



EA Connection - January 2017

Your monthly newsletter from ISC
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News from the Executive Director, ISC

A new year – a new beginning for us all. At EA, we are starting this new year with more efforts we hope will benefit everyone involved with EA. One important goal is to increase the number of EA groups. We get emails and phone calls from people *daily* questioning why there is no group in their area. Clearly there is an interest and a need. Our response is always to suggest they consider starting their own group – and many people have asked how to do it. We’re simplifying the information we send out, hoping that by making it easier to use, people will make the effort to start – and maintain – new groups.

To that end, we are including the “Guide for EA Groups” with this issue. While we are not telling any group to make changes, we do want everyone to know what the program recommends regarding how groups are run. The EA program was created based on the AA program of recovery, and the ISC and Board encourages everyone to stay as true to the program as possible in order to carry the message as the founders envisioned it to be. That said, perhaps not all our members know what the suggested meeting format is. We hope this information strengthens your group and we encourage you to take time at your next meeting to discuss whether there are changes you could make in the coming year to make your meetings as helpful as possible. If your group chooses to have this discussion, I would love to hear from you – What did you discover? What changes might happen? What else would be helpful? Here’s to a happy, healthy, positive and productive 2017...*Elaine, Director ISC*

EA Recovery Tools - January

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 Todays, 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.

Of Importance to Groups

Please make sure your group contact and meeting information is current. Email changes to: [Bobbie Jo, Group Coordinator](#)

Correct information on the website listing is important so newcomers and members can find a meeting or someone to call/email if they have questions.

Want to receive information directly from the ISC? Go [Get Involved](#) You'll get The Connection sent directly to your inbox each month, as well as periodic emails about EA.

Event Calendar

Be sure to check the [Event Calendar](#) on the EA website for activities in your area .

Notify the ISC if you are holding a special event you would like to see on the calendar. Send your notices to: [Elaine, EA Director](#)

Memorials and Special Gifts


To remember or acknowledge that special person: Memorial Donations



Recovery Using the Tools of EA


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

Absolutely true. When I think about the second part of the first step, I agree, that my life has become unmanageable. To be more precise, I think that my reactions to my emotions were what became unmanageable. This un-manageability was the result of shame. Shame from wanting to love my father when I was a child, but being told by my mother that he was a monster. And in the blink of an eye I learned to reject my feelings. Shame from my stepfather telling me to go into the basement so he could beat me with a 2 x 4 for a harmless mistake I made. Shame, shame, shame. Even my wonderful grandmother saying to me now and then: Shame on you when I did something she did not approve of. How did our culture ever allow the phrase ‘Shame on You,’ to become acceptable? This shame created the terrible confusion in my mind about who I was, versus what I did. I am not what I do. I am what I feel. Or, more simply, I am. And because of that, I feel. But because I learned to reject my emotions, I became a mess. I had become ashamed of my emotions. Now I desperately want to feel my emotions, to accept them, to love them, to embrace them, to own them, and to allow them to teach me. This, I believe, could be a path to peace. A path I am grateful to have begun...*Chris*



As the new year has ushered itself in with efficiency, I am working hard in my recovery. Focusing on the posi-

tive, and remembering Step One, has been refreshing in dealing with some of the malarkey that has been sent my way. As old as this funny little unemployment problem is, I am seeing a new counselor and working my program. As other touched on today, depression has been an old enemy that I have had many a battle with. Thanks to EA, those battles have become less frequent, and given me more defenses and armament to protect my self with...*Bill*



In admitting that I am powerless over my emotions, I was able to find help. I knew I was doing some stuff that I really didn't want to be doing. Like getting angry and yelling. Cussing and screaming even. I was acting out in self-destructive ways even though I was clean and sober. And I was very depressed and sad. That is when I knew I really needed some extra help!

Luckily my then sponsor in another fellowship and I found EA together. We had meetings at her home at first studying the EA book which was a dark black book at that time. We both saw we did not want to live our lives sober and crazy. We wanted sanity in our lives. And EA really has helped me with sanity. Because in Step One, when I admitted all these things I was powerless over, I saw how lack of power truly was my dilemma. I was saying and doing things I didn't want to do and my life was unmanageable due to that.


