



THE EA CONNECTION: JUNE 2019

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EA TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP 6: WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.

TRADITION 6: AN EA GROUP OUGHT NEVER ENDORSE, FINANCE OR LEND THE EA NAME TO ANY RELATED FACILITY OR OUTSIDE ENTERPRISE, LEST PROBLEMS OF MONEY, PROPERTY AND PRESTIGE DIVERT US FROM OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE.

SLOGAN 6: LOOK FOR THE GOOD.

PROMISE 6: WE HAVE LESS CONCERN ABOUT SELF AND GAIN INTEREST IN OTHERS.

JUST FOR TODAY 6: I WILL TRY TO GO OUT OF MY WAY TO BE KIND TO SOMEONE I MEET. I WILL BE CONSIDERATE, TALK LOW, AND LOOK AS GOOD AS I CAN. I WILL NOT ENGAGE IN UNNECESSARY CRITICISM OR FINDING FAULT, NOR TRY TO IMPROVE OR REGULATE ANYBODY EXCEPT MYSELF.

CONCEPT 6: WE NEVER DISCUSS RELIGION, POLITICS, NATIONAL OR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, OR OTHER BELIEF SYSTEMS OR POLICIES. EA HAS NO OPINION ON OUTSIDE ISSUES.

A “Healthy Group” Checkup

“Our common welfare should come first; Personal recovery depends on EA unity.” – Tradition One

In my experience with the program, healthy EA groups are like healthy people – they get check-ups once in a while to stay well. One way to do a check-up is to review the [Best Practices for Productive Meetings](#) and to follow that with a group inventory meeting. The Best Practices information is free and includes such meeting recommendations as:

Meetings start and end on time.

No cross-talk is allowed.

There are no discussions of religion or politics during the meeting time.

No single individual is identified as a meeting ‘manager’; responsibilities are shared among group members in a manner that is agreed upon and suits the individual group.

The [Group Inventory](#) one-pager is \$.40 and can be ordered on our literature-for-purchase site. The inventory asks members to answer questions about their view of the group, and then to share the answers either in writing or in person at a group inventory meeting.

Some groups find it helpful to schedule these meetings once every four to six months, just before or after their usual meeting time. Others prefer to have some group health discussions during the business section of their meetings on a biweekly or monthly basis. Either way, the purpose is to generate discussion about things you believe your group does well, and areas where you’d like to make improvements.

As you work through your Healthy Group checkup, remember that, “... our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.” However mutual respect of all members, especially those who may have started the group or those with important roles in keeping the group functioning, is critical.

I was grateful that someone was there when I walked through the doors of my first EA meeting 35 years ago. With careful care and attention to group health, someone will be there when all the newcomers of the future walk into their first meetings, too....*Colleen C, EA Board of Trustees, Secretary*

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RECOVERY USING THE TOOLS OF EA

STEP 6: WERE ENTIRELY READY TO HAVE GOD REMOVE ALL THESE DEFECTS OF CHARACTER.

Six months ago I completed Step 6 with my sponsor. At least I thought I did but have found that we never really "finish" a step. We keep them with us as "tools" to use throughout life. I even felt "entirely ready" to have ALL of my character defects removed. And yet I found that I still clung to some. I didn't even understand why I wanted or needed them.

Today, I can see my character assets beginning to blossom. With my HP's help, I am feeling more comfortable in my own skin and with who I am and who I am becoming. EA is really a gift! EA is like someone putting you in front of a mirror and allowing you to face yourself, your imperfections, character defects, and telling you that you are no longer alone. That you don't have to suffer anymore, there is a way out. That you are worthy of love, living life, happiness, serenity, kindness, help and freedom from emotional pain. "Stinking thinking" is like looking at yourself through a distorted mirror. It's not real and causes so much pain seeing ourselves that way. It hasn't been and still isn't an easy journey but its been getting better as I learn through my mistakes to find healthier alternatives. I am stronger than yesterday but not as strong as I will be tomorrow. All it takes is willingness to try...*Denise*



I have struggled a lot with self-pity in my life and most of the time, I didn't even realize it. I felt sorry for myself, when others gave me sympathy, I felt better. One of the **Today** book reflections talks about feeling so sorry for ourselves that we cannot see the world around us. That was me for sure. When I first got into recovery in another 12-step program, I was unable to see that others were hurting as much, if not more, than I was—I felt that I had been dealt the worst hand ever, and that's how I thought, how I talked to myself and others.



