



THE EA CONNECTION: MAY 2019

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EA TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP 5: ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS.

TRADITION 5: EACH GROUP HAS BUT ONE PRIMARY PURPOSE, TO CARRY ITS MESSAGE TO THE PERSON WHO STILL SUFFERS FROM EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS.

SLOGAN 5: FIRST THINGS FIRST.

PROMISE 5: THE FEELINGS OF USELESSNESS AND SELF-PITY LESSEN.

JUST FOR TODAY 5: I WILL DO SOMEBODY A GOOD TURN AND NOT GET FOUND OUT. IF ANYONE KNOWS OF IT, IT WILL NOT COUNT. I WILL DO AT LEAST ONE THING I DON'T WANT TO DO, AND I WILL PERFORM SOME SMALL ACT OF LOVE FOR MY NEIGHBOR.

HELPFUL CONCEPT 5: EA IS NOT A SOUNDING BOARD FOR CONTINUALLY REVIEWING OUR MISERIES, BUT A WAY TO LEARN TO DETACH OURSELVES FROM THEM. PART OF OUR SERENITY COMES FROM BEING ABLE TO LIVE AT PEACE WITH UNSOLVED PROBLEMS.

FROM EA'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The EA Board is made up of dedicated individuals interested in doing important service work for this organization. We have been fortunate to have an active, thoughtful, and dedicated Board and I greatly appreciate their hard work to move the organization forward. As you may know, we lost our Board President recently. Gus S. was a kind, generous man and I'm sure many people will miss him dearly. I know I will.

We have operated with a smaller board during the past few years than when I came to EA (four years ago!). However, they have made up for their numbers by their willingness to work hard. Two years ago we made the decision to hold bi-monthly board meetings (6 per year), instead of bi-annual meetings (2 per year). This made an enormous difference in our ability to make things happen at EA and it kept the Board much more *on board* with the day-to-day operations. We also recently changed the Board terms to begin at the start of our fiscal year, July 1.

Each year we seek new Board members. I encourage you to think about the possibility of Board service this year. Terms are for three years, with the opportunity to renew for one additional three-year term. Board meetings are held every other month in the evenings by phone or skype. Board members are asked to serve on one committee, choosing from Book & Literature, Finance, Nominating, Personnel, or Outreach. The requirements to serve on the Board are to have completed Steps 4 and 5 and be an active member of an EA group. There is an application form available on the website to complete and return by June 1. All applications will be reviewed, all candidates will be reached by phone for a discussion of their interests and the needs of the Board at this time, and then those appointed will be notified in order to begin their terms July 1.

Board service is vital to the wellbeing of all nonprofit organizations. EA needs thoughtful individuals who have time to attend meetings and work in between the meetings for the good of the organization. I am personally extremely grateful to be able to work with our current Board members. They are engaged, make time for EA in their very busy schedules, and are interested in making the best decisions possible in order to reach as many people with the EA program as possible and make sure this organization exists for all who need it well into the future. Please consider joining us!

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RECOVERY USING THE TOOLS OF EA



STEP 5: ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS

It's good to have my sanity today. I'll be sharing the fifth step from my perspective.

EXAMPLE

It was so difficult for me to face another human being, in full honesty, admitting my wrong doings. I thought it would kill me to do so. What I didn't know was for the first time I would admit my powerlessness. I didn't know it would take me many years before I would understand reality and maturity by doing the fifth step.

I carefully choose a person I knew would honor my anonymity. It wasn't as hard as I thought it would be trusting someone. Enso, my sponsor and spiritual adviser both would hear my fifths. I had trusted my therapist with one deep dark secret that opened-up my tear gates. Since I cracked open a door I might as well go for the full experience the fifth step offered.

STRENGTH

As I held onto my written fourth step...I began to feel as though I wanted to die. I held on to it for too long. I found out later. It's best to get the fifth done before any regrets or procrastination holds me back from the telling the truth. I didn't reread it because I knew better not to. For if I did...my perfectionism would kick in.

I knew I would go through any lengthens for sanity. Doing the fifth would bring me some serenity. Or, perhaps, guilt and

remorse to the particulars would be known and I wouldn't relive the same things over and over again. I was so sick and tired of being emotionally sick.

