



The EA Connection: January



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SHARING MY EA JOURNEY

My name is Scott J. I live in Hastings, Minnesota. I am a member of the board of trustees and serve as the Vice President / Treasurer. I am on the Book and Literature committee. I am the trusted servant for the Hastings EA group. My wife of 30 years and I have two daughters in their twenties. I am a Lutheran Pastor and work as an interim minister.

While living in the small Minnesota town of New Ulm, on a snowy New Year's Eve, I reached the EA contact person in nearby Le Sueur. I asked when I could learn about EA. She said, "How about tomorrow?" Thus, I began my EA journey on New Year's Day a decade ago with a two-person, two-hour meeting with 90 year old Kathleen. Through the transforming work of my Higher Power, I continue to learn about EA and I continue to grow in my ability to deal better with people and the circumstances of my life and to "handle" my thoughts and emotions in healthier ways.

Through sponsorship, 12th step service, and attending meetings, EA has helped me to develop a more rich and authentic spirituality as I enter more deeply into the lives of others who are working this powerful recovery program. I'm drawn closer to my Higher Power and to others as I find the courage to trust and to let them be close to me. Love is the driving force behind my desire to help others experience serenity in their lives.

As we enter 2018, I invite you to allow our Higher Power to bring health, wellness, and healing into our lives and into the EA fellowship, as we work to increase the membership and to manage the challenging financial life of this organization through generous giving. Happy New Year!...**Scott J**



OF IMPORTANCE TO GROUPS AND MEMBERS



EA TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

Step 1: We admitted we were powerless over our emotions - that our lives had become unmanageable.

Promise 1: We realize a new freedom and happiness.

Slogan 1: Let go and let God

Just for Today 1: I will try to live through this day only, not tackling all of my problems at once. I can do something at this moment that would discourage me if I had to continue it for a lifetime.

Tradition 1: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on EA unity.

Helpful Concept 1: We come to EA to learn how to live a new way of life through the 12-step program of Emotions Anonymous which consists of 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, concepts, the Serenity Prayer, slogans, Just for Today's, EA literature, weekly meetings, telephone and personal contacts, and living the program one day at a time. We do not come for another person - we come to help ourselves and to share our experiences, strength, and hope with others.



RECOVERY USING THE TOOLS OF EA

STEP 1: WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER OUR EMOTIONS - THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE.

I have been procrastinating on sharing on the loop for many months now. I keep waiting for my circumstances to change and my problems to be solved. And, as I'm sure you can imagine, I'm still waiting... I am ridiculously complicated which is not a good thing at all. I walk around wearing "Life is Good" t-shirts or "Keep it Simple." I must buy these shirts trying to remind myself to do this. I know that I have to start somewhere on page 44 of the EA Blue book, towards the bottom of the page, "Admitting" is discussed. It says "Admitting we cannot manage our lives is not easy", "It is not easy to admit our self-centeredness, self-pity, and resentments". "It is difficult to stop blaming others for the way we are and the way we behave".

Today I am admitting that I cannot manage my life and I certainly can't manage anyone else's life either. I have worked really hard at doing this on a daily basis and must admit it's not working very well. For some reason I have this illusion that I have control over a whole bunch of things that I have no control over. I think that I just let my EGO guide me sometimes to avoid pain. What I've found though is that the pain hap-



pens anyway and then I feel guilt for my reactions to situations regardless of what anyone else has done.

On page 44 it also says "Through Step One we begin to learn to accept our emotions as they are and not allow them to control our behavior. As we learn to accept our emotions, we are better able to manage our lives. We can make conscious choices in response to our emotions rather than just reacting and having our emotions manage us. We begin to take responsibility for our lives, regardless of who or what may have influenced us in the past. This first step is one of honesty and humility. Admitting our human limitations frees us from hiding our imperfections from ourselves and others, thus allowing us to face the reality of our situation"

I am grateful that Step 1 offers hope. I believe that if I was able to accept myself more, I wouldn't feel as affected by the actions and choices of others. I've been struggling for quite awhile now, today, I am giving this situation to my HP for safe keeping...*Michelle*

Why do I want to admit I'm powerless over my emotions? Because if I am not so busy controlling (or trying to control them), I can begin to accept the emotions as they come up, and notice that when I accept each one and locate them in my body, I notice they can change all by themselves.

I can begin to experience that acceptance of each emotion eventually leads to my having new skills. Even when I am most afraid, I can learn to find a way to be there for

myself. To stay present, even when I don't feel "real." It does help to be able to talk to someone about my fear, to put into words what I feel in my body. Slowly, slowly, step by step...*Victoria*

1: LET GO AND LET GOD



I haven't worked my way through the steps but even in early recovery the thought of "Let go and let God" speaks to me. As a way of trying to combat anxiety and depression, attempting control of pretty much everything in my life has been a coping mechanism for me for as far back as I can remember. The problem, I realize now that it actually makes the anxiety/depression worse, because it's just not possible. I can't control situations or issues or other people or what happens in my life. The only thing that is really mine is my reaction, the emotions, the thoughts and even those are things that I realize I am very much powerless over. My first response is still, "How do I?" When I need to remember to just, Let Go and Let God. I can't, but He can, I just need to let Him. It adds so much to my stress levels to try and be the manager, the one in control, when it's not my job and not within my capabilities. In trying to feel more secure I am actually adding to my own fears, exhaustion, and pain by trying to be the one controlling things and other people. I get it intellectually, it's putting it into practice that I am having difficulty with. But, I know that it will get easier with time if I keep working it. I need to be patient with myself. I need to hand even that, over to God. ...*Kathleen*

DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA



IN THE HUSTLE AND BUSTLE OF THE HOLIDAYS, WE SOMETIMES LOSE THE PEACE AND SERENITY THAT IS TO IMPORTANT TO THOSE OF US IN RECOVERY. MEDITATION IS SUGGESTED AS A WAY TO IMPROVE OUR CONTACT WITH OUR HIGHER POWER IN STEP 11. MEDITATION WHICH CAN ALSO PROVIDE A PATH TO PEACE AND SERENITY BUT AT TIMES CAN BE FRUSTRATING.

