

EA CONNECTION—NOVEMBER 2016

YOUR MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FROM ISC



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR—INTERNATIONAL SERVICE CENTER

Your Board spent two days in workshops prior to the recent Convention delving into important issues to EA. Some of the items discussed included: changing the Board meeting schedule to have the full board meet every other month, restructuring the make-up of the Board, adding new opportunities for more EA members to get involved in new ways, making changes to EA's bylaws to better reflect what the organization is today, determining how we can use technology to communicate among Board members, EA members, and the broader community. Following these very intense workshop days, we held the Annual Business Meeting for Delegates. As part of that agenda, I asked the larger group to divide into four smaller ones to discuss issues facing EA today and possible solutions. Attached to this month's *Connection* is a bullet-pointed list of what your delegates said. Based on the workshops and the Delegate meeting, we have identified focus areas for the coming year that we believe will move EA forward; that information follows the list. I welcome any comments, suggestions, or recommendations you have after reviewing what your Delegates said. And if any of this spurs you to action, I'd be happy to know what you would like to do! We will be reaching out to the EA membership more and more in the coming months – we need your insight and abilities to continue to share the message EA offers to current members and to others who need this program...*Elaine Weber Nelson, Executive Director*



NOVEMBER TOOLS:

Step 11: Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Tradition 11: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

Promise 11: We acquire a feeling of security within ourselves.

Concept 11: Each person is entitled to his or her own opinions and may express them at a meeting within the guidelines of EA. We are all equal - no one is more important than another.

Just for Today 11: I will not compare myself with others. I will accept myself and live to the best of my ability.

Slogan 11: Keep it simple.

OF IMPORTANCE TO GROUPS:

Be sure to check the Event Calendar on the EA website for activities in your area – and notify the ISC if you are holding something special so we can share your information on the Calendar! Send your notices to director@emotionsanonymous.org.

Please make sure your group contact and meeting information is current. Email any changes to Bobbie Jo at groupdata@emotionsanonymous.org. Correct information on the website listing is important so newcomers can find a meeting or someone to call/email if they have questions.

The EA Annual Report for 2016 is on the website now at www.emotionsanonymopous.org/who-we-are/financials.html. Our 2015 financial report (the 990) will be listed at the end of the month.

GRATITUDE MONTH

November is traditionally the month we ask everyone to consider making an additional gift beyond what your group contributes. Please think about making a donation online or by mail during the coming weeks. One-third of the ISC budget comes from contributions and are necessary to continue the functions the ISC provides to the entire membership. Thank you for your generosity.





STEP 11: SOUGHT THROUGH PRAYER AND MEDITATION TO IMPROVE OUR CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH GOD, AS WE UNDERSTOOD HIM, PRAYING ONLY FOR KNOWLEDGE OF HIS WILL FOR US AND THE POWER TO CARRY THAT OUT.

I am really thankful to all who prayed for me today. I got the genetic test reports and it seems like my baby is doing well.

The last few weeks really opened my eyes to how vulnerable and powerless I really am. There was nothing I could do but go down on my knees and pray. No mental strategy, no words, no books...nothing gave me any comfort. Before I got pregnant, I didn't even have any strong urge to be a mother. But now that I started thinking about the baby, the thought of losing him was so painful.

One thing has changed for me. Even after 9 years in Program, I wasn't very good at Step 11. But after this experience, I find myself much closer to my Higher Power. I felt as though when nothing works, prayer gives me comfort. When nothing can help me, my Higher Power can. Maybe this experience was meant to draw me closer to my Higher Power. I was also touched by all the people who showed concern, who prayed for me. It helped me to not feel alone...*Pri*

One of the things that I started doing earlier this year was to take 15 minutes, at least once a day, and simply sit still and be quiet. I don't fight my thoughts. I don't talk to my HP, I simply—sit—quietly.



I have started doing that again and it is helping me work/practice Step 11 which in turn has helped me to slow down and appreciate the nature that is around me...*Jim*

PROMISE 11: WE ACQUIRE A FEELING OF SECURITY WITHIN OURSELVES.

I like Promise 11 which states, "We acquire a feeling of security within ourselves." Lately I have been okay with my own company. I do not have to always be so connected with people all the time. I enjoy spending time on my own. I think that is the security that is within myself. My Higher Power is the One who helps me feel secure. Whenever I get scared, I pray lots to my Higher Power to help me, and then I am not as scared.

I also wanted to share with you that I had admitted recently about some fears I had to my Psychologist and now those fears really are lessened. Today I no longer have to depend so much on "human powers" to give me that feeling of security. I know my Higher Power is with me in all that I do from morning and until night. I say quick "Serenity Prayers" throughout the day when I find myself being a bit uneasy and that helps.

