

EA CONNECTION—FEBRUARY 2016

YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM ISC



FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

In the January edition of the EA CONNECTION, our Executive Director, Elaine Weber Nelson, spoke of the importance of each of us, members of Emotions Anonymous. She touched on our financial support as well as our need to carry the message to others. She also spoke of the need to grow the EA membership and asked each of us to consider ways we might do it and even suggested ways we might accomplish this task. Any success stories these past four weeks? If so, it would be great to hear what you did and how you accomplished it. It's no secret that increased membership and increased revenue go hand in hand, and frankly, our organization needs both! I believe it is important that each of us become aware of some EA group information. There are roughly 310+- EA groups in the United States. Of this number less than half (123) groups actually supported the International Service Center last year. World Wide even fewer supported the ISC. The well-kept secret is out. Frankly the ISC needs our financial support. Can we do it? Yes We Can! ...**Gus**

FEBRUARY TOOLS:

Step 2: Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity

Promise 2: We do not regret the past or wish to shut the door on it.

Slogan 2: You are not alone

JFT 2: Just for Today I will try to be happy, realizing my happiness does not depend on what others do or say or what happens around me. Happiness is a result of being at peace with myself.

Tradition 2: For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Concept 2: We are experts only on our own stories, how we try to live the program, how the program works for us, and what EA has done for us. No one speaks for Emotions Anonymous as a whole.

OF IMPORTANCE TO GROUPS:

The new website (coming soon!) will provide a place to list your group's activities beyond the usual meetings. If you plan to host a Public Information Meeting, sponsor a retreat or a workshop, or have other activities or events you'd like others to know about, please send the information to director@emotionsanonymous.org and we'll get it posted.

The Outreach Committee still needs help finding radio stations willing to play informational spots about EA that have been developed. Email Vicki at EA4RadioSpots@hotmail.com if you're willing to call a few stations

MEMORIALS AND SPECIAL GIFTS:

*In memory of Brian F, former trustee and longtime EA member
Katie F, Columbus, OH*





EA TOOLS



STEP 2: CAME TO BELIEVE THAT A POWER GREATER THAN OURSELVES COULD RESTORE US TO SANITY.

"Came to believe that a Power greater than myself could restore me to sanity," used to be difficult for me. I was upset by the word "sanity," even downright triggering to consider! As a child growing up in a dysfunctional home, I experienced insanity. I saw my mother taken to a psychiatric unit and labeled "crazy" by family, neighbors, and friends. She was blamed and criticized for my family's illness. As an adult I, too, felt responsible for my family's dysfunction. When I came to EA and heard the word, "sanity," all I could think of was the lack of it, in my life. Even worse, I feared becoming like my mother.

What I had overlooked in Step Two was the word, "Power." The day I started placing my attention on that Power instead of on insanity, I began to see miracles in my life. One such miracle was my ability to talk about my fears in meetings. Other miracles included taking the Twelve Steps that led me to serenity, and engaging in the process of forgiving and healing. It has taken me many years of hearing Step Two read at meetings for me to really hear the word, "Power." Now I realize how much more awesome my Higher Power is, than my vulnerability. Instead of dwelling in fear, today I am striving to pass on the miracles of recovery to my children...*Victoria*

Though I grew up in a recognizable organized religion and still am faithful and practicing that religion, I do not like references to any particular religion in a meeting or other sharing meant for a wide audience. Our Traditions cover this for us, and it makes me feel safer in the whole group.

I have learned that friends who struggle with following this 12 Step program, frequently have not done their 2nd Step thoroughly. I made this mistake. I read and slid over Step 2, thinking I had that whole belief stuff covered. But, I relapsed and a new sponsor didn't let my religiosity faze her. She gave me this assignment: Write a list of all the attributes that my Higher Power must have in order for me to believe that this HP can/will/wants to restore me to sanity.

I dutifully did my assignment, and have gotten over many hurdles because of it. When I notice I am feeling out there on my own I go back to my list. Sometimes I find that I have listed too few attributes, and that my HP needs to be bigger than I first imagined. With a too small idea of my HP, I cannot turn my will and life over to that being.