FRUSTRATED WHILE TRYING TO MEDITATE

Every morning for the past few days I've tried to meditate on my prayer to my Higher Power. One thing I have noticed is just how difficult it is for me to concentrate--even for just 5 minutes. I start repeating my prayer and after even just 30 seconds, I'm off onto some other tangent thought. I really, really have to try--and even then I can only get about 2 minutes and then I'm off. It's really frustrating to me--and it even scares me a little. But when I reflect back on my life, I do notice that one of my difficulties in general is an inability to focus, concentrate, and stick with something for longer than even a few days. Does this sound familiar to anyone else? Does anyone else wrestle with this? I have a feeling it could be a significant piece to my emotional health puzzle, but I don't know what to do with it all--or how to address it...*Chris*

MEDITATION

I had been doing meditation for the last twenty years. Meditation has nothing to do with concentration, it's a byproduct of Meditation. To start with the byproduct, one will obviously gets frustrated. Meditation is about attention, not concentration. Attention is easier and more natural. We pay attention to things that we need. We need Grace. No need to concentrate for Grace, just pay attention, leaving all other works and to sit and be calm for something not found in the physical world. Meditation is just sitting and being in Grace. Meditation is not a doing, meditation is a non-doing. Meditation is to give a break to the tormenting intellect. Let the intellect be kept aside for some time from its ever solution giving mode to so many problems. We all know, no matter how hard human intellect works to give solutions, there are to many unresolved problems in the world. Because of intellect we are more in destroying mode of the planet with very effective nuclear weapons, which can lead to depletion of basic elements to live water, pure air, etc. Meditation is to keep away little from the intellect, logic and be in Grace consciously for a while till we are in meditation.



There is a tremendous possibility from intelligence, still it has limitations. It can harden the ego and block a person from growing beyond the hard cocoon of intellect to the beautiful butterfly stage which awaits from the cocoon. Meditation is to be away from intellect, emotions and be in Grace for a while. This is termed as Nirvana, to drop the intellect and emotions for a while and be naked in Grace...*Naresh*

A GIFT

Today I'm feeling especially grateful. I am off work for two days, and am embracing it. In the past, I would get depressed, withdraw into myself, and count the minutes to get back to the comfortable and familiar routine. Today, I am enjoying it, and I figured it's because I'm enjoying life. For the the first time in years, I can actually say I am enjoying my life - which I never thought would be possible. I adore my children, love my husband, love my face to face meetings and its members are becoming my most closest friends. I started the program a year ago, and cannot begin to compare myself of the past, to myself of the present. I got a really special gift, and that is a second chance at a healthy life...*Esti*

TODAY BOOK—JANUARY 27

EVERY DAY IS BETTER WHEN I START IT BY COMMUNICATING WITH MY HIGHER POWER.

IF I FORGET TO START MY DAY WITH A MEDITATION, PLEASE REMIND ME HOW IMPORTANT IT IS FOR ME.



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THE 12 PRINCIPLES, STEP 1: HONESTY

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 should keep in mind when working

the steps. Below members share how **HONESTY** factors into Step 1 for them.

**WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER OUR EMOTIONS -
THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE**

The principle of honesty, in working the EA program calls us to be authentic and genuine as we approach our recovery. When I take an honest look at myself and my life, I get to look at the good and the bad. It's about a fair assessment - taking stock of things. To be honest in daily living is to be straightforward in dealing with myself and my world. If I avoid patterns of blaming others and if I stop making excuses for why I'm not doing my program work, I'm being honest in working the EA program... *Scott J*

In Step One, I had to honestly admit that I could not handle my life by myself alone and that I was powerless over my emotions. I had extreme emotions and was behaving in ways I did not really want to behave. Honest admission I needed help was the first step on my road to freedom. I asked my first EA sponsor, "How honest do I have to be in my recovery?" She replied, "How well do you want to get?" From then on I knew that honesty was going to be the guiding principle in my recovery... *Connie W*

Step One is about honesty and accepting the unmanageability of our lives. Honesty has always been difficult for me. When I admit I have trouble with honesty, I feel like a bad person. Step one is also difficult because when I admit my life is unmanageable, I feel like a failure. As I work through Step One, it will be important for me to reframe how I view myself and who I am. I can feel bad about having trouble with honesty and feel like a failure for the emotional chaos in my life, or I can feel good about admitting these things and taking steps to turn myself and my life around... *Chris*

It was difficult for me to be honest with myself and others about the unmanageability in my life because of my **out of control** emotions, but I could not do a good first step until I was able to do that... *Susan*

Whether you are in in the frozen tundra of the North or on the sunny beaches of Australia, I want to wish you all blessings of the New Year as you grow in peace and serenity through the 12 Steps of Emotions Anonymous.



Karen M, Editor
EA Connection