



The EA Connection: September 2018



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EA TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

TRADITION 9: EA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

HELPFUL CONCEPT 9: We utilize the program, we do not analyze it. Understanding comes with experience. Each day we apply some part of the program to our personal lives.

PROMISE 9: Our relationships with other people improve.

JFT 9: Just for today I will have a quiet time of meditation wherein I shall think of my Higher Power, of myself, and of my neighbor. I shall relax and seek truth.

SLOGAN 9: This too shall pass.

Looking Toward Fall

Here in Minnesota, we see the seasons change four times each year. It is a nice reminder that nothing stays the same for long and that we need to take advantage of what each new season brings. So too, every organization needs to be willing to change if it wants to continue serving its mission in the best ways possible. At EA, new opportunities to take advantage of technology continue to appear – the website revision two years ago allowed easier access to information; compiling email addresses in an email provider (Mail Chimp) provided a cheap and simple method to share news with members; moving files onto the cloud allows easier sharing and less duplication among staff and trustees. We've also seen staffing changes this year. Mary and Bobbie Jo decided to move on and we are grateful for the service they provided. Sandy Wells has taken on the financial management responsibilities for EA and Claire Horton has picked up some of the website management as well as other technological and organizational pieces that have been waiting in the wings. We are lucky to have both of them. (Carleen and I are still here too!) EA has seen substantial new interest by members to write new literature, serve on committees, form new groups, offer suggestions for changes that make it easier to spread the word about the program, financially support the organization, and many other ways. Everything truly bodes well for EA's future.



And speaking of the future, the Annual Business Meeting is coming up on Saturday, October 6. The main discussion topic will be "How to generate more involvement in the EA program –A Focus on Step 12." At last year's Meeting we were able to use technology that allowed people to participate from across the U.S. and Canada; we plan to do the same this year. The agenda is available on the website and we chose to hold the meeting on a Saturday in hopes that more people will be able to attend – either on the phone or in person.

I look forward to seeing and hearing from our membership – both at the upcoming Annual Meeting and in regular communication. If you have ideas for strengthening the organization, please get in touch – given my very limited office hours, email is the best way to reach me - director@emotionsanonymous.org – but I'm always happy to arrange a phone call as well... *Elaine Weber Nelson, Executive Director*

SPECIALS GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

THIS AREA IS RESERVE FOR SPECIAL GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

RECOVERY USING THE TOOLS OF EA

STEP 9: MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.

As I reflect on making amends, I recall what someone tried to teach me a long time ago. This person said that what God wants more than anything else is for me to be happy. God wants to please me, to take care of me, to watch over me, to help me. And that what makes God sad is when we turn our backs on Him. Needless to say, I was in no shape to hear this—much less embrace it. I was deep in a “If God is so great, why am I and so many others so very unhappy!!!.

Today, I am more open to considering whether or not this is true. I still don't really understand it or believe it, but I think about it a lot. And I pray dearly for the ability to feel and experience this in my life.

I also reflect that, if this is true, then I need to make amends to God for shunning Him for years, decades. Labeling me “The Prodigal Son” would be an understatement. I am more like the fallen angel.

In some ways, I so very much want the opportunity to make amends to God—for that would mean his love for me is vast and waiting...*Chris*

Step Nine introduced me to the concept of making amends. The person I needed to make the most amends to was myself.

This step was a beginning of a process where I ever so gradually changed my thinking from negative to positive.

This work helped me to have a lot more self-esteem. Although my emotions can still be quite strong, I can wait them out. I know they'll calm down and I don't need to take any action. The more consistently I work the steps, the healthier my thoughts, actions, and life becomes.

Carol

Today Book, January 12

REFLECTION FOR TODAY

I became more mannerly and stopped thinking it was all right to hurt people around me. It became easier to say things such as, “Excuse me. I didn't mean to bump into you.” I became aware that there were others around me as sensitive as I was. As Step Nine suggests, I began to make direct amends to people I had harmed whenever it was possible. Fear and pride made it difficult at first, and I had to be willing to risk. It became easier as my apologies were accepted. Some people had died and others had moved away, so I asked God to help with those amends. Making amends releases guilt feelings.

MEDITATION FOR TODAY

God, please grant me the courage, honesty, and good sense to enable me to sincerely and lovingly apologize, including to myself.

TODAY I WILL REMEMBER

Everybody can be hurt, including me.

SLOGAN 9: THIS TOO SHALL PASS.

I always believed in God and talked to Him each day, but I was lost. On the darkest days and hours. I'd say, “Please God make this my last day

on earth. I can't kill myself because it will hurt and I don't like pain.”

A friend suggested EA. I not only joined EA. I also, joined AA. Both, together, have given me many years of happiness, joy, pain, and awareness to my unmanageable character defects and HOW to live serene. No matter what people, places or things may come my way. So glad I listened when members told me, *This too Shall Pass...Anonymous*

JUST FOR TODAY 9: I WILL HAVE A QUIET TIME OF MEDITATION WHEREIN I SHALL THINK OF MY HIGHER POWER, OF MYSELF, AND OF MY NEIGHBOR. I SHALL RELAX AND SEEK TRUTH.

A quiet time of meditation—rarely do I take the time to do that. Yet, when I do, the rewards are great.

My meeting last night was on Step 9. I walked into my small group with a heavy heart, just too much sadness right now. But the group did what it always does. It brought me to a quiet place where I could listen and absorb what the others had to say about the Step, as I reflected on my Higher Power, myself and the members of my group.

