



EA Connection



Your Monthly Newsletter From ISC—September 2011

MATCH 10

Wow— LOOK AT OUR LADDER—IT IS BECOMING MORE COLORFUL. REMEMBER INDIVIDUAL DONATIONS WILL BE MATCHED UP TO \$500 UNTIL THE END OF NOVEMBER.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO OUR ANONYMOUS DONOR AND TO THOSE WHO ARE DONATING.

This is our month to make amends to those we have harmed—funny how our lists never seem to end, but as long as we are human beings there will be names to add. None of us is perfect or even expected to be, but it is good to keep on being aware of our actions. I know that I have offended some folks over the years—not intentionally, but nevertheless it has happened. So I would like to take this opportunity to make amends for those times...*Karen Mead, Executive Director*

OF IMPORTANCE TO GROUPS

WE CONTINUE TO LOOK AT SERVICE AS THE BEST WAY TO SPREAD THE WORD OF RECOVERY THROUGH EA. WE TALKED A LOT ABOUT THIS AT THE LAST CONVENTION AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. HAS YOUR GROUP DECIDED ON A WAY TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO STILL SUFFER? IT CAN BE AS SIMPLE AS PUTTING A NOTICE ON A LOCAL BULLETIN BOARD, ASKING PERMISSION TO LEAVE PAMPHLETS IN YOUR DOCTOR'S OFFICE, OR PLACING AN AD IN A LOCAL NEWSPAPER. A GROUP CONSCIENCE MEETING MIGHT BE A GOOD TIME TO DEVELOP A PLAN SO THAT ALL MEMBERS UNDERSTAND THE NECESSITY OF CARRYING THE MESSAGE.

FROM OUR OUTGOING PRESIDENT

I have many mixed emotions about leaving the Board of Trustees and the position of President for these last two years. I am very thankful for the support of the many folks who have helped me over these three years and the six years previously in the business of the EA Service Center and the EA program.

At last year's convention, we talked a lot about service. I see personally how important service is in my EA program, as well as how service helps keep the message of hope going to those who still suffer from emotional problems.

During my nine years on the Board of Trustees I have watched as the number of groups has lessened throughout the US as well as around the world. Service is a very major part of the recovery story, because we pass along what we have been given. Service will help our number of groups to grow, just as it always has.

The EA literature is still very powerful and helps folks who read it and apply it to live their lives better and find some hope where before there was darkness. The problem is, this hope dies somewhere along the path because folks leave the program and take some of their light with them, and so it becomes hard for others to see where they have gotten this help.

Our program is challenged by so many different parts of society wanting to help those who struggle with their emotions. This EA program is about the person coming to terms with themselves and deciding that they want to live rather than just exist, and going to any length to find that help and then giving away what they have found. Here again, service is a major part of giving the program away...*Paul H, President, EA Board of Trustees*

SPECIAL GIFTS AND MEMORIALS

In memory of Adria B

The Houston TX, Tuesday Group

In honor of his 31 years in the program—Bill S

*In appreciation to Renee R and Todd H for the workshops they presented at the Glen, MI Retreat
Helen W*

**THE EA CONNECTION IS FUNDED THROUGH YOUR DONATIONS—TO DONATE CLICK BELOW
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EA Tools



STEP NINE: MADE DIRECT AMENDS TO SUCH PEOPLE WHEREVER POSSIBLE, EXCEPT WHEN TO DO SO WOULD INJURE THEM OR OTHERS.