So EA gave me hope with the 12 steps, the Just for todays, the slogans and the people at the meetings, that I could get well, one day at a time. All it took was me having a desire to be well emotionally. Nothing more was

required. And I am so grateful I still have that desire today. It has made my life so much more sane than insane and I am grateful for that...*Connie*



SLOGAN 1: LET GO AND LET GOD

I came to EA because my panic was kicking in, but now that I am here the panic is calming down. I still find it hard to meditate. When I do, I find my mind wanders off to who knows where. I do find when I think of all the good in the Steps, I can look for the good and *Let go and let God*...*Lillian*



Before program my life was all about me, I knew everything, I knew how to solve my problems and I could tell you how to solve yours to! The only problem with my opinions was that they were full of judgement and didn't work very well. I came into the program suffering from chronic depression with thoughts of suicide, feeling desperate, lonely and worn out. I was in my twenty's for crying out loud and all I wanted to do was sleep!! God in his patience, grace and wisdom has led me down a slow and steady path of recovery. I have been recovering from being my own worst enemy, I have been rescued from being judgmental, and critical and I have been given a new life! It has not been easy but it has been oh so worth it!

I was able to give up what was not working for me and allow God to teach me how to live through the tools of this program,. By *letting go and letting God*—trusting his wisdom, I have been granted a new life...*Jessica*



Discovering the Tools of EA

Please help me to let go



I'm powerless over my emotions, other people, places and things, and so much more. It wasn't that many years ago I felt I had no future. I was very depressed, anxious, fearful and in the end, suicidal.

I found EA and with that a lot of other *workable* things came that I knew I needed to *do*. I really had to accept my powerlessness and basically pray to HP that each step I took, each doctor I saw, each medication, each day would be worth going through. I had to ask HP for a bit of hope, a belief that I was moving upwards rather than sliding deeper into the black pit. I had to let go of my false pride, my conceit, my fears, my beliefs, my *do it myself* attitude...and those are just a few things I had to *let go* of in the beginning.

I had to realize how self-centered and helpless I had made myself with my negative, brute force self-talk. I had to give up self-brutalizing, telling myself I was hopeless and therefore flawed. These things were a product of my illness and therefore not based in *reality*.

I had to give up my fantasy world of horror and self-hatred. I needed to hand those over to HP and ask for some help...which came in different ways, a person who said something to me (a nurse actually suggested that I may have an emotional illness, of course I denied it and was furious, but after some thought I realized she was totally right). It can come up in a book, a tv show, or some other way...I may not like what I hear, but if it moves me forward it's worth hearing. Someone suggested I was a *drama queen* and that much of my illness was made worse by my own imagination, which I was feeding with total garbage and fear. But I had to let go of the idea that I could do it all alone.

Being a victim is not a pretty thing, it helped me hide for awhile until I realized there was no white knight coming to save me. I had to be my own white knight.. With HP's help, meetings, literature and some old fashioned truth I started to move forward. I had to let go of the fantasy that someone would save me.

This program was a God send, the more I do it, the more I learn and the more I grow. I no longer feel like a victim, I no longer suffer debilitation to the degree I once did physically or mentally and I like myself, remarkable but true, all thanks to EA...*Pat*

I will try to live through this day only



I have finally been able to get some little things into my schedule, .a little exercise, a little reading of the newspaper, going to bed on time etc. Earlier, I'd make plans for a month or even 6 months in advance and fail after 2 days. I have tried the Just for Today with my inability to stick to a schedule. When I wake up in the morning - when my anxiety is at its worst. I tell myself that just for today, no matter how I am feeling, I'll do my exercise for the next 15 minutes, then I tell myself the same thing regarding another task and move on. Before EA I'd lie in bed for two hours trying to analyze and find a reason and a cure for my anxiety all inside my head. Not giving in to my anxiety, which I still cave in at times, and making better use of my time is making me feel a little better about myself. I am looking forward to working all the Steps. Honestly, I am very scared of facing my feelings, but I am hoping that I will learn to look beyond my fears...*Pri*

Am unwelcome guest



I've been speaking to my sponsor a lot about my anxiety. The last 2 days I have started to confront that paralyzing anxiety that wants me in bed all day. It has now been given a name and an objective. His name isn't printable- he is not my friend. I don't accept him. . He is an unwelcome guest.