I am very grateful that having a Higher Power belief helps me feel way more secure, way more sane and way more "knowing" that I am okay for me. Grateful for this EA program that helps me have a much better life. I think having a much better life has helped with me feeling more secure as well. I have so many things to be grateful for more good with each new day...*Connie*



PROMISE 11: WE ACQUIRE A FEELING OF SECURITY WITHIN OURSELVES.

Today's RFT - August 1, reminded me of Promise 11. Fear of economic insecurity will leave us. That does not mean the insecurity will leave me, it means that fear of it will. And there is a great difference between these two things. Being a single mother with a rather unstable income is not always easy. However, whenever I ask my HP to release me from my fears, my mind automatically gets into present. *When life gets too hard to stand - kneel.*

When I pray, my mind becomes clear and quiet, staying in the moment enables me to calm down and concentrate on what is really important. Very often only when I start hearing that birds are singing, noises of people and cars outside, colors and smells around me, prayer helps me to get back to earth and realize I am not alone in my "desperate bubble" any more. Every single moment of release from prison of myself is precious for me and I feel really grateful for such magic moments.

Being in another Twelve Step program for several years has helped me to realize that worrying over things I cannot change costs me a lot of energy that I could otherwise spend in far more useful ways. Instead of creating catastrophic plans in my head, with the help of my HP and this program, I am able to think how I can be of service to others. Even simple thinking about somebody else but myself helps a lot to get out of me-me-me and diminish my fears...*Anonymous*





EA TOOLS APPLIED: GRATITUDE



GRATITUDE: A FEELING OF APPRECIATION OR THANKS

This morning I am grateful for a good nights sleep; that when I cry out for my Higher Power he hears me; that I am never alone; for the love of good friends; for the ability to choose to love myself; giving myself healthy, nutritious food yesterday; an awareness that I am feeling overwhelmed; a clear blue sky on a beautiful Spring morning; to be able to sit here and take my time awakening; for the shares on the loop and all that I learn from them...**Ian**



I am grateful because this program has given me the ability to feel wonderfully equal to others, and normal and average on occasion. I no longer have to be the super star overachiever. Thank you God. This has given me room to be human. I am so grateful to know what this feels like. I am so grateful to know what it feels like to experience life rather than run past it. I used to watch movies like Family Man, and thought they were hogwash. He was successful. Why did he need this or that in his life? Nobody gets it all. But, now I get it. I know what he was missing, and I know what I was missing (and am still working to build). Nothing is more beautiful than sustained relationship. Nothing is more important than love. Right now, I am still working on relationship with myself and others. I am progressing but not where I hope to be yet. Old patterns, old words, old ways of behaving keep surfacing that keep people far away from me. Not knowing what to share, not knowing what not to share, not knowing what is superficial from intimate discourse, not knowing who to trust nor how much I pray these skills continue to be refined in me...**Beth**



After I came into the program over 2 years ago, I questioned why should I do a gratitude journal as what is the point behind it—being the skeptic that I am. Well, early last Summer, I started doing a gratitude journal and have made it a regular habit after I read my devotional books in the morning...great way to start the day.

There have been days that I struggle to add things as my heart wasn't in it. Over time, I've learned to love doing my gratitude journal regularly and have no problem filling up the page. Doing this journal regularly especially helps during the bad times as things can always be worse than they are...one of my Mom's quotes. Even repeat some of the same things that I am grateful to keep it ingrained in my mind. By working my program especially doing the gratitude journal, I think that it has rubbed off on my Mom as she gets down in the dumps at times with her health problems...and that is coming from someone who is naturally optimistic and calm...**Janelle**



There are several reasons for writing a gratitude list. First is that for me it is a way of fighting my mind's tendency (aka "character defect") to notice only the negative or to become discouraged and even depressed because "nothing ever changes" or "nothing good ever happens." One of my favorite slogans is PACE "Positive Action Changes Everything." Making a gratitude list is a positive action I can take when I am feeling in a negative mood. It is a powerful antidote to PLOM "Poor Little Old Me" syndrome. If I attribute the things I am grateful for to my Higher Power it can be a reminder that God is providing for me and taking care of me in many wonderful ways.

I do not always feel each gratitude deeply. If I don't feel them much at all, I can at least "act as if" I do, as the EA program suggests. In my experience, if I take positive action, my feelings will eventually change. Thus I may start out only being halfheartedly grateful, but after a week, two weeks or whatever, eventually my perception of my situation will change and I will become more genuinely grateful for how many people, things, events I have to be grateful for.