In my experience with Step Nine, the more I work my program, the fewer defects I will have. With fewer defects I will have less amends to make. The healthier I am, the quicker I will make my amends when I've done the wrong thing. For me making my amends sooner rather than later is essential, because I hate walking around with the guilt. Fortunately, through recovery, I can see my wrongs and can take responsibility for them and make my amends. But what I really would like to do is change my behavior so I don't have to keep making amends for my same wrongs...*Ms N*

Step Nine has us making amends to those persons, except when to do so would injure ourselves or others. We are not looking for others to forgive us, not at all; we are forgiving ourselves as we make our amends. But the fruition of Step Nine is when we begin to see the 12 promises coming true. And with that, gratitude is a very natural emotion that arises. A spiritual flush carries us...*Victoria*

I like the one phrase in this Step Nine explanation that says we make amends by changing our behavior. What I have discovered is that I've had to make the most amends to myself. Changing the negative thought processes that were so easy they seemed like they were natural to me has been my biggest project. I'm not nearly done, but as I continue to work the EA steps and my thinking alters, my behaviors seem to follow in that positive stream without making much of an effort. My thoughts change and my behavior follows. That's been my experience...*Scott*

CONCEPT NINE: WE UTILIZE THE PROGRAM—WE DO NOT ANALYZE IT. UNDERSTANDING COMES WITH EXPERIENCE. EACH DAY WE APPLY SOME PART OF THE PROGRAM TO OUR PERSONAL LIVES.

I have always been a master at over-analyzing everything. I spent so much time trying to figure out what I did wrong or why I was done wrong that I wasn't moving forward. Over the past few months I have been spending less time analyzing why or how I got to where I am and instead am focusing on what I can do to make me better going forward. Tim McGraw has a song about what he wants to do differently in the next thirty years. I used to not be able to look past the present moment. Now I am planning on how I want to live my next forty years. I am making changes in my life almost daily, and it is really starting to show. Hopefully, eightieth birthday I will be able to look back on my life and see all of the lives I have touched and the good things I have done. Now that I am out of the fire I no longer need to analyze how I got there, just how to keep from going back...*Sharon*

I was far too smart for my own good prior to the EA program. I did find out that even the most brilliant mind is no defense against emotional illness. Secretly, many of us thought we could float above the rest of the folks on brain power alone. I try to remember that intelligence is a God-given attribute that I can use, like any other talent. It does not make me any better than anyone else, and it is not a particularly reliable tool for recovery. For it is a power greater than myself who will restore me to sanity—not a high IQ or a college degree.

Analyzing is paralyzing, where acceptance of my powerlessness and a God who unconditionally loves me brings a power into my life to overcome my difficulties one day at a time as I turn my will and my life over to Him...*Randy*

PROMISE NINE: OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE IMPROVE.

It is very humbling to see how my behaviors and choices have affected others. What is interesting is now that I am aware and trying to live the program and my other program, I see

my relationships with others improving. A funny thing was that I thought they would only improve if the other person changed...*Maria*

How to tell others how I feel in a way that doesn't hurt them or me is something I struggle with. I have not done this well in the past and have lost friendships because of it. Learning how to be honest without being defensive or accusatory is a skill I so desperately need to learn. Lately, I have just withdrawn from discussing my feelings and opted to wait it out, but that is not going to help me in the long run. I know to move forward in healing I need to venture into being assertive about my feelings and still protective of those around me (including myself). I will deal with the problem at hand and will not put another down nor attack their personality. I pray for God's inspiration in using the right language to convey this so the words are helpful and not hurtful...*Irenie*

For the most part I have really good friends and supporters, it was I who was manipulative, I who was trying to make others fit my plans and dance to my tune. This came from my childhood and the feeling of being manipulated then.

I worked through quite a bit of childhood stuff, did my amends, and then allowed the past to be the past. With current relationships I had to learn to keep my hands to myself, listen to my HP and sponsor, talk with fellowship members, learn not to criticize others and let things just be in my own circle. This is particularly important with those closest to me.

My thinking was pretty sick, so I had to stop reacting to it through prayer and practice, particularly if I felt others were trying to manipulate me or make me feel something, because most of the time it wasn't true. Often it was my erroneous thinking and my desire to control my own life my way that was at play. My view of the world was sick, so I often thought what others were thinking and doing was sick too or had sick intentions, when it was usually me...*ML*



EA Tools Applied to Self



Self—Acceptance

I postpone happiness and living life to the fullest because of a lack of self-acceptance. I keep waiting for the magic number on the scale, or the right person to enter my life, or the right job offer; the list goes on and on.

