



THE EA CONNECTION: DECEMBER 2019

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EA TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP 12: HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

TRADITION 12: ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF OUR TRADITIONS, EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.

SLOGAN 12: I HAVE A CHOICE

PROMISE 12: WE REALIZE THAT GOD IS DOING FOR US WHAT WE COULD NOT DO OURSELVES.

JUST FOR TODAY 12: I CHOOSE TO BELIEVE I CAN LIVE THIS ONE DAY.

HELPFUL CONCEPT 12: PART OF THE BEAUTY AND WONDER OF THE EA PROGRAM IS THAT AT MEETINGS WE CAN SAY ANYTHING AND KNOW IT STAYS THERE. ANYTHING WE HEAR AT A MEETING, ON THE TELEPHONE, OR FROM ANOTHER MEMBER IS CONFIDENTIAL AND IS NOT TO BE REPEATED TO ANYONE—EA MEMBERS, MATES, FAMILIES, RELATIVES OR FRIENDS.

FROM YOUR EA BOARD OF TRUSTEES

I know that whether I celebrate Christmas, Hanukah, Kwanzaa, Winter Solstice, the vast range of other winter festivals around the world, or no holidays at all, the Program is there for me. Some of my holiday memories are great and I enjoy recreating them in my own home. Other special days have been darker and I've truly had to rely on the Serenity Prayer, the Just for Today's, my meeting and my phone contacts to make it through. I know that I wouldn't be where I am today, with 35 years in the EA fellowship, without the tools I use daily to understand myself and my world. My Higher Power walks next to me each day during joyful moments, sad times, celebrations when I'm surrounded by family or friends, and quiet times when I feel alone. Other people are there for me to lean on too, as is all the literature and resources of EA, from online to telephone meetings. In my part of the world, winter days are short. The lack of sunlight can be a challenge and the holiday rush is sometimes overwhelming. That's when I know I have to tune in to my HP's will for me and help myself get out of my own way to achieve it. Whatever you celebrate and wherever you are in the world this season, I wish you serenity and the special gift of the Promises coming true in your life. That's a gift money can't buy...*Colleen C, Secretary, EA Board of Trustee*

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Kiwana M - Lansing MI, Taperra Riddle

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RECOVERY USING THE TOOLS OF EA



STEP 12: HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AS THE RESULT OF THESE STEPS, WE TRIED TO CARRY THIS MESSAGE AND TO PRACTICE THESE PRINCIPLES IN ALL OUR AFFAIRS.

Eleven months ago I committed to studying the 12 steps this year--one step per month.

I'm studying Step 12 now and it states that "Having had a spiritual awakening...we tried to carry this message and practice these principles..." I reflected on this:

"What do I believe my spiritual awakening to be...?" I think my spiritual awakening can be summed up this way: Prior to the past couple years, I believed and acted in a way that seemed to say: "My life is in my control and the purpose of my life is to further my own success, enjoyment, superiority, righteousness, and everything else having to do with me and all at the expense of others....."

Today, I increasingly believe that my life is not my life--it is God's. I am simply an instrument in God's plan to bring all His children back to him; in His plan for peace and joy to be returned to everyone. God uses me for His purposes--not mine; for His plan--not mine; for His meaning--not mine.

There is only one Higher Power in my life and that is God. The more I live according to this belief, the more at peace I will likely feel. The more I resist, the more I will be lost.

As of today, this is the message I will try and live and spread...*Chris*

SLOGAN 12: I HAVE A CHOICE

I am so thankful that I am beginning to see I do have a choice. For me those choices are getting out of bed, doing self care, going to work,

eating healthy, exercising, not engaging in behaviors that cause me grief and chaos (and that have shown this in the past very clearly to me). I used to always think it just had to be this way, I had no choice, it just was going to be that way. I felt that about my illness very strongly. It was something I had and I would not get well. I did not believe wellness was a choice. I felt I was going to lose my mind, end up on disability or in a homeless shelter, grow old alone and be crazy and likely die a young lonely death. Wow! I have made healthier choices in my life which improved my thinking and overall mental wellness. Thank God! I could have chosen to stay in bed every day and continue to spiral downward but I sucked it up, got up, started reading and learning and accepting and praying and working for what I wanted and slowly these things are coming to fruition. Thank you HP...