I woke up anxious this morning. I told him to stop out loud. He tried to keep the door open but I wasn't playing. Gradually my anxiety levels started to decrease and after 20 minutes. I got out of bed and began my day. I got on my knees and thanked my HP and asked him to stand between me and my anxiety just for today...*Adam*

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The Concepts are the first tool listed in the “EA’s Twelve Step Program pamphlet. There is good reason for this. The Concepts give us the basic structure for the program of Emotions Anonymous

Thoughts from your Trustees : 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.

I came to Emotions Anonymous bringing another person for their support and after a few meetings found it would be helpful to me. My life has changed for the better by using the whole program of Emotions Anonymous. When there was a conflict event during meeting date I would choose to go to a meeting and if possible use another date with the conflicting event...**Harold**

Where would I be without the tools of EA as outlined in this very first Helpful Concept? If truth be told, I'd still be on the slippery slope that brought me to EA to begin with! Our EA toolbox is just packed to overflowing with prescriptions to keep me emotionally healthy, and that is why we have them to begin with. EA is a “me” program. It's about me, not another person but I can share what I have with them...**Gus**

COMMENTS FROM A MEMBER:

A portion of Helpful Concept 1—that rattles around in my head a lot is that we do not come to EA to help another person. We come for ourselves. I am really glad we use this to guide us in meetings. My interpretation of this helpful concept is that I do not drag someone else to my program to get "fixed" by it. I come alone, and I come to work on my part of whatever is going awry in my life. It means that, to the best of my ability, I don't take anyone else's inventory in what I share, which can be a tough. But if I end up analyzing someone else, instead of doing what I need to get well, then I am in their drama all over again. In my own work there have indeed been times where it seemed essential for me to look at the other side of the fence—the side occupied by my son or my mom or even a member of our program. I had to do that for a long time with my mom, until I finally figured out how to handle my emotions around her. This is as I said, tough stuff. I am glad that the helpful concepts are not set in stone. They are guidelines, or principles to aim for—as much as is humanly possible...Victoria

REGIONS OF EMOTIONS ANONYMOUS

REGION 1: NORTHWEST

CAN: AB, BC, MB, ON, SK

USA: AK, ID, MN, MT, ND, OR, SD, WA, WI, WY

REGION 2: SOUTHWEST

USA: AZ, CA, CO, HI, NM, NV, OK, TX, UT

REGION 3: CENTRAL

USA: IA, IL, IN, KS, MI, MO, NE

REGION 4: SOUTHEAST

USA: AL, AR, DC, DE, FL, GA, KY, LA, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN, VA, WV, Puerto Rico

REGION 5: NORTHEAST

CAN: NB, NF, NS, NT, PE, YT

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Guidelines for EA Groups

The following suggestions have proven successful in encouraging group unity and individual recovery within EA groups. Keep this information available for current and new members.

What is Emotions Anonymous?

A 12-Step program adapted from AA that supports individuals with emotional difficulties in their efforts to live a more manageable life.

What is the purpose of EA?

To help individuals with emotional problems cope with everyday life.

Who attends an EA group?

- Individuals who want to recover from mild or severe emotional illness
- People who desire to maintain their emotional health.

Who runs an EA group?

