

Reflections on Tradition 3

Tradition 3: The only requirement for EA membership is a desire to become well emotionally.

For me and many of us in the US, springtime is tax time. If we earn more than a certain amount, we are required to report our income, and, if we owe taxes, we’re required to pay them. This is one of those many requirements of being an adult. There’s a requirement for EA membership also, but it has more to do with our desire to join others in seeking the serenity and emotional sanity we want so desperately. This sounds simple, but takes some thought. In my recovery, intentions have been important. Am I sure I don’t desire to try to control or enable others? Do I want to play the hero and save others? Am I looking for others to serve as my unpaid therapists? Do I secretly desire attention, political discourse, or religious instruction? If so, EA is not the place for me. But if what I really want is an emotional connection to others like myself with the intent of getting better, I’m in the right place... — Colleen C., *EAI Trustee*

It doesn’t matter who we are or what we have done, we are always welcome to attend an EA meeting; no strings attached; no judgment. Why are we always welcome? Because we have a deep desire to become well emotionally. Period! But walking through the door that first time takes courage. It took me three attempts to walk into my first meeting, simply because I was afraid of meeting the voice I had first encountered on a telephone call. I was terrified of meeting the person behind the voice or perhaps I didn’t know who I might see and perhaps be judged. Actually, the person behind the voice and others in the room were happy, comfortable about who they were and indeed welcoming. More than that I felt at home and experienced a sense of family within the group. If you happened across this issue of the EA Connection while simply surfing the internet, I hope that you will have the courage to attend your first EA Meeting as a result of reading this and other reflections on EA’s Tradition 3. Thanks for stopping by! — Gus S., *EAI President*

When I came to EA, I was emotionally and spiritually bankrupt. Moreover, I was on the verge of losing my job, which would have resulted in my being physically/financially tapped out as well. In the beginning I couldn’t do much more than get to meetings. If there had been more required of me, I may have stopped coming and felt defeated that here’s one more thing that I couldn’t succeed in; and who knows where that sort of thinking would have led me? I was relieved then and grateful now that that was the only requirement for EA membership... — Derita P., *EAI Trustee*

Having the sole requirement of desiring to be well emotionally in order to be a member of EA means that all of us can belong to the EA movement and move towards relationship wholeness and mental health. All it takes is for us to be sick of being emotionally troubled. If we prefer remaining emotionally troubled, or are fearful of moving ahead, we stay in the pattern of mental illness that makes life unmanageable for us. Being an EA member is like being a member of a greater whole, each of us playing an important role in the EA fellowship while working this simple program of emotional recovery... — Scott J., *EAI Vice President/Treasurer*