



January, 2021
Volume 1, Issue 9

Strength & Hope

A message in support of emotional well-being.

FINDING WAYS TO BE OF SERVICE — DERITA P.

Happy New Year! 2021! The turn of a new year. Now is a good time to do something different, something more. It's a good time to buff up my program; a time to evaluate my recovery. Is it as good as it can be? Do I feel peace and serenity? Can I do more; help one more person; put myself in a place to do more service?

Service is one of the keys to my success in the program. The more I serve, the stronger my program. When my helpfulness to others decreases so does my serenity, peace, and thus recovery.

During this pandemic we are all doing things a little differently, but the basis of what we need to do for our recovery remains the same. Personally, I still need to go to a lot of meetings. Instead of face-to-face meetings, I'm doing mostly Zoom and telephone meetings. I still need to do service for EA.—and there are plenty of ways to do this. Instead of helping with physical duties at my face-to-face meetings, such as setting out literature or being a greeter, I can, first of all, get a virtual homegroup. Then I can volunteer at it; maybe I could offer to moderate the meeting or I could sign on early to see if any newcomers are there, welcome them, and answer any questions they have before the meeting starts. Perhaps I could contribute money if I have it. When I think about making a donation, I think of what else I would have spent the money on and ask myself, "Is that (whatever *that* is) more important than my recovery?" In fact, some of the things I would spend money on are not even conducive to my recovery.

We can, and need, to be creative right now in all sorts of ways. Just being there for each other is the greatest form of service. I know many people have been there for me over the years. Why would I not be there for others? And the wonderful part of serving is that it always, *always* makes me feel better, though I don't believe it will at first. I will charge myself to do more. Please join me as we leave 2020 behind and welcome in the new year.

QUICK TIP OF THE MONTH

Find a way to recognize when you are Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired that works for you—perhaps by monitoring your reactions more closely for the next week. When you find yourself slipping into a pattern, try to HALT and take care of what you need.

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JANUARY'S TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP 1

We admitted we were powerless over our emotions - that our lives had become unmanageable.

PROMISE 1

We realize a new freedom and happiness.

JUST FOR TODAY 1

I will try to live through this day only, not tackling all of my problems at once. I can do something at this moment that would discourage me if I had to continue it for a lifetime.

SLOGAN 1

Let go and let God

HELPFUL CONCEPT 1

We come to EA to learn how to live a new way of life through the 12-step program of Emotions Anonymous which consists of 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, concepts, the Serenity Prayer, slogans, Just for Today's, EA literature, weekly meetings, telephone and personal contacts, and living the program one day at a time. We do not come for another person - we come to help ourselves and to share our experiences, strength, and hope with others.

TRADITION 1

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on EA unity.

UNCERTAINTY IS EXHAUSTING

— Kelly M.

We are many months into this pandemic and the lack of control I have over so many things is exhausting. I find managing my own uncertainty is tiring. It is particularly unmanageable when I try to manage other people's uncertainty. We are now in uncertain times, there is no controlling it and there are no certain answers except to have faith that this will pass, not sure when, not sure how. I know this and it brings me great comfort.

My routines bring me closer to my HP too. I was sorting out my recycling this morning and thinking

about something I needed to do. It made me think about how my faith was getting me through this difficult time and how a lack of faith / and panic at work was leading to rash decision making.

I then laughed and reminded myself that I do this too - when my HP is not near me, panic sets in easily and I can resort to old ways. This reminded me that I do better when I respond to the RFT's in the morning—it is a ritual that helps remind me of the best path for me, a path where I am never alone. I am grateful we walk this path together.

SCHOLARSHIP, PRISONER AND HARDSHIP FUNDS NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT.

In the past two years we set up funds to assist in defraying start-up costs for new groups, to send materials to prisoners, and to make EA materials available to individuals who could not afford to purchase them. Member support for these funds was generous but demand has been high. These funds are now depleted. Would you consider making a designated contribution for this effort? Please make a gift online (<https://emotionsanonymous.org/donate/donate-page.html>) or send a check with a note on which fund you wish to support. Thank you!

You can find the Trustee Reflections on the website,
www.emotionsanonymous.org.

This month we focus on Step 1.

CONTRIBUTION GRATITUDE

EAI could not operate without donations and we deeply appreciate your support! Recent gifts have been received from these groups:

Midwest City, OK
Boulder, CO
Summerside, PE Canada
Ukiah, CA
Ljubljana, Slovenija
(Slovenia EA Group)
New Douglas, IL
Bend, OR

GRATITUDE GIFT:

Anonymous, Oakland EA Group

ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS

The fall months have been busy at EAI! During the 2020 board workshop, the trustees approved a new strategic plan for the coming year that focuses on five goals:

- Grow the number of groups
- Increase awareness of EAI
- Increase service by members
- Increase health of existing groups
- Improve organizational finances

These goals will act as our guide in deciding what activities/efforts we will focus on during the coming year. *The common denominator is growth.* And all of this must happen without adding staff time. It's a big job. You, our members, can help by responding to requests for engagement and by making sure the groups you are part of stay 'true' to the program. Thank you for helping grow EAI!