No one person is in charge of any group. While one or two people may *start* a group, once it is organized, all responsibilities should be shared among members. Those who form the group accept the responsibility of regular attendance and leadership *until others are able to share this responsibility*. Some groups choose different people for the roles each week, others choose multiple weeks at once. The 'Trusted Servant' manages the process of the meeting by reading the suggested format, keeping track of the time and assuring everyone has a chance to participate if desired. The Treasurer collects and tracks donations. Groups decide what is best for them as long as their decisions are based on the Twelve Traditions and do not negatively affect other EA groups or the entire EA organization. Meetings usually last 1 to 1½ hours.

Do professionals lead EA meetings?

No. Professionals may join Emotions Anonymous just as others do – because they have emotional problems from which they wish to recover.

What is a "Group Conscience"?

This is the understanding and agreement of the individuals of the group when making a decision. When an issue arises, time to discuss the issue should be set. It is important those voting are well informed and understand the issue. After everyone has had an equal opportunity to speak and discuss the issue, a vote should be taken. A majority vote indicates "the group conscience" and the action to be taken.

Are there EA materials to help with meetings and deal with issues?

Yes! The *Suggested Format for EA Meetings* is a useful guide for conducting meetings. When problems arise, *Handling Disruption to Maintain Group Serenity, A Key To Successful Groups*, and *Group Inventory* might be helpful in providing solutions.

How is the overall EA organization managed?

Management includes the EA International Board of Trustees, the International Service Center (ISC), and local intergroups (if any).

The Board of Trustees:

- approves EA literature;
- sets policies guiding the EA program;
- authorizes the services provided to EA groups and members;
- is governed by the Bylaws and approved by the membership;
- is made up of individuals that are elected by the membership.

The ISC:

- publishes and distributes EA books, literature and monthly newsletter; and maintains the website;
- assists groups and members with information about the EA program;
- shares information with all EA groups;
- works on behalf of all EA groups to share the message of EA recovery.

Why is anonymity important?

It is important that people feel comfortable sharing personal information, and anonymity assures that this information is not shared outside of the meeting. It is each person's own decision whether to share their name and contact information with others. Only first names are used in order to maintain anonymity. Anonymity means we do not divulge another member's identity, membership in EA, or anything said by another member at meetings.

What is the format of the meeting?

Groups may determine the format of their meetings, although the use of EA's *Suggested Format* is encouraged. Meetings are held weekly and generally last between 60 and 90 minutes. Members can discuss one of the Twelve Steps and how it applies to their daily lives, sharing how they have received help from the EA program. As we grow in EA, we also grow in our knowledge and understanding of the steps. With growth, these steps are always new as we see them from a fresh perspective. Groups may choose to identify a topic to discuss and use material from approved EA literature.

What materials are used at EA meetings?

Only EA-approved materials are made available at meetings. These items can be purchased directly from the ISC or sold at meetings. Any other books, magazines, workbooks, etc., are not allowed at meetings because the focus is on the EA program and not other therapies or philosophies.

Are contributions required?

No dues or fees are required. Contributions are requested at meetings to pay the expenses of the group and to contribute to the ISC and the local intergroup (if there is one). Donations are needed to provide coordination, administration, and informational services to EA groups throughout the world. Tradition Seven encourages self-support.

What is sponsorship?

Sponsorship is a mutual agreement between two people who wish to sponsor and be sponsored. The purpose of sponsorship is to assist a member in recovery and in working the Twelve Steps. Although recommended, sponsorship is voluntary and sponsors are not assigned to another member.

How can an EA group publicize meetings?

- List meetings in the community calendar of local newspapers;
- Distribute flyers;
- Provide EA's *Help For A Better Life pamphlet* to churches, social service agencies, therapists, psychiatrists, and other professionals;
- Participate in health fairs or other community awareness projects;
- Hold a Public Information Meeting for the general public to learn about the EA program. The *Public Information Meeting Guide pamphlet* contains information on how to plan and carry out this meeting.

What is an intergroup?

Intergroups help groups work together to promote EA unity and understanding, and enables groups to exchange information and pool resources. Generally intergroups are formed when there are multiple groups in one geographic location. Groups elect one or two members to represent them and to vote on issues at intergroup meetings. All group members are welcome to attend the intergroup meetings.

