



THE EA CONNECTION: MARCH 2019

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EA TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP 3: MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS *WE UNDERSTOOD HIM*.

TRADITION 3: THE ONLY REQUIREMENT FOR EA MEMBERSHIP IS A DESIRE TO BECOME WELL EMOTIONALLY.

SLOGAN 3: ONE DAY AT A TIME.

PROMISE 3: WE COMPREHEND THE WORD *SERENITY*, AND WE KNOW PEACE OF MIND.

JUST FOR TODAY 3: I WILL TRY TO ADJUST MYSELF TO WHAT IS AND NOT FORCE EVERYTHING TO ADJUST TO MY OWN DESIRES.

I WILL ACCEPT MY FAMILY, MY FRIENDS, MY BUSINESS, MY CIRCUMSTANCES AS THEY COME.

CONCEPT 3: WE RESPECT ANONYMITY—NO QUESTIONS ASKED. WE AIM FOR AN ATMOSPHERE OF LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE.

WE DO NOT CARE WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT YOU HAVE DONE. YOU ARE WELCOME.

FROM YOUR EA BOARD OF TRUSTEES: MARCH MADNESS

In Emotions Anonymous we work as a team to recover from a seemingly hopeless state of mind. We are a fellowship, a community. People from all walks of life come to EA looking for a solution to their mental anguish. My life became unmanageable when I tried to do everything on my own. EA introduced me to a power greater than myself. Obviously I needed something more powerful than me. I had no power to get out of the rut I was in. The harder I tried to change things, the worse matters got. The people at the EA meetings were very nice. They listened to all of my problems. They said I was the most important person in the room. I said to myself, "Really, you all really believe that about me." They brought me in out of the cold world I believed I lived in. Thank you EA! *Derita P.*

NEWCOMER ORIENTATION

As a newcomer to our meeting, we wish to extend a warm welcome to you. If this is your first 12-step meeting, we applaud you for your courage. Every one of us attended a 12-step meeting for the first time, and we know it can be intimidating. Our goal here is to ensure that this is a safe place for everyone to both share and listen. We find we can accomplish this by practicing the following principles:

I LANGUAGE

It's the language that's spoken when sharing. Please avoid making "you" or "we" statements. Newcomers may find this difficult to do at first, but they usually find they can comfortably adapt to it after a few meetings. "I" language is used even when expressing the obvious. Therefore, while a statement like, "We all need to take care of our bodies," might be perceived as lecturing, the problem is avoided if expressed as "I need to take care of my body." We also use "I" language because recovery involves taking responsibility for one's own life and thoughts. Saying "you" or "we" is a way to avoid taking full responsibility.

EA's Newcomer Orientation, available on our website: Item 27

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SPECIALS GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

In memory of Thomas S, he will be missed by all: Debra S , NJ

In memory of Leroy P, trusted servant:

Anna H, TX - Karen P, Carrollton, TX - Laura B, Dallas, TX - Lila H, Esko, MN





RECOVERY USING THE TOOLS OF EA



STEP 3: MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM.

It has been over 20 years since I've worked a step program. Having worked the steps before, I know they work. I have a memory of it, but I have quite a few years of troublesome habits built up which brings me to Step 3. I'm working on it now and finding it much harder than Step 1 and Step 2. Now the hard work begins. I read it over and over. "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*." What the heck does it mean? is my first response.

The stumbling block may be my will. I have been relying on my own willpower for survival my entire adult life. It's second nature. It feels like "me." How do you just "hand it over?" Nothing to do but ask for help from my HP. So far this step for me is a conversation with my Creator. I don't know the specifics of God/Higher Power, but for me I experience it as a mysterious presence of grace, love, justice, faith, miracles, etc. So in my conversation and prayer I just say..."God of Love and Understanding, I am handing this to you—all this confusion, insanity, pain and shame. I do not know how to let go of my will so can you help me with that?" Somehow it feels like I should be doing more here but I keep on having this basic conversation and prayer with my HP. I don't feel any different. Nothing seems to happen, but I know in time, not only will I let go, but it will feel like I have...*Linda*

Here it is a Monday—back to work day—and I had a wonderful day. I woke with no morning panic. It's amazing how things change when I live within my HP's will for me. When I go against it, my body lets me know through panic/anxiety. And my thoughts also tell me that I am NOT doing the next right thing. I have been ignoring the thoughts and the physical "hints" for way too long. But now I am living within my HP's will for me and I am so much happier. As a very wise person in my home group says, "It's easier to do the thing that looks the hardest"—one of EA's many paradoxes...*Claire*

Lately at the top of my "to do" list, I write Step 3. I consciously turn my will and life over to my loving Higher Power (HP) before I even make my list. This helps me know my HP is in charge of me and my plans. When the day ends and I am seeing how much was accomplished, I know and trust my HP has been helping me with it all.