I was ready to be rid of the heavy load I'd carried around for years. I didn't want to suffer anymore, either. I wanted to face reality and to become mature. I had to confess the people, places and things I didn't understand. Also, I didn't want to keep company with the people, places and things I chose by mistake.

HOPE

Admitting my character defects didn't kill me! I thought the world would come to an end. I thought so many things would go wrong but I kept plowing through. I wanted to have the freedom to make better choices. To be happy without feeling guilty. I wanted to *learn how to live with myself*. And, for this I needed to learn how to rely on my HP, myself and another human being.

What I found out throughout the years is the 5th Step was an ego buster. I had so much false pride and no humility. I couldn't laugh at my mistakes nor did I realize my membership to EA was a lifetime membership.

I continue to make mistakes. I make wrong choices. I have adversities. I am no different from the rest of the EA members. I am certainly not alone by choice. The Twelve Promises had been proven in my life-time...Pat M

Having an emotional illness is a bummer! Doing a Step Five helped me a lot. I did it with my sponsor Pamela. She wasn't horrified at all.

Amazing! I learned in EA f2f meetings that we were as sick as our secrets. I have shared all of my secrets. No one abandoned me.

I don't believe that the EA program is easy. I have never found anything worthwhile that came easily. My strongest advice for anyone is KIND to yourself! Do NOT beat yourself up! That activity helps no one!...Carol

SLOGAN 5: FIRST THINGS FIRST

"First Thing First" in my life is having the desire to be well emotionally. So, I ask myself if something that I am going to do is going to help me with my emotional life or not. If it is not something that will help me with my responsibilities or is not something good for me to be doing, then I just don't do it. I make sure I pay my bills and rent on time, I buy healthy foods, make sure I budget my money since I am on a fixed monthly income and I ask my Higher Power daily to please direct my thoughts, my feelings, my actions and my words. I am not perfect on all this, but this is what I strive for when living first things first in my life...Connie

This helps me to not to be in the future but to stay in the present. So I've taken it to mean "take care of the things that are right in front of you before you start thinking about things further down the road". So in other words do first things first. Let the rest come later

...Sophie





DISCOVERING THE TOOLS OF EA

FEELINGS POWERLESS OF EVERYTHING!

Feeling powerless over everything, but especially over myself, that I had tried to change myself and couldn't - feeling like God had abandoned me - feeling alone - being powerless to do anything about what was happening in other's lives around me and around the world. After learning more about myself from working Step 4, perfectionism was and is a big character defect of mine, hence, when I perceived my world (including myself) and the world around me to not be perfect enough, depression set in and that feeling of being powerless would swallow me up. Anger was also tied up with my depression, I'd get angry with myself about not being able to change certain things about myself. I would stuff my anger and as we all know anger turned inward becomes depression. The weather affected my depression at times too. I hated cloudy, rainy, dreary days or really, really cold days in the winter, but later in all honesty there were many times I suffered from depression during beautiful summer days too. Feeling overwhelmed could send me in a tailspin also, but this also is tied to perfectionism with me.

As I've grown in the program I see how depression is related to not turning my will and my life over to a Higher Power, because when I do turn my life and will over I feel free—free of the burdens of self, of expectations, of perfectionism, etc. All I have to do today is what God has planned for me, not what I have planned for me. How many times I've set out with my agenda for the day to only be interrupted by my Higher Power's plans for me, for example: my agenda is to clean my house or get some project done, but someone calls on the phone who needs to talk or a friend stops by in need or just to talk. This is just one simple example of God's plan for me.

Part of God's will for me today is to spread the message of recovery of EA and to help the new person who walks in the door of the meeting. In doing 12th step or service work of sharing what this program has given me and my experience, strength, and hope, I get to keep what I've been given. In doing this action, I get out of myself and my problems in sharing with another how I work the 12 steps. And in practicing Step 12, with time, my depression or tendency to dwell in the negative and fall back into a depression is removed on a daily basis...**Renee**

I DO REMEMBER

I do remember very much when I was extremely depressed, it lasted so many months. I did not function—and I wanted to die all the time. I now have the steps in my life and they have helped me have a program, no matter what. The steps have helped me not get to "that place" anymore. For this, I am always appreciative and really quite overwhelmed. I still have downward trends in my thinking and strength at these times to turn my thoughts to the positive.