So, I do not want to hear about your specific religion, or have you try to evangelize me in a personal conversation. I rejoice that you have a strong belief and are devoted to that. I appreciate that and many other beliefs/descriptions of a HP. And we all need a HP in order to recover...*Theresa*

I was quite happy that God was not mentioned in Step Two because I wasn't too keen on God at that time.

But it was easy for me to believe in a power greater than myself and at first this power was the EA group that I'd joined. I was no longer struggling with this baffling mental disorder all by myself.

Later my Higher Power evolved into something much bigger than the EA group but the beauty of the program for me is that I was introduced in Step Two to the concept that I could develop a belief/faith in a power

greater than myself.

I've come to believe that I need to reinforce this belief on a daily basis if I want to continue enjoying peace of mind...*Carol*

JFT 2: JUST FOR TODAY I WILL TRY TO BE HAPPY, REALIZING MY HAPPINESS DOES NOT DEPEND ON WHAT OTHERS DO OR SAY OR WHAT HAPPENS AROUND ME. HAPPINESS IS A RESULT OF BEING AT PEACE WITH MYSELF.

This was very hard for me to come to terms with. Most people in my life have actually liked me, with some exceptions. There was my fourth grade teacher who I drew a picture of washing her hair in a toilet. She did not like me. Bossy Alma, our past table tennis president doesn't like me.

But basically, I was my own worst enemy. It has taken a lot of work to turn that relationship around, but I'm grateful that I've had the willingness to do just that, and most of the time I am at peace with myself...*Carol C*

PROMISE 2: WE DO NOT REGRET THE PAST OR WISH TO SHUT THE DOOR ON IT.

When I first read this promise, I thought it was pretty silly. How can I not regret the past; it is full of pain and misery and shame. Why ever would I want to remember all that stuff. But as I grew in the program, I learned that we are to learn from our past and perhaps even embrace it. I have even come to realize that some of the things I thought were awful were not really so bad at all. Without my past and all the experiences good and bad, I would not be the person I am today, and today I like who I am....*Karin*





EA TOOLS APPLIED: LOVE



ASPECTS OF LOVE



Fear has been an almost constant companion for me for most if not all of my life. I still struggle with it but I am noticing it getting less as the years of recovery go by. One day at a time, I am turning over my fears to God, sometimes smoothly and sometimes leaving claw and scratch marks. Lately I am thinking about trust, and trusting my Higher Power that everything is going to be ok.

Valentine's Day has made me think of Love and what that is. I feel like my ego gets in the way of my truly loving others, and despite my best intentions, honestly, I am usually looking out for number one. On the other hand, in the past I have put aside all needs and desires of my own and become completely enmeshed in someone else and what they wanted in their life. Their life became mine and I did this out of "Love" because after all, isn't that what a selfless person does?

So I'm learning what Love is in life. People and relationships are my greatest teachers. How do I love someone and how do I love myself? What do I want? Lots of questions in my mind today. I am going to try not to think too much and just let the questions be...*Kelly*



Sometimes I don't feel worthy of love. I definitely haven't felt brave enough to accept it at times. I pray for courage to accept this beautiful gift from God when it comes my way again. I know it's all around me. It's just difficult to see it as well...*Irenie*



If I am honest about my own experience, and I know that to progress in this program I must be rigorously honest, I would have to say I haven't let in very much love at all. "I need people," that's what the slogan says, not "There are a select number of people I will tolerate, if I have to." And right now I am thinking, maybe this has something to do with how little serenity I have found, and how easily I lose it. Scratch that: I don't lose it. I fumble it; I drop it.

Looking at what others have written today, I also see that I must love myself before I can love others and that if I don't truly feel something I can act as if I do. I went to a meeting this morning and someone spoke about the difference between wanting and being willing. She said, and I am paraphrasing here, "I want the recovery that others have, but am I willing to do what they have done to get it?" That's sort of how I feel about loving myself. I know that some people do it without thinking, but for others, like me, it doesn't come naturally at all. No matter how hard I want it, I just can't get to that place of loving myself. But I have come to believe that it is possible. I have read evidence of it in the EA stories, and in the shares I read here daily.

