LET GO AND LET GOD

Hopefully tonight I can *let go* of

some of my resentments and give them to God. I will fake it until I can make it. For the people in the program who have experienced widespread pain, you can understand my stubborn state of mind. I have meditated and prayed about the situation for days, but it keeps popping up. It feels as if I am diverting my pain to other people. During the highest levels of pain it is very hard to have compassion for anything or anyone. Finally said enough and took prescription pain medication tonight. It has calmed my body down somewhat.

I realize my anger is toward the pain and not people. I have to find ways to channel this anger because I do not take prescription pain meds often. I do not want to become dependent on them. Heard a word tonight at meditation practice that hit home. Spiritually immature – that's me.

I have to keep honing those skills to be a spiritual person, to be full of good spirit by letting go and letting God...**Betty**

HELPFUL CONCEPT 1: WE COME TO EA TO LEARN HOW TO LIVE A NEW WAY OF LIFE THROUGH THE 12-STEP PROGRAM OF EMOTIONS ANONYMOUS WHICH CONSISTS OF 12 STEPS, 12 TRADITIONS, CONCEPTS, THE SERENITY PRAYER, SLOGANS, JUST FOR

TODAYS, EA LITERATURE, WEEKLY MEETINGS, TELEPHONE AND PERSONAL CONTACTS, AND LIVING THE PROGRAM ONE DAY AT A TIME. WE DO NOT COME FOR ANOTHER PERSON - WE COME TO HELP OURSELVES AND TO SHARE OUR EXPERIENCES, STRENGTH, AND HOPE WITH OTHERS.

One of the helpful concepts that rattles around in my head a lot, is that we do not come to EA to help another person. We come for ourselves.

I am really glad we use the helpful concepts to guide us in meetings. Maybe it is just me. My interpretation of this helpful concept is that I do not drag someone else to my program to get "fixed" by it. I come alone, and I come to work on my part of whatever is going awry in my life.

It means that, to the best of my ability, I don't do anyone else's inventory in what I share, at meetings or here. Damn that it is a tough one. But if I end up analyzing someone else, instead of doing what I need to get well, then I am in their drama all over again.

In my own work here on the loop, there have indeed been times where it was essential for to look at the other side of the fence... the side occupied by my son or my mom or even a member of our program.

I had to do that for a long time with my mom, until I finally figured out how to handle my emotions around her, and not get caught in the tar of mistreatment that she dished out.

This is as I say, tough stuff to do. I am glad that the helpful concepts are not set in stone. They are guidelines, or principles to aim for... as much as is humanly possible...**Victoria**



EA TOOLS APPLIED: ACCEPTANCE



THE SECRET INGREDIENT

I had an amazing conversation with a friend of 20 plus years the other day. This man has, for as long as I've known him has been bitter and negative. He's always been good, and kind with me, but I've been one of the few.

Granted, he's had a lot of really sucky things happen in his 70 years. No elaboration here, but some really bad stuff...things that crushed his dreams repeatedly. He's been treated very badly. And he's been in a deep, VERY deep depression for at least the last 18 months, following surgery for cancer. (Which is in apparently complete remission.)

And yet, when we spoke the other day, he was HAPPY. Genuinely, and gloriously happy. He told me that after all these years, he has discovered the "Secret Ingredient" to happiness. And it was, guess what? Acceptance. He's accepted he can't go back and change the things that have happened to him. That he can't change his current situation except through his words, deeds, and the way he thinks about it.

So, he's accepted it, and he's happier than he's ever been, for as long as I've known him. He's experiencing a new zest for life. His marriage has improved. His health has improved. HE has improved.

I feel so privileged to have witnessed this transformation. To have been a part of it. So many times he's told me that he's like Old Man River"...tired of living but scared of dying. Now he's not tired of living, and not scared of dying. He now knows first hand that acceptance is a beautiful, life transforming thing.

I'd like to include a quote here from my psychiatrist, who is one of the most caring, wise men I know. "Much of the pain in life comes from having a life plan that you've fallen in love with, and when it doesn't work out, you become angry that you now have to pursue a different life plan."

Well, that's me, and that's also my friend. My life plan most certainly did NOT include two chronic illnesses. Nor did it include having all my children living hundreds or thousands of miles away from me.