I am grateful to my HP and EA for reminding me of this strength and being here to remind me that there is always something to be positive about. I have learned, thanks to EA, to put little joys in my life and to seek them, no matter what—like my morning coffee, my plants, my animals, the birds, weather, and other people's joys. Even when I feel none in my own life—theirs can be contagious...**Kelly**

A BAD PLACE

I haven't been in a good place. I missed taking my medicine for 3 days. I'm sure that had an effect on how I was handling life. I haven't felt this depressed in a couple of years. I've been doing a lot of taking things one hour at a time. I know my thoughts are unhealthy right now so thinking about things is the worst thing I can do.. I'm trying to stay busy, hanging things on my walls, watching a movie, cleaning my fridge... stay moving, stay on task and not indulging in my thoughts. Of course when a task ends, my feelings take over and I cry. I feel like nothing matters—and what is the point of doing anything, I cry, but I have a tiny bit of faith that something will matter again.

I've been isolating from friends. People want to know what's wrong—they want to help and fix and offer ideas for how I can make myself well again. But I know that I'm powerless over my emotions, and I just have to let them run their course. It's easy to cause drama from this mental state. It's easy to blame others for not loving me enough, I want to call everyone out in my life who has let me down in some way and show them this is what's become of me! I know I need to wait out the feelings and they will pass. I will be okay again!

The crazy thing is that this is so familiar and weirdly comfortable. As much as I reject it, I welcome it. Depression is like an old friend who sleeps on your couch and won't leave and makes you crazy but you know you always have someone there...**Sarah**



2018 - 2019 EA Board of Trustees

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



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The minutes from your Board of Trustee meetings are available at www.emotionsanonymous.org/who-we-are

FOSTERING HEALTHY GROUPS

The EAI strategic plan includes elements of fostering healthy groups. In keeping with that objective, two pieces of literature that are key to keeping a group healthy will be available *for free* with any orders during the month of May. These are: #6 - Group Inventory and #7 - Suggested Meeting format. Both will be available as paper copies and are still subject to copyright protection; groups or individuals should not copy these materials themselves. To receive either of these pieces, simply place your order and include these with your request at our [EA Store](#).

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS

The 12 Traditions are the guidelines by which our group and our fellowship function, they proven over the years to be an effective way of holding the fellowship and individual groups together.

TRADITION 5: Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry its messages to the person who still suffers from emotional problems.

A group health has been an important part of my recovery over the 35 years I've been in the program. To me, sustaining the health and integrity of an EA group allows that group to achieve its primary purpose and carry the EA message effectively to others. It is part of regular maintenance, like changing the oil on a vehicle. I was grateful that members were there to support me when I walked through the door at my first group meeting and reassured that the group, which took regular inventories, could help me and others on our path toward recovery....**Colleen C, EA Board of Trustees**

THOUGHTS ON TRADITION 5 FROM OUR LITERATURE

The mission of every EA group is the same: To reach out to others who are suffering. This tradition is important because it's also a key to every EA member's recovery. If we want to stay well, we must give away to newcomers what we've been given so generously through the program. Our egos may try to make us believe that our own EA group is different or unique, or has a higher purpose in the community. However, the highest purpose we can achieve is to be there when that newcomer walks through the door...***It Works if You Work It p 54***

Tradition Five clearly states the *one* fundamental reason for an EA group to exist. This purpose is to bring to those who still suffer from emotional problems a message of hope for recovery by way of the Twelve Steps of Emotions Anonymous. We, as EA members, have an obligation to share this message with those who do not yet know there is a way of recovery. Newcomers will listen to those who have had similar problems because they want to know our solutions. By sharing, through our group meetings, our experiences, strengths, and hopes, we are uniquely able to help others. We do not share other philosophies, therapies, religions, etc. in meetings. To do so would distract us from the message of Emotions Anonymous. Of course, there are other routes one can take to emotional health. Members of EA are free to utilize professional therapy, pastoral counseling, or other sources of help, if they wish, but discussion or debate about other resources is not appropriate during an EA meeting. Outside of meetings, members are free to share information about other subjects as they wish.

Members attend EA meetings to share their understanding of and experiences with the twelve-step program as applied to their own lives. Newcomers to an EA meeting are there to learn if our twelve-step program might help them.

...EA's 12 By 12