Julie R

I have a choice. I can choose to stay where I am or continue through the process of recovery. Working the Steps is not a once and done effort. I go through them each year after the initial completion of the 12 Steps. And I always find more revealed and discovered. And while that sounds great now, it is far from where I was in the beginning.

Entering recovery, I had a flurry of emotional ups and downs. As I became aware of emotions that were previously stuffed, I found anger, rage, impatience, denial, and arrogance. I was a ticking time bomb in an emotional mine field. Each step I took was a risk. Through it all, and with the support of a sponsor, I connected with my Higher Power. That connection has been tested often. The concept of a Higher Power has evolved tremendously.

As I began detaching from my emotional prison of fears, anger and resentment, I gripped my Higher Power's hand more firmly. I had to sacrifice the one (me/selfishness) for the greater good (Higher Power/selflessness). The expense for such an act of surrender comes at the expense of pride and ego. This ensures an attitude of gratitude.

As I continue on the path to recovery, I see answers to questions I had long ago. At the same time, some questions have no place in my consciousness today. I may not see it, I may not be aware of it, but growth is a perpetual event. It occurs whether I want it or not. But it occurs on my Higher Power's time line, not mine. No matter, how much I crave it, no matter how much I have begged for it, I must be willing to wait for it. Because when I do that, I am assured my Higher Power will give me the tools to cope with it appropriately...*Lynn A*

The Twelve Steps

I am grateful to this program and the twelve steps because to me, they are much like a "broken record" that I have in my life that brings me comfort/peace/stability, as it continues to say the same things over and over. I can continue to heal and grow. I need this beautiful broken record in my life, this constant reminder, this guide, this consistency, this reliability _— for this is what was missing before, these 12 steps that remind me that I am never alone as I have a HP and He walks with me as do the others in my pro-





DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA



CHANGING MY ATTITUDE

Christmas Attitude 1

I'm beginning to have a better attitude about Christmas. When I return home from my day out, I immediately turn on my little 10" Christmas tree with its blinking lights. I had hoped the little pine wreath would smell a bit but it doesn't. I'm thinking of checking to see if there is a pine-smelling air freshener and if so, I'll spray it and pretend it's coming from my little wreath.

I had given up Christmas cards but a box of them called out to me the other day when I was just browsing, "Buy me, buy me!" What could I do??? I haven't sent any cards yet. I always write something personal. I do not understand people who send a card with just their name?

I saw a cute display in my neighborhood today with Snoopy wearing a Christmas hat and rowing a boat with gifts. Very California. I do NOT have to conjure up anything bad about Christmas. I like this new attitude I have. I think I'll keep it, **"one day at a time."**



Christmas Attitude 2

The breezeway of my condo complex is now decorated with a small live Christmas tree with sparking-colored lights on one side and a wreath with white twinkling lights on the door of the condo on the right side. Also, on a table on the



right is an artificial tree with one red bulb and Snoopy sitting beneath it. It's festive. I'm continuing to change my Christmas stance. I know, I know, there's a lot of commercialism around Christmastime, but that doesn't mean that I need to focus on that aspect of Christmas. I shall think of it as a time of love and joy and generosity of spirit.

Christmas Attitude

I'm really amazed by my new Christmas attitude. I'm no longer upset by all the Christmas ads. Instead, I'm grateful that there are so many things that I do NOT want or need.

I rather like that folks seem to be wearing a lot of red things. I like the color "red" and I think it makes people feel spunkier. I even am amused when I see people wearing Christmas hats.

And I'm happy when I see Christmas trees being transported on the top of cars--- as I no longer have to do that---and I have a lovely little 10" Christmas tree that doesn't even need water.

