



# The EA Connection: March 2018



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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.

**SLOGAN 3:** ONE DAY AT A TIME.

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

**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.

## NEWS FROM YOUR TRUSTEES

How many of you are aware of the EA Administrative Concepts (pamphlet # 67)? It's a very helpful reference when addressing concerns about decisions Trustees make as your Trusted Servants and to understand how decisions are made and by whom. Here's why this resource is being pointed out: The EA Board of Trustees asked and was granted permission by Alcoholics' Anonymous to make changes in EA literature when referencing our Higher Power specifically as "God". A.A., in their response to our request, made it clear that other 12-Step groups have also asked permission to adjust their language choices. So EA now has flexibility regarding how we refer to our Higher Power in the Steps, Traditions, Concepts, Promises, and Slogans. With this permission in hand, and after a great deal of discussion, the Trustees have approved implementation of this change, acknowledging that many of our EA members are quite comfortable – and may even prefer – using the term "God" as synonymous with "Higher Power." In fact, some in EA are very protective of personally using "God." As Trustees, this decision follows key statements in our material that guide this organization – i.e. "we do not advocate any particular belief system" and we are "a spiritual program, not a religious program." What this all means is that when we ask individuals to share their thoughts in printed materials and they choose the word 'God', we will honor that usage. Otherwise, materials being produced or revised by EA, in abiding by our own convictions to be "spiritual but not religious" and with A.A.'s permission, will be using the non-religious language of a "Higher Power." In doing so, we

rest in the belief that there remains a Power greater than ourselves that can restore us to sanity, no matter what term we choose to use.

Yours in Program, Gus S, President, Scott J, VP/Treasurer

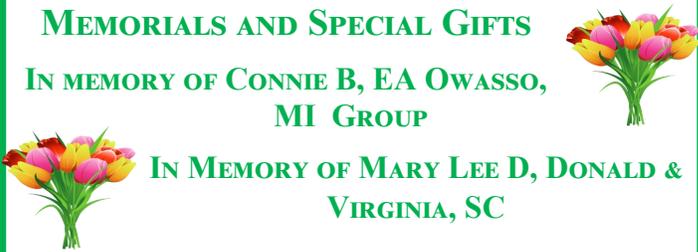
## WHAT I LEARNED IN EA: A MEMBER PERSPECTIVES

In my 20's, I began to experience depression and anxiety which worsened over several years. In spite of weekly visits with a psychiatrist, I was hospitalized three times and really did not understand how to deal with my emotional problems. When I found EA, I felt real hope because it gives me specific tools: (1) At Meetings I learn to talk honestly about myself with people who are experiencing similar difficulties. I also learn to listen to how others work the program. (2) By working the Steps, I face and let go of my past and seek help from a Higher Power. (3) By using the Just for Today's and Slogans, I learn to think differently, stay in today, not compare myself with others, remind myself I am not alone, etc. What I learn in EA has helped me stay out of the hospital, handle my responsibilities, and trust a Higher Power. For these, I am very grateful!...*Anonymous*

**MEMORIALS AND SPECIAL GIFTS**

**IN MEMORY OF CONNIE B, EA OWASSO, MI GROUP**

**IN MEMORY OF MARY LEE D, DONALD & VIRGINIA, SC**





## 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.**

**Today I woke** with one thing on my mind: don't think about the future, don't think about the past, focus on what you can do today and let your Higher Power take care of everything else. What a great feeling! All day I kept asking myself: What can I do right now, today, that would make a difference? I also thought about how turning my life over to my Higher Power might include turning my future and my past over to my Higher Power. This perspective might be one way of looking at Step 3 turning my will over to my Higher Power is focusing on just today. It was truly an awesome feeling. I felt like I didn't have to take care of my entire life all in one day or fix every problem. On the flip side, I felt very irresponsible as well. But I have a feeling this is because I am usually hyper-responsible. Anyway, just for today I felt great....*Chris*

**Surrender, I have** always known what it meant but until EA and the 12 steps, I didn't know just how hard it is. Surrendering my will, my ego and what feels like my sense of self is necessary to heal and find peace and serenity. So what is the attachment to what hasn't worked all these years? Why is it so hard to surrender those defects and let them go? Perhaps because some of them have protected my heart from hurting, or feeling shame for being

imperfect and flawed.

My HP whom I choose to call God is keeping His promise. By working the program even imperfectly at times, I am "realizing a new freedom and happiness" as said in the first EA promise. And I realize "God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves." I see it in others and I see it in myself.

Now that I have learned what I've learned and have the tools, my suffering is now of my own choice. If I suffer its because I'm turning my back on my toolbox.

I won't lie when I say at times I wanted to say where I wanted to stick that toolbox! And then I realized, wait a minute, why are you fighting it? Yes you have these tools to get you through and you want to choose your own way Still!! Wake up Denise! "Surrender." I think I love that word now!...*Denise*

### **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.**

I am so thankful that I struggle less with my character defect of trying to make everything fit my own desires. It was one of my first discoveries in the Program through JFT 3. What a relief to stop trying to shove things together and just hand it all over. Though I have had relief in letting go of the puzzle pieces of

circumstances outside of me, I do still try to push and batter and shove together the conflicting pieces of my internal life and my daily activities. I am practicing willingness to turn these pieces over as well...*Angela*