I left feeling renewed. I have learned over the years that that quiet place of peace and serenity is always there. I just need to take the time to relax into it and listen to the quiet...*Karen*



DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA: DEPRESSION

REMEMBERING

I remember very much when I was extremely depressed....it lasted so many months...and I did not function.... and I wanted to die all the time. I have the steps in my life and they have helped me have a program....no matter what. The steps have helped me not get to "that place" anymore. For this, I am always appreciative and really quite overwhelmed. I do however still have downward trends in my thinking and I do need the strength at these times to turn my thoughts to the positive. I am very grateful to my HP and EA for reminding me of this and being here to remind me that there is always something to be positive about. I really have learned, thanks to EA, to put little joys in my life and to seek them, no matter what...like my morning coffee, my plants, my animals, the birds, weather, other people's joys (even when I feel none in my own life...theirs can be contagious for me). Thank you for listening...**Kelly**

A BAD PLACE

I haven't been in a good place. There are situational things that I'm dealing with, and I also noticed I missed taking my medicine for 3 days. So I'm sure that had an effect on how I was handling the situational things... at any rate, it's been a very emotionally hard week. I haven't felt this depressed in a couple of years. I've been doing a lot of taking things one hour at a time. I know my thoughts are unhealthy right now so thinking about things is the worst thing I can do. I'm trying to stay busy...hanging things on my walls, watching a movie, going to an art festival, cleaning my fridge. I try to stay moving, stay on task, do not indulge in the thoughts.

Of course when a task ends, my feelings take over and I cry. I got back from the art festival yesterday and cried because it was so dissatisfying. I feel like nothing matters and what is the point of doing anything. I cried. But then I did another task. That's how I've been making it through the days, because nothing does matter right now, but I have a tiny bit of faith that something will matter again.

I've been isolating from friends. I don't want to talk about feeling depressed. talking about it keeps me in it. I need to do things and turn my brain off until these feelings pass--they will pass. In the mean time, I don't want to give them power by putting words to them. People want to know what's wrong. They want to help and fix and offer ideas for how I can make myself well again. But I know that I'm powerless over my emotions, and I just have to let them run their course. So I've been avoiding my friends. I've still been trying to get out into the community though--get groceries, check out a local festival. Still trying to keep a foot in the real world while my mind goes rogue.

It's easy to cause drama from this mental state. It's easy to blame others for not loving me enough, for example, I want to call everyone out in my life who has let me down in some way and show them this is what's become of me! I'm my own worst enemy at the moment so I feel like I'm trying to keep myself away from my life so I don't mess things up. I just need to wait out the feelings and they will pass. I will be okay again. The other crazy thing is that this is so familiar and weirdly comfortable. As much as I reject it I welcome it. Depression is like an old friend who sleeps on your couch and won't leave and makes you crazy but you know you always have someone to do stuff with...**Sarah**

GRATEFUL

I'm very grateful to have found The Loop because, although I am in another 12-step program that changed my life miraculously, I still suffer from bouts of depression and anxiety. In my other 12-step program, I've struggled to understand fully the concept of "bondage of self." I didn't want to understand it intellectually; I wanted to see clearly how it was operating in my life. Today I considered that my depression and anxiety are exactly what "bondage of self" means in my life, and that when I ask my Higher Power to relieve me from the bondage of self, I am asking to have my depression, anxiety and self-pity relieve.

I love the idea that to ask my HP for freedom from the bondage of self means to ask for relief from my depression and anxiety. Until now, I thought perhaps it meant that I should refrain from doing nice things for myself...**Susan**



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THE 12 PRINCIPLES—JUSTICE

In the early 1950's Twelve Steps groups began informally sharing what has become known as the Principles of the 12 Steps. Each step has a corresponding principle that one can keep in mind when working the steps. Below members share how Justice factors into Step 9 for them.

STEP 9: MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.

The pursuit of justice means striving to do what is right, fair and proper at all times. Many of us in EA have had real issues of Anger, Resentment and Control for instance. The tools of our program help us realize the pain our behavior, both selfish and destructive, has caused others and ourselves. My working the program has helped me look at many issues in my life and have brought about much peace and serenity, both vital for healthy loving living. At the same time, I can with honesty say that the Promises have become a reality, especially realizing a new freedom and happiness; not regretting the past or wishing to shut the door on it, and realizing that God is doing for me what I could not do for myself. Our program works if we work it, and it won't if we don't! so, let's work it!...**Gus**

Justice is about having things be "set right" - justified. If something's wrong (there's an injustice), I correct it. If there's something lacking, I satisfy/provide what's missing – if possible. Justice-work is related to making amends in step 9. I seek justice correctly when, in making amends, if I focus primarily on making amends for my sake, instead of for the sake of the other person. The thing that is wrong or missing is the way I am relating to myself – the guilt, remorse, and shame. I can correct how I think about myself, when it comes to how I hurt others, by either making amends to them or by making my amends to another person if there's a reason I am not able to make amends to the person I hurt. Justice is all about me being free from the guilt I feel and then having peace by making amends. ...**Scott**

IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT

Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. the AA Big Book is very specific about the benefits of this very difficult step. It says that as **justice** is served via the amends process, some or all of The Twelve Promises will come true for us. Just a few of those promises are: realizing a new freedom and happiness, not regretting the past or wishing to shut the door on it, comprehending the word "serenity" and knowing peace of mind, and realizing that God is doing for us what we could not do ourselves... From EA's It Works if You Work It Book, page 44*

OF IMPORTANCE TO GROUPS

- 1—Some groups are being asked for insurance at the location of their meeting, note ISC doesn't provide insurance.
- 2—Let ISC know if your planning a special event so we can put it on our online Events Calendar. Notices to Elaine.
- 3—Correct information on the website listing is important!. Email groupdata@emotionsanonymous.org with updates.
- 4—The Loop (EAnon) is our online discussion forum. Click here more information on the EAnon.

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