As I realize how much I have to be grateful for, I become much more trusting that God/H. P./the Universe will take care of me & supply what I need. As this happens I can begin to let go of my need to control people, things & events. As I begin to have a more positive attitude my depression/resentment/anger etc. lessens and my serenity increases - even in the midst of unsolved problems (Concept 5), which is EA's formula for recovery...**Joe**



I think that gratitude is an invaluable tool in recovery. Focusing on solutions as much as possible rather than problems helps too. When I can focus on gratitude I generally feel I am in a much healthier place. My serenity is often directly proportional to my gratitude...**Adam**

2016—2017 EA BOARD OF TRUSTEES



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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

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FROM YOUR TRUSTEES: SLOGAN 11—KEEP IT SIMPLE:

For me, the program is "simple" but sometimes not easy. One of the difficulties I run into is over-complicating things. My mind likes to obsess, and maybe sometimes I use analysis and "research" to procrastinate. When this happens, I tend to hit a wall and life reminds me to go back to basics - sometimes the A-B-C's: "(A) that I was emotionally ill and could not manage my own life, (B) that probably no human power [especially my own thinking] can relieve my emotional illness, and that (C) a Higher Power can and will if it is sought" ...**Val C** As a member of EA I notice if I break down tasks or problems into small portions the solutions become much easier to solve. This is how I keep it simple and less complicated...**Harold F** This slogan can be a problem for me! I can easily complicate my life, my program with too much useless baggage. Remaining focused; remaining in touch with my core values; remaining true to who I am and how this simple program works has served me well. It's all in the first three steps! I can't. God can. Let God...**Gus S**

Doesn't it seem like even the tiniest problems become complicated once we start to dwell on them? Our minds take over, probing for information that isn't there, attaching our emotions to each issue and making problems seem more daunting than they are. The Serenity Prayer offers us a solution.....*It Works if You Work It*, p. 78-79

EA EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

For a listing of current events go to
<http://emotionsanonymous.org/get-involved/2016-events-activities/>
To post an event contact Bobbie Jo at
info@emotionsanonymous.org

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

Delegate Business Meeting Discussion Notes on *Problems* and *Solutions Facing EA Today.*

Group 1

- EA needs:
 - to reach out to individuals not just group contacts
 - group mentoring
- EA needs a new face

Group 2

- 60% of mental health professionals say they are overworked (too much demand)
- Plan to inform these associations about EA
- Meetings held in hospitals and growing by informing hospital
- Need to inform mental health orgs worldwide about EA
- Modern communications used to best of the ability – such as social media, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram
- Crowdfunding for EA

Group 3

- Issue - Health of current groups
 - Local mentoring/assistance needed
- Sponsorship – don't foster enough sponsorships. Strength of groups based on 1 on 1 relationships with accountability and relating to each other.
 - Difficulties with people being willing to sponsor (as too timid), and also not enough people who have worked first few steps
 - Guidelines for sponsorship should be developed
 - Introduce newcomers to sponsorship & follow-up on newcomers
 - Phone numbers of newcomers are on list
 - A person volunteers to call a person by the end of the meeting
 - Brochure specifically on sponsorship should be in newcomer packet
 - Newcomer orientation by people talking outside of the room
 - Newcomers meet with a specific greeter after the meeting
 - Phone lists should be made and maintained
 - Solution – temporary sponsorship
- Need stricter guidelines from bottom to top so groups are similar
- Lack consistency, lack structure, lack promotion / marketing.
 - Structure is there but every group is autonomous
 - Solution - ISC could make materials available as recommendations (not requirements)
- Mass mailing to doctors wasn't successful
- Making a letter available and suggest individual members take to their therapists worked great in the past

Continued on following page

Group 4

- EA is old - needs new face
- EA needs:
 - to approach emotional healing
 - hospitality at F2F meeting
 - sponsors that are working the program
 - visibility – possibly through mixed 12 step groups
 - our name out in public without advertising personally
 - financial support and revenue streams
 - volunteers
 - Individual members to be growing in the program and to be able to see/measure their groups
 - all stages of program working together
 - to engage mental health practitioners
 - more linkage between groups and between groups and ISC
 - Need literature with fresh language to address new issues and fresh language for old issues
 - speakers that can come to meetings and community and share message
 - to differentiate spiritual v religious program
 - healthy people to spread message of value of EA

The resulting focus for the ISC and Board of Trustees based on this information:

- Work to identify groups/organizations that *should* know about EA, but don't
- Develop appropriate materials to help people understand what EA is
- Restructure the Board so they can focus on organizational issues
- Inform members of opportunities to get more involved
- Restructure the regional contact system in the U.S. to create closer ties among the groups and their regional volunteers
- Work with members to develop and publish new literature
- Revise suggested meeting guidelines and encourage their use more at meetings to achieve more consistency while not stifling the groups' desires for running their meetings
- Figure out how best to use social media