**I've found that** many program tools can be put into play when dealing with customer service, or technical support, or whatever. There are two things I do going in: sit at my computer so I can play solitaire during the inevitable periods on hold when I have "elevator music" and ridiculous advertisements to listen to. The other thing is to psych myself up to not have expectations regarding how long this is going to take. So I never initiate a call when I have limited time. Just basic program stuff about what the reality is, and accepting that I have no control over what's happening at the other end. Another thing that helps me is to remember that these people are just people...exactly like me. No better, no worse. When they go into those aggravating comments like...did you know you could upgrade for only an additional \$9.95 a month...we have an extended warranty available, etc??? They are just doing their job. Remember that little spiel, the one that said "this call will be recorded for security and training purposes." That means the supervisor at any time can check to see if this person is following the assigned script. I would not like to work like that, but it's just a reality of the techie world we live in. And I can always go back to JFT 3...*Kim*



## DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA



### GOING TO NEUTRAL

My HP had to teach me how to let go. On my own I was not learning it too well. So he gave me so many things to worry about that there was no possible way to keep up with them all. And so I have let go of it all. And I mean all. A short list: my dog, husband, son, mother in law, father in law, job, sister in law's mother... All of the listed things are in crisis of some sort right now.

I can't keep up. So I am staying in the now and it is great in the now! I so enjoyed going to work today, I looked forward to it, to having my mind absorbed in my work instead of issues going on in every direction of my life. It was a relief. So I hope I can let go from now on without needing my whole life to be so chaotic. As someone in my face to face group used to say, "there are really only 2 steps, the first is to let go, the second is to let go some more". I used to enjoy hearing him say that.

I also heard something good on the radio. We all know to think positively is the goal. But we can't all get there. So it was suggested that we can at least let go of the negative and go to neutral—even if we can't go all the way to the positive. I am usually predicting doom, so find it impossible to go all the way from that to sunshine and rainbows (I am just too much of a born pessimist) but I can go to a place of, "I don't really know what will happen." A middle ground, not negative or positive, just neutral...*Claire*

### WHERE I GOT STUCK

When I first started working the 12 Step Program I had two very big areas where my life really got stuck. One was the idea of a HP because I came from a very religious community and their view of God was not one that worked well for me so I struggled with Step Two for a while.... The other that I still struggle with is the slogan, I need people.

It's very hard to invite people into your life when you don't like people...humans are a very strange lot. Like I have a dog, she might bite other people but she does not bite the hand that feeds her. However, you can be as nice as you want to with a human and many of them will bite you when you don't give them what they want from you. Just saying, not all, but some.

I have a hard time being vulnerable with others. I struggle when it comes to being in a relationship and allowing people to come and go in my life and not attempt to control what's happening. As a result of these character defects it's hard for me to be in long term committed relationships. I wear out, and when I turn my attention off of a relationship I have to move on - which is very hard for many of those who I have invited to be close to me.

There are so many different emotions which come to mind as I write this that travel along the roots of my emotional problems. I won't take the time to list them all but before the EA program I listed guilt and shame at the head of my list when I did my Step Four.. As I did my Step Five I could understand how powerful these feelings were and as I shared my thoughts about them with my HP and a trusted Fifth Step person I was able to let the energy of these two feelings go, so I seldom go back and visit these two things. I am thankful for this program in helping me lay down the fear that comes from being a little different than others. Recently I read where a person was sad to see a 30 year EA member still attending meetings. I smiled... as I have been at this for over 33 years and I still have to come back and deal with my emotions which are constantly a part of who I am. I'm able to reach out and ask for help today. I am able to share openly about who I am. I am grateful that today I do need people and want them in my life even if it's for a lifetime...*Paul*

### NEGATIVE VERSUS POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Before I started EA (it's been 7 weeks now- although it took me ages to figure out the loop) - I started every morning with my usual negative self-talk - "Oh "shucks"- it's another day, I have to figure out how to get through today." Now it's all different. I say, "Thank you Lord, it's another day and I GET to figure out the best way to get through today." Such a HUGE change!! Thank you all for helping make this happen...*Ruthie*

# 2017 - 2018 EA Board of Trustees

Please feel free to contact members of the Board with questions or concerns



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## THE 12 PRINCIPLES, STEP 3: FAITH

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 can keep in mind when working the steps. Below members share how **FAITH** factors into Step 3 for them.

### MADE A DECISION TO TURN OUR WILL AND OUR LIVES OVER TO THE CARE OF GOD AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM

**Wikipedia defines faith** as complete trust or confidence in someone or something. When I am anxious or worried and start an emotional slip, I stop myself and turn things over to God. Thanks to the EA program, I recognize those times of trouble are when I am not really showing my faith and trust in God. It's more than lip service. If I feel God is my co-pilot, it's time for me to switch seats. EA slogans help me snap back to where I need to be: Let Go and Let God. There is a God and I'm not it...*Irenie*

**Faith....I thought I had faith.** I had a belief in a Power greater than myself but not a faith that my Higher Power was in control. I was still trying to do things my way and wondering why my reactions were the same. This month I had a rude awakening and finally said enough! This was after I contemplated giving up on myself and succumbing to the life of isolation and fear again. I turned to my Higher Power, God, and I asked for help, for His will in my life and for His forgiveness. I knew I could not do this without God. Now, I turn to my Higher Power for relief and guidance on dealing with my emotions. I turn my life and my will over to the care of God and trust the outcome...*Denise*

**I am grateful that I found** a loving Higher Power in Step 3, my faith has deepened by continuing with all the rest of the Steps. My faith continues to grow as I review my Steps and live the Steps in my life to the best of my daily ability.

Today when I look at my life, I can hardly believe all the things I made it through. I know I was not alone and I know many miracles helped me through the years. So it is good to remember all the miracles I have had as that just strengthens my faith even more...*Connie*

## 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

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