NEW SKILLS, NEW LIFE – ML

When I relax and work with my brain instead of hostile feelings, the pieces seem to go together of their own volition, just like the parts of my life. I'm often reminded that by accepting EA as my "new way of life" I have things to do. I need to hand over to my HP those things I'm struggling with, and do so no matter how much my pride and ego try to tell me I CAN FIX IT by myself, ESPECIALLY when pieces of my life don't fit. This allows me to relax and carry on through my day. If I'm feeling stuck it's because I'm standing on the brakes, so to speak.

Some things I hand over simply dissolve instantly. HP helps me replace my attitude or thought right then and there. Usually a saying, a Just for Today, a step or something I read pops into my head and it's my mini "aha" moment.

Some events (people, places, things) are *defect enticing*...my "old" defective reaction might be to get ornery first, ask questions later. Or withdraw. Or strike back. Or run away. My new way of life gives me 1) an HP to talk to first 2) new tools and skills 3) an awareness of assets I can use instead.

Sometimes the issue might be an "unsolved situation", requiring my best efforts at handing it over. Acting "as if" it's okay... and realizing I'm doing the best I can to let HP handle it in time.

Relationships can be the trickiest. I may have spent a lifetime responding one way, when I now need to learn to respond differently in order to get different results. Unless I am in mortal danger I can live—and be at peace with—an unsolved problem.

I also need to see where I cut my own self worth, confidence, enjoyment of life to pieces. If I have self loathing or self hate, if I have mercilessly high standards, expectations and drive myself - these need work with HP to heal. These are old wounds carried forward.

I have to pray for defects to be removed and replaced. For the people, places, and situations I struggle with most. I have to put them in my HP's care. Other people's lives are NOT MINE to order, dictate or fix.

I am only responsible for myself and how I treat myself and others. To bring out my true self is my responsibility, and to do it I need my Higher Power and this program. It isn't about pretending to be perfect, *it's about being honest.* It's not about the lofty "best" or 'stoic" - it's about the true human that is me. I can step back, take it to my HP, hand it over, and do the next "best first thing."

OFFICE INFORMATION

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2021: CELEBRATING EAI'S 50TH YEAR

A YEAR TO SHARE

EA is valuable to so many people in so many different ways. As we celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our beloved program, we are requesting notes of how the program has helped you or what you've gained from it to publish on this page in future publications. You could include what you value most in the program, how you want to see EA evolve in the next 50 years, or simple words of gratitude. Please email submissions to:

submissions@emotionsanonymous.org

EAI BY THE NUMBERS

1971 THE YEAR OF EAI'S FOUNDING!

1978 THE YEAR THAT THE BIG BLUE BOOK WAS INTRODUCED...THE SAME ONE WE STILL USE TODAY

2019 THE YEAR *WELCOMING THE SPIRITUAL AWAKENING IN ME* WORKBOOK WAS PUBLISHED

4 TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES AT EAI'S CENTRAL OFFICE WHO DO EVERYTHING—MANAGING THE WEBSITE, FIELDING CALLS, FULFILLING LITERATURE ORDERS AND UPDATING PROGRAM LITERATURE

100+ NUMBER OF ITEMS AVAILABLE ON THE EA WEBSITE, INCLUDING MORE THAN 40 PAMPHLETS COVERING A RANGE OF EMOTIONS AND RELEVANT LIFE CIRCUMSTANCES!

Trustee Share — Paul N.

I have only been attending Emotions Anonymous meetings for two and a half years, but in that time, I have experienced how the longevity of EA has been crucially important for the program members. On multiple occasions, people have come through the doors of my relatively new group who had been a part of EA years or even decades earlier in search of the same serenity they once experienced by working the program. That's one of many great aspects of the program: It is always there when we need it.

Sometimes a life event will make past members want to dial up or visit a meeting. Divorce, death, relationships, work or family, just to name a few. New things enter our lives regularly. Knowing that EA is there when times get tough, utilizing the same reliable literature for almost 50 years is a gift. Being able to join with people in a structured way that allows for sharing, learning and reflection can be powerful for healing and growth.

Like most things in life, the program would not be possible without holistic support from its members. On the 50th Anniversary of the program, it is worth thinking about how we can give back to a program that has given so much to us. One way is through sharing your thoughts/experiences with the program. There are many different types of thoughts to share as you can see on www.emotionsanonymous.org under the *Literature* tab of the website menu under "Write For EA." Spreading the word about the program in your community, through emailing or sending flyers to appropriate healthcare professionals (therapists, mental health facilities, etc.) can be of great service as well. Recurring, sustaining contributions are important to EAI so we are able to serve people throughout the world who are looking to improve their emotional wellness as well. Without donations, the office has no way to do all the great things that they do to make sure that the program is available to people looking for hope and serenity.

During the next fifty years, I hope that the program is able to reach an ever-growing number of members in the U.S. and around the world. I truly believe that EA is a program that most people can use at some point in their lives. The tools of the program might look and sound basic at first glance, but working through steps and growing in the program is a commitment that is worth the time and effort required. Fulfilling the twelfth step commitment to carrying the message forward has been an important piece of the program. I hope that together, we will find fun and rewarding ways of experiencing this great program's fiftieth anniversary.