I will continue this daily practice as I feel comforted knowing my HP is truly with me in all that I am doing. I love the saying "Surrender to Win", because in turning over my will and life to HP (surrendering), I really have been winning more at things that matter the most to me. I am very grateful for that. And even with difficult times, I am given strength, power and comfort from a Power much greater than the difficulties and I am able to endure and live with unsolved problems with serenity given to me from my HP. So, Step 3 will continue to be the first item on my daily list for my emotional well-being, which not

only benefits me but others around me, especially those who endured my emotional "un-wellness" before EA. Grateful for recovery, one day at a time. Grateful to look for the good in this day before me...*Connie*

PROMISE 3: WE COMPREHEND THE WORD SERENITY, AND WE KNOW PEACE OF MIND.

A tall order in today's world. *Serenity* means to be serene. The dictionary gives a number of examples of serene, two that I like are "clear and free of storms or unpleasant change" and "marked by, or suggestive of, utter calm and unruffled repose or quietude." With an unsettled world and a crazy mind that runs from one issue to another, I find this pretty impossible. That is until I remember that I can find that sense of serenity within myself. When I sit and be quiet and let my mind go blank, there it is, serenity. It is always there but I need to take the time to just let it happen, even if just for a few seconds to remind me that it does exist.

Does this change the outside world? No, but it does give me a minute to pause and remember that there are tools to help me survive it. The most favorite of those would be the Serenity Prayer.

*God, grant me the serenity
To accept the things I cannot
change, Courage to change the
things I can, And wisdom to know
the difference.*

As I say it, it is important for me to remember that the only thing I can change is me...*Karen*





DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA

FOCUS

These past few months has been an unprecedented place of uncertainty for our family. I don't dismiss the feelings, but instead of dwelling on my troubles, I meditate on my Higher Power's strength, power and love for me. The peace I have gained by taking a few minutes each day for acceptance, has been immeasurable. Living in this one day and not picking up all my problems at once has been a powerful practice. So has choosing to use one program tool at a time. Focus is one of my character limitations. Prayer and meditation allow me to focus on the solution, not the problem.

There was a time I truly believed talking to God continuously about my problems was a form of both prayer and meditation. Yet, I didn't find the sense of tranquility I sought. It wasn't because I could not tune out distractions; actually, I was too good at tuning out reality.

It helped me today to come across a reading in which a 12-step member found themselves running a stop sign, while being so single focused on pleading with God, that they did not even hear the siren or see the flashing lights of the police car. I also read of a person who ruminated so much on his troubles that he "often didn't hear the solutions offered at meetings." He shared his realization: that if he could not get himself to focus on recovery at the meeting, he was not going to have the discipline to practice recovery work at home!

I can ask myself this. When I sit in a meeting and the preamble is happening, where is my mind? Do I have the habit of picking up my problems and thinking about them, instead of preparing myself to receive guidance? If I can put my problems down for a few minutes, I can practice having faith in my HP. I can turn my heart to God and focus my mind. Let me begin by concentrating on the experience, strength and hope shared at the meeting.

Do I make a daily quiet time just for self-care and for resting in God's good? Let me meditate, just for today. All it takes is a few minutes, wherein I gently focus all my attention on God. And, when I take my problems to my HP in Step Three, let me practice leaving them with Him...*Ham Sah*

NEITHER BLACK NOR WHITE

I am a man who was born into an Amish family. My father was troubled because he was shunned by his family for leaving the Amish community, so he was tied to booze for much of his life. My mother was a lady who hid herself in work, work, and more work. She was the saint and my dad the sinner. I grew up being in a black and white world. The little town I lived in did not have grey in it. It was this or that, but nothing in-between.

It took a lot of pain and suffering for me to learn about grey. My mom would drag me through all the tent revivals in the summertime and attempt to get me into the church house as a teenager. I struggled with many things adults said were important. Being a strong-willed child, I had a lot of different things rolling through my head and made some good choices and some really poor ones, but the poor ones taught me a lot about grey.

I am a pretty hard-headed German—I wear it well, I have a lot of mixed messages that go through my mind, and my feelings run through many different cycles in the course of a day. I don't have any problem admitting that I am powerless today because I can easily recall how unmanageable life was before, when I thought I was all-powerful.

Today, I am very grateful for "grey." I do understand that when folks think in black and white that I don't have to take the time to correct them. All I have to do is allow the consequences of that thinking hit them and see how it works for them. It did not work for me, but, then again, it really is none of my business how it all works for another. I am really glad I have allowed grey into my life...*Paul*

FEELINGS

My feelings are part of me. If I suppress them, I suppress and essentially reject part of myself. Not a good way to go. Today I have pain, emotional pain, and that's OK. Life is such that sometimes we have pain, and sometimes we have joy. Even they can exist together like the sun that sometimes shines in the rain. Feel the feelings, and they do the work in us that they are supposed to. Already I am feeling better. Storms pass, rain ends, the sun shines alone again. Thank God for all of them...*Joan*



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

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**

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**

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**

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**



REFLECTION FOR TODAY: Our incessant analyzing could mean our failure to get well and eventually cost us our lives. It is as if we were standing in a burning fire, trying to understand the principles of oxidation and how or why the fire might have started before we make plans for escape. What we need to do is get out of the fire first and try to understand later. For a long time we will stand on the edge of our old lives and think about going back. Have I made a clear choice? **Today, March 1**