Self-acceptance is an agreement with myself to appreciate, validate, accept and support who I am at this very moment, even those parts I'd like to eventually change. I often have the misconception or belief that if I accepted myself as I am, I wouldn't change, or that I wouldn't work on becoming more of who I want to be. I tend to think that if I don't accept myself, that will be a motivation to change what I don't like about myself.

The ironic thing about that type of thinking is that if I will go for self-acceptance right here, right now, then all of those things that I felt will make me happier will come to me once I let go of the need to have them to live my life to the fullest. I have to look honestly at my beliefs about myself and about others. Let go of the need to be someone else, or to be a different size, or to look a certain way. I have to accept myself as I am right now, today, and then look with wonder at the miracles that will happen once self-acceptance is firmly rooted in my being...**Shorty**

Self—Discipline

I dealt with a difficult situation the other day. In order for me to not "react" negatively to some negative stuff that was happening. I prayed first before I became involved. Praying helps me to be able to be self-disciplined. Even if I am in the middle of some troubling thing, I quickly just say in my mind "help" to my Higher Power or silently say the Serenity Prayer, and I wind up not reacting in a cruel way to make matters worse.

Like the reading said today, "rolling with the punches" brings order to a chaotic life. When I am faced with trying times, I don't have to be walked all over, either. I take whatever actions I need to take, do what I have to do and then just let other stuff go that is negative.

The way life goes, we will most likely be facing difficult things here and there. That is just the nature of life. But with the help of EA, I am more able to not react in kind negatively or act out aggressively to life's difficulties or life's difficult people. I am totally not perfect at this, but I have improved through the years. I may think in my mind all the stuff I want to say to some person acting cruel to me, but I don't have to say it all out loud. I have a choice. I can walk away or just bite my tongue and pray to the Higher Power to help me deal with the issues at hand in a dignified manner.

It takes lots of practice at this stuff. If I lived in a cave, I most likely would only have to deal with me and not other people, and these issues wouldn't be so important. But I don't choose to live in a cave and I am glad to be able to interact with life, even the difficult times, even though they are tough. It is nice to have a loving Higher Power and the EA program to help me through...**Connie**

Self—Talk

When I woke up this morning, the first thing that came out of my mouth was, "It's going to be a bad day." And I really believed that. As I said those words, I noticed a lot of negativity inside of me. As I poured my coffee, I repeated it. I repeated it again as I started my morning talk with my HP. He can only seem to fit me in at 5:30 AM these days.

I realized that I was already setting the feel and pace for my day ahead by proclaiming it bad right off the bat. If I keep that thinking going, everything that is said and done today will inevitably be bad. Yes, I'm going to have to do some things today that aren't nice, but it is probably better for me to effectively deal with each situation and conversation on their own merits. I look back to how many times I started my day with "it's going to be a bad day"...and it was.

My day is undoubtedly going to be filled with challenges. My highest potential is going to be to get through them in the best ways I know how. I know that me and my HP will do it, and I don't need to advance an air of negativity around all of my interactions today. Each obstacle today can be a stepping stone. It's in these tests that I am able to grow. I pray that I'm still on this path of serenity at 7PM...**Michael**

Self—Worth

Some days are more confusing than others for me. I try to keep things simple and focus on what I need to do next. I try to ask my Higher Power for the willingness, courage, and strength to do what I need to do each day. I pray for help making decisions, but I usually wind up second-guessing any decision almost immediately. I am having a really hard time today with self-worth. It is not unusual for me. I feel guilty and selfish for having needs and desires. I wonder if I will ever learn to love myself. I don't even feel like bothering to try today. But I have to; I can't go back to the bottom.

Today I am grateful for my drafty old house, my goofy dog, my patient husband, my ancient cat, and all the people who love me, even when I can't love myself. I haven't found anything to make me happy today, but I am grateful that I could cry. A friend told me recently that if we hold our tears inside, eventually they will fill us up and drown us...**Linda**



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Judie H—Email: judyh8190@comcast.net

EX-OFFICIO: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR 651-647-9712

Karen M—Email: director@emotionsanonymous.org



FROM YOUR TRUSTEES: JUSTICE AS IT RELATES TO STEP NINE.