The December 1 reading in our Today book says in part, "Make plans but don't plan the results." Acceptance when the results are not what I wanted or expected is, I believe, the Secret Ingredient."...**Kim**

PEACE FOUND

I think that I have finally found peace. With acceptance comes peace. If I try and fight my anxiety without leaning on my Higher Power, it doesn't work. If I just let go and let God. It works. I owe it all to my Higher Power...**Brandon**

GROWING WHERE I AM PLANTED

There are many things I have learned along this recovery path which have helped me to live at peace with my depression and my choices in life. I have learned from the many consequences these choices have brought into my life and am very grateful for them. Before my years in recovery began I'd spend a lot of time in the "could and should" game of life. I had a victim mentality and thought that God was sitting up in heaven ready to heave on more misery to me when I was bad. Ugh...I continued to make choices from this mentality and always ended up on the dirty end of the stick and blamed God for this and wanted Him to save me from myself.

One of the very true sentences in this program which has stood the test of time is "pain is inevitable, suffering is optional." No matter what happens we are going to get sick and die someday. It does not matter whether we live a healthy life or a sick life we are not getting out of here without doing some suffering. Now, I can choose to do it either with a victim mentality which will cause me lots more additional suffering or I can choose to do it with an idea that I can learn something from this experience. The choice is mine.

Acceptance is a big part of the recovery process. I have learned through these many years of practicing it that it is true. The more I can accept the fact that life is exactly where it is, the more I can accept my life as it is and not how I want it to be. The more resistance I bring to any situation the more difficult I will make it. Resistance does not breed acceptance, it only breeds more strong will which drives out our HP and leaves our ego in full charge. I don't know about other folks but for me when my "ego" (easing God out) becomes my driver I usually end up in a bad place.

I really dislike learning valuable lessons of life at my present age.

I have learned that life is a series of adjustments. Adjustments require patience and tolerance. The more I can find opportunities of growth in these adjustments, the more I will be able to find peace, love and joy living inside of me which translates to finding them outside of me. Does this mean that my life will always be filled with love and light - no, it will come and go. I can live with it today because I have learned to grow where I am planted...**Paul**

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SLOGAN 1: LET GO AND LET GOD

TODAY BOOK—AUGUST 30

I never understood why my life was so unrewarding, or what it meant to “let go” until EA taught me that the opposite of “Let go and let God” is like driving through life with the emergency brake on. Everything is harder except for complete stops, which correspond to my periods of total withdrawal. After driving a while, though, friction builds up inside, and my brakes smoke angrily. I push harder and harder on the gas, yet less and less gets done. Finally, the brakes may wear out altogether and I go wildly out of control, causing chaos all around me.

THOUGHTS FROM YOUR TRUSTEES : Truly, this bit of wisdom is probably the most difficult thing for me to do in my entire life. My parents taught to be self-reliant, and I have always been independent—but that has only made it difficult for me to be a team player, and now for me to submit to my Higher Power. Wow; what a lifestyle change! But it is worth it. My HP has consistently protected me in ways far, far greater than I could anticipate, or even imagine. Try it, it works...**Tyrell** Letting go is a result of realizing you're in control and floundering. You make a conscious effort to drop the reins and let God take control of your life. It worked for me!...**Vince** What does it mean? Simply put, letting go should be seen as an alternative to control: of people, of events, of things. The more I attempt to control the less connected I become. Remaining focused on who I am allows me to be who I am. Me, not God!...**Gus** Holiday preparations, anticipation of guests, calls for service, etc., provide opportunities to strengthen one's Higher Power connection. The busier I get, the more time I set aside for meditation, just to function. This time out with my creator proves to be so helpful, I remember to visit more often with him or her. Thus intimacy has developed, helping me to trust enough to let go...**Phyllis** The reason I need “Let go and let God” is because I hold tightly to things that I know my H.P. wants me to release. It's a “sweet release” to trust that I don't have to stress about things that are not meant to be controlled. EA teaches me to depend on the wisdom-strength of a Being that can handle things too large for me to handle—accepting things I cannot change. The theme song of Frozen is a fresh reminder to “let it go, let it go”...**Scott** Let Go and Let God is the total phrase of this slogan. Too many of us, myself included, get the first part, but ignore the second half. It's important to remember that when you let it go, you are willingly giving it up to a “Higher Power” and not just stuffing it, because it has no else place to go, but within! Let Go and Let (Surrender it to) God! ...**Lynne**

EVENTS FAR & NEAR

If you have an event you would like listed here please send your information to :
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