

The Board of Trustees of Emotions Anonymous International, like many 12-Step Fellowships, has identified the need to provide additional clarity about the types of meetings available. This is to make it easier for people who have an interest in a particular meeting to find what best meets their needs. To this end, the Board of Trustees has developed standard definitions of "Closed" and "Open" meetings. This effort, along with other commonly used definitions from other 12-step fellowships was done to strengthen EA as a whole while at the same time maintaining group autonomy. Each group can decide if they want to use the definitions in their meeting descriptions. There will be examples of the agreed-upon meeting definitions that will be shared with the Fellowship in the next few months and a pamphlet is being created as well. If questions arise as you learn more about the definitions, please the Board of Trustees or the EAI Director.

"Why is it important to define what kind of meeting I am attending? This is a common question, and the answer is found in our 4th Tradition. "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or EA as a whole." Many will contact a trustee or the EAI office and ask "How do I know if I am at an approved EA Meeting?" "I went to a meeting and no one even read the 12 Steps, are groups allowed to not even read the 12 Steps?" The most unsettling question that I have heard is "How do I know that the meeting is safe and it's not open to the public or professionals?" EAI has not officially defined the types of meetings that are available. It has been left up to the individual groups to construct a script for their meeting. It has been an "honor system" as to if the Helpful Concepts, Traditions, and Steps are being read and upheld in a meeting.

It has been decided that with the increase in calls questioning how to navigate individual meetings; it is time to give more structured guidelines for the meetings to identify themselves to the newcomer, professional, student, and support systems. The intent is not to dictate the scripts that are to be used in a meeting. It is an attempt to create a safe environment for everyone who attends an EA meeting by being transparent with some simple definitions.

Here is a list of the types of meetings a person can find in most approved 12-Step Fellowships.

- 1) Closed Meeting: The meeting is reserved for people who identify with Tradition 3. The only requirement for EA membership is a desire to become well emotionally.
- 2) Open Meeting: The meeting is open to observers, professionals, and family and friends who want to learn more about EA. Members are welcome to attend both Closed and Open Meetings.
- 3) Step Study: These meetings will focus on reading the EA Step Literature and applying it to their recovery.
- 4) Tradition Study: These meetings will focus on reading the EA Tradition Literature and applying it to their recovery.
- 5) Speciality Meeting: These meetings will focus on a common experience between the members that is unique. Examples: Military, Men, Women, PTSD, Medical Conditions, Grief, LGBTQ, BIPOC, etc. These groups still uphold Tradition 10. Emotions Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the EA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy. These meetings are created to allow for safety and not as responses to politics, religion, national, or international issues, conversations, or opinions of the labels themselves. These meetings can also focus on a particular Step such as a Step 11 Prayer and Meditation meeting.
- 6) Topic Meeting: These meetings will focus on topics with approved literature and focus on personal recovery.

7) Workbook Meeting: These meetings will use approved EA Literature that is in a workbook format.

Each Group will need to decide as a group if they want to be listed as an Open or Closed Meeting. The Group will also need to discern which meeting description fits them the best. It is also highly recommended to start a new meeting with at least three people because it is pretty much impossible to practice and model fellowship without others. If you have questions about where to find others to start a meeting; attend other open 12-step meetings and experience fellowship for yourself and ask questions.