Making amends to another person for the harm we have caused them has to be well thought out and practiced before delivery so that we don't allow our emotions to become involved if the other person reacts negatively towards our amend. It is important that we accept our responsibility in our actions and then let it go and let God...**Paul H** If more people made good, well-planned amends as Step Nine suggests, the load of our criminal justice system could be lightened. Keep in mind that an effective amends may require much more than a mere apology!...**Vince C.** It has been said that "justice is truth in action." When I think of justice, I think it helps me put things in their perspective while my HP humbles me when I am either making or receiving amends...**Bill L** Making amends to my adult children was one of the most gut-wrenching actions I have taken. The recognition and sorrow over the irrational emotional outburst I subjected them to was overwhelming. When I made my amends to each of them, I said the door would always be open if they later thought of something they wanted to process. This truly has been a gift to me, as the communication has been so enriching—clearing up misunderstandings, a little more pain at times, and much laughter. After several years I no longer feel guarded and shame for my mistakes; we can talk openly. Time, talking, and prayer are healers. one day at a time...**Suzanne G**

Events Far & Near

12th Anniversary Public Information Meeting—September 13,
Champaign, IL. For more info call 217-352-3632 or eamtg2@gmail.com

Fall Retreat— September 23-25, Sunset Lodge, Lake Michigan, Glen MI
Back to the Basics and Sponsorship
For more info: Jan D 630-790-3435 or Vicki B 810-516-6135

23rd Anniversary Public Information Meeting—October 3, 2011,
Euclid, Ohio For more information, call 216-289-6308.

French-Speaking EA Convention—October 21-23, Strasbourg, France
Halt—The First 3 Steps on the Road to Serenity
Contact: Ingeborg ea.infos.id@wanadoo.fr

24th Anniversary Information Meeting—October 25, Akron, OH
For more information call 330-849-0849, e-mail emotionsanon@yahoo.com

Send event info: director@emotionsanonymous.org

TODAY I WILL REMEMBER

I CANNOT DO GOOD OR BAD TO OTHERS
WITHOUT DOING GOOD OR BAD TO
MYSELF... *TODAY BOOK, Jan 11*

Emotions Anonymous™

PO Box 4245

St Paul, MN 55104

Phone 651-647-9712

Fax 651-647-1593

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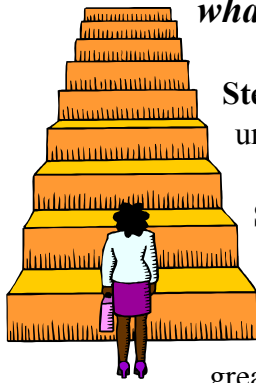
info@emotionsanonymous.org

groupdata@emotionsanonymous.org

orders@emotionsanonymous.org

shipping@emotionsanonymous.org

The Twelve Steps Combined: *The twelve steps give us precise guidance on what we may do in order to recover.*



Step 1—Defines the problem: powerlessness over our emotions, and unmanageable lives.

Step 2—Defines the solution: sanity through belief in a Power greater than ourselves.

Step 3—A decision to take the rest of the steps to learn how that Power greater than ourselves is available to us.

At this point we begin to be at peace with the God of our understanding.

Step 4—An effort to learn the truth about ourselves.

Step 5—The humility to honestly admit our character liabilities to our Higher Power, ourselves, and another human being.

Step 6—A commitment to our Higher Power that we will continue our study of the 12 Steps and follow the clear-cut directions.

Step 7 - Now that we have told God we will do our part, we humbly ask God to do His part.

At this point we begin to be at peace with ourselves.

Step 8—Take the list of people we've harmed, from Step 4 and now add to it if needed anyone we've neglected, used, abused or harmed including ourselves.

Step 9 - Make restitution to all the people we have harmed as listed in Step 8. This action step is vital to long-term emotional sobriety, because this