I didn't know that there was a difference between feeling sorry for myself and feeling bad. When I felt sorry for myself, I said, "I hate my life, I hate everything about it, and nobody has it worse than I do." When I felt bad or sad, I found that I could say, "I hate my life today, and that's how I honestly feel. But I know it will pass, and until it does, it's ok for me to admit it, and maybe be kind to myself while I'm feeling this way." Working Step 6 with a sponsor helped me see self-pity as a character defect, and helped me to ask my higher power for help with it. I couldn't wish it away! Or stuff it or ignore it.

Grateful for EA, which has helped me learn that my feelings are not bad or wrong, and that I'm not bad or wrong for having them, that all feelings are ok, and that even though they are not all pleasant, they can all help guide me in their own way...*Gail*

SLOGAN 6: LOOK FOR THE GOOD.

I live in northern California, and we

had a big storm here. It was especially loud last night with lots of rain and high winds. At first I was getting a bit scared in the night, but then I remembered our slogan "Look for the good." I started to think of the good things in my life such as sleeping in a warm bed in a warm rental home that is sturdy and safe. Turning on my little computer tablet and putting on some beautiful music that calmed me. Having a Higher Power belief that can calm me when reach out to that Power and ask for help. Saying a prayer helps comfort me, too.



I have been daily watching for the little and big miracles in my life and am seeing many of them. Even being diagnosed with mental health labels, I have still lived my life medication-free and with more sanity than insanity due to the 12-step way of life, talk therapy and having a desire to be well emotionally. A doctor said I had to be on medication for the rest of my life. Luckily, with lots of help from our program, doctors, and professionals, that was not the case.

Another miracle is that even though my marriage did not work out, I still managed to raise my two kids as a single mom. They are now 23 and 26, and they are my loving family that I am so grateful for. That is a huge miracle, and I know my Higher Power was with me all the way and still with me helping me. Today I have the things I need and some of my wants. That is a lot to be grateful for as I continue to look for the good in my life...*Connie*

DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA

TODAY BOOK: JUNE 5

TOO OFTEN I AGONIZE OVER A PROBLEM AS IF ALL SOLUTIONS DEPEND ONE ME. I TRY TO ANTICIPATE WHAT TO DO AND WHAT TO SAY. I SEEM TO HAVE TO TORMENT MYSELF A WHILE BEFORE I REMEMBER IT IS NO ALL UP TO ME. GOD CAN HELP ME AND IS WILLING TO DO SO, BUT I HAVE TO ASK. OFTEN I "DISCOVER" THE SOLUTION QUITE SOON AFTER I ASK. HOW WONDERFUL TO HAVE SUCH A FRIEND TO RELY ON.

I CAN CHOOSE



I have written about my extreme anxiety, and some of you have responded with personal emails encouraging me, for which I am very grateful. Today's RFT is "We often take on the problems of the world. We let our feelings of despair overpower us." It goes on about so much despair in the world situations and allowing people and situations to instill in us fear, anger, defeat, and hopelessness. "I can choose who and what I listen to."

Today I choose to listen to you, my dear friends, who share from your heart honest, true feelings of where you are in your daily life, the hurts and pain as well as the encouragement and hope you share. Today I choose to listen to my inner voice telling me that this anxiety does not define me. I proved to myself over the weekend that I can get out and do things in spite of those feelings and not die.

Today I choose to be ever so grateful for all of you, for my wonderful doctor, for my job, for my car that keeps on running, for my mother who is always a long distance phone call away ready to listen, for my nephew who is now honorably discharged from the Marines and out of danger (Hoo-Rah), for the gentle breeze today, and especially grateful to my HP who never fails me even if I feel I fail Him. My days are minute by minute sometimes, but I am grateful to be here and alive and doing what I need to do to keep on going. Sometimes I slide backwards but for today I am grateful for those minute -by-minute challenges...*Pat S*

HIGH ANXIETY



I am experiencing a period of serenity despite high anxiety and stress levels last week. Instead of reacting to my anxiety and trying to control it, I practiced acceptance by paying attention to what it was like to have high anxiety. It feels weird not to do anything in response to anxiety. But I am sure that has been contributing to my sense of serenity in recent time. I know life takes many forms, so I am going to enjoy living with serenity while it is here. I am grateful that EA has shown me that serenity is a possible state of mind, even when it is not permanent...*Sarah*

FEELINGS OF DOOM

I am a person who has anxiety. The same type that many people on the Loop have. That awful feeling of dread—sometimes panic. But right now I am dealing with a different kind of anxiety since I am having to consider the possibility of my son having cancer. This is a feeling of doom. Makes all the other anxiety pale in comparison. Makes me only wish I could have my normal anxiety right now—worrying about everything like I do, silly things like making it somewhere on time, or did I make a mistake on my taxes, or all the minutia of life.

If I get through this scary time, I hope I remember that all the little worries/anxieties are pretty unnecessary. And I need to let go and let God now and always. Really all I can do is pray.

It is weekend and I don't have work or work friends to support me for two days. My husband is away. I am having to get through one minute at a time. And try to make my son's birthday on Sunday something pleasant. I know you are all out there, and that is helpful. Biopsy is Tuesday...*Claire*

ACCOUNTABILITY



When I'm very overwhelmed, frustrated and near tears, I can be destructive. It's very hard to admit, but I know I need to hold myself accountable. I've been having many good days, and today was my first real bad day in a while. I couldn't find something, and the more I looked, the more aggravated I got. I really hate this about myself. I feel like I lose control sometimes and become basically "insane." I want my sanity back! I've forgiven myself, given myself time to calm down and recognize I have to be aware of this powerlessness at all times. I realize my mistake was not accepting I just couldn't find it, that it was no big deal and not allowing myself to step back and calm down. It also didn't help that I felt like I was in an oven and sweating profusely. And I guess it's also shameful because its such minor that cause me so much frustration. I'm actually calmer in more serious situations.

Thank you for listening and letting me get that out and hold myself accountable. God, help me to remember to pause when I'm agitated...*Denise*

2018 – 2019 EA Board of Trustees

Please feel free to contact members of the Board with questions or concerns.



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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

The 12 Traditions are the guidelines by which our group and our fellowship function. They have proven over the years to be an effective way of holding the fellowship and individual groups together.

TRADITION 6: AN EA GROUP OUGHT NEVER ENDORSE, FINANCE OR LEND THE EA NAME TO ANY RELATED FACILITY OR OUTSIDE ENTERPRISE LEST PROBLEMS OF MONEY, PROPERTY AND PRESTIGE DIVERT US FROM OUR PRIMARY PURPOSE.

The primary purpose of EA is to aid people by offering a twelve-step program of recovery, creating connection and offering resources for mental wellness and emotional health. We read in Tradition 6 and in other key EA messages to never divert from helping others to deal with their lives differently. We want to support others so that they no longer have to suffer with emotional problems. Any diverting issue prevents us from having a laser-like focus on helping others. I ask that my H.P. help me and others to always focus on helping as many people as possible in this endeavor and to not get diverted along the way...*Scott J, President, EA Board of Trustees*



FROM OUR BOOKS

IT WORKS IF YOU WORK IT—PAGE 55



Tradition Six tells us, Keep it simple. It would be easy to make EA into a big business, endorsing home healthcare products or vitamins or certain types of psychotherapy, but that invites trouble. We are a loosely organized, extremely focused group that works best when we concentrate on helping those seeking emotional wellness. For some of us, money, property, and prestige are among the many egocentric things that brought us to EA. Balancing the cares and concerns of the outside world, in addition to concentrating on being there for new EA members, is stretching our recovery, and our fellowship, too thin. Pursuing our primary purpose is our highest and best calling.

EA's 12 By 12—page 32

It is very tempting to think EA could help more people in their emotional recovery or greatly increase its financial security by operating clinics, endorsing self-help books, or supporting other mental health projects. However, the early experiences of A.A. demonstrate that such endeavors would only detract from EA's main purpose. A.A. members thought they could start businesses and work for social change to further help alcoholics to recover. A.A. groups were thrown into turmoil as some members vied for position and prestige by running hospitals as a way to spread their twelve-step program. Controversy developed among members over which treatment centers or methods to endorse. They worked for legal reforms, only to find themselves mired in politics. Many members' recovery was jeopardized by such conflicts and chaos.

A.A. finally decided it was best for them to stick with what they did best, which was to share the twelve-step program, and leave the rest to others. They learned that A.A. was better off to give up the potential money, property, and prestige. Their continued sobriety and the possible sobriety of other alcoholics was much more important than all those other things.

What happened to A.A. could happen to EA if it involved itself in outside activities. The risk of clouding the EA message and confusing the public and newer members about EA's main purpose would not be worth the gain. It would take time away from what EA was founded to do.

Tradition Six protects our unity, enables EA to avoid many problems, and keeps us focused on our primary purpose. (closing sentence from *EA's 12 By 12* on Tradition 6)

The complete text can be found in EA's 12 By 12, available for purchase on our web site