For me, the issue isn't faith, the issue is trust. This is where I have been stuck for a long time. I have climbed the ladder, rung by rung, and I stand on the platform. I watch as people who have no more power over their fear than I have cross to the other side. I tell myself, "I could go over there if I wanted to, I just don't want to," when I know that is a lie. So I stay put, and my self-hatred grows. I have a sponsor who patiently cheers me on, but when I rely too much on one person's support it weakens both of us. How did all those others develop the trust that some mysterious higher power could get them across safely? I want to know, but I'm not willing to ask. Do I love myself enough to try? And if I don't, am I willing to act as if I do?...*Grace*



I have seen how necessary love is to me. I'm not in a romantic relationship but I still have people in my life who love me, and who I love. I have my dog, the greatest source of unconditional love ever. I have a connection to the source of all love, a power greater than myself for which I am grateful. Also important to me is the relationship I have with myself. Grateful that today I can choose to be good to myself and do something nice and special for me. By looking for the good on this day, I'm able to see all the love that's in my life, to appreciate it and savor it...*Gail*

2015—2016 EA BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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SLOGAN 2—YOU ARE NOT ALONE:

Comforting words, surely. My path to wellness began in 1997, but remaining healthy is a forever commitment. My major stumbling block: lack of SELF ESTEEM. I struggled but by working my program, going to meetings, reading and conversation with my Higher Power and sponsor I soon discovered that I was NOT ALONE, and magically it became easier. Forever grateful for Emotions Anonymous!...**Gus** Thank God! I'm sure not wise enough or strong enough to handle life's challenges; but with my HP I can, and do, have a full, rewarding, and joyful life. I AM NOT ALONE....**Tyrre** I have often felt isolated, separate and different from others. In EA I meet other people who have had emotional difficulties, and I am given steps to help me to connect with a higher power who can be there any time or place...**Val** All I have to do to see that I am not alone is to go to a EA meeting. There are members that have emotional problem similar or the same as I do. When I am not at a meeting I know I can turn to my Higher Power who is always with me...**Harold**



REFLECTION FOR TODAY: Today is a special day celebrated by lovers in the United States. The heart is a symbol which has been seen in stores for weeks. Sweethearts send each other cards, flowers, candy. We call friends and relatives to say, "Hi, I am thinking of you." We care for each other in a special way on this day. We make an effort to be nice to friends and strangers alike. In short, the day is dedicated to love. Why only one day of the year? I can strive for two days and then three and so on. In the past I was afraid to show love for fear of rejection. It is not as hard as it used to be. I have seen how necessary love is to me

EVENTS FAR & NEAR

95th Retreat: Kings House, Buffalo, MN
"Watch Your Steps" Feb 19-21, 2016
Contact Diana: 763-755-9317
dlsq@usfamily.net

29th Anniversary Public info meeting
March 31 at 7:45 pm. 130 Broad Blvd,
Pilgrim United Church of Christ, Cuyahoga
Falls, OH. For more info call 234-206-1232
or email emotionsanon@yahoo.com

MEDITATION FOR TODAY: Help me to not be fearful of sharing my love and friendship all year long.

TODAY I WILL REMEMBER: Lack of love will pain me much more than lots of love....*Today book, February 14*

EMOTIONS ANONYMOUS™

PO Box 4245
St Paul, MN 55104
Phone 651-647-9712
Fax 651-647-1593
Hours: Monday—Friday: 10 to 4
www.EmotionsAnonymous.org

EMAIL ADDRESSES:

director@emotionsanonymous.org
editor@emotionsanonymous.org
info@emotionsanonymous.org
groupdata@emotionsanonymous.org
orders@emotionsanonymous.org
shipping@emotionsanonymous.org

If you have an event you would like to see listed here, send your information to editor@emotionsanonymous.org