I guess the lesson I've learned is that it's never too late to change one's attitude.



Christmas Attitude

I'm no longer going to say that I'm NOT a Christmas Person. It does seem such a negative identification. I'm thoroughly through with NEGATIVITY. Sure, I've chosen it a lot in the past, but now I'm DONE.



I enjoy looking at variations of the baby in the manger. So innocent.

I like the idea of PEACE, HOPE, and LOVE, and "God bless us, everyone." I like it a lot. I've chosen, ever so recently, to be a Christmas Person. But that still doesn't mean I'm going shopping.

Christmas Attitude 5

It is the Christmas season and I am HAPPY. I realize that my experiences in life have been so influenced by my ATTITUDE and EXPECTATIONS. I have always had this genetic problem with depression, but by working the steps of EA— (over and over!) I have learned how to have fun and how to avoid getting bogged down trying to deal with things I cannot change.

It's pretty astonishing to me that here I am, 86 years old, having had all kinds of experiences, some really really BAD, and yet I can look back with a lot of compassion and little regret. I've SURVIVED it all and am living with calmness and thankfully a wee sense of humor about it all. Love to all and the merriest of Christmases...**Carol**



Thank you Carol for teaching us all that we can change, no matter our age, and that Attitude and Expectations play a large part in our ability to make those changes...Karen M, Editor

2019 - 2020 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 12: ANONYMITY IS THE SPIRITUAL FOUNDATION OF OUR TRADITIONS,
EVER REMINDING US TO PLACE PRINCIPLES BEFORE PERSONALITIES.**

Tradition 12 reminds us that anonymity is EA's spiritual foundation. Anonymity and confidentiality are among the greatest gifts of our fellowship, essential for fostering trust and openness at meetings. But what if someone's sharing conveys a credible threat of harm to themselves or others? Must a member keep silent when faced with the possibility of harm to another? Under such circumstances we must remember that our Traditions are guiding principles not rigid dogma, and whether or not to report a threat to appropriate authorities is a personal one for each individual EA member and his/her Higher Power...**Steven B**

The principles of the program are far more important than the people who carry the message. It is not important who we are, but rather, what we are. We are Emotions Anonymous, and we offer people the chance to recover from their emotional problems. Our message of recovery is what we can offer to the newcomer. We are all just members of the program. We practice a genuine humility by remembering we are one among many, no better and no worse than others; and by placing the principles of the program ahead of the personalities in the fellowship. We do not publish the names of speakers. We are all just examples that this program can work, does work, and will work for anyone who works it...**Derita P**

Sometimes using the word anonymous might make some of us feel that we have a reason to be anonymous, something to hide. This is not at all the spirit of tradition 12 as I understand it. EA fellows come into meetings week after week to grow through sharing. Sometimes the stories and feelings we share come from a vulnerable place within us. Anonymity is essential as the foundation of emotional safety in meetings and in fellowship so that we can continue to grow through the program...**Paul N**

The idea of placing principles before personalities can be challenging. The program teaches me that I must apply the steps, traditions and concepts in every area of my life, from the workplace to the family room. When I become rushed and impatient, particularly around this sometimes-stressful holiday season, it's easy for me to "overrule" my HP. That's when I let my personality and personal wishes take over. My prayer for this holiday season is the serenity prayer. Turning things over is a great way to put principles first...**Colleen C**



COPING WITH THE HOLIDAYS

I appreciate having a place to share honestly about how difficult holidays can be. I appreciate that I can admit that I don't like all the noise, the gatherings, the extra food, and spending. I know that I need people, and that I actually like people, but I just know that if I spend too much time with people, no matter how much I like them, I get worn out. I've learned in EA that it's ok if that's my truth. I do my best to honor those boundaries I have for myself, even though I can't always do it perfectly. I guess it's a balancing act, because I know that I need to be around people at times, but I know at times, I need to have solitude. Grateful for EAnon (the Loop) and for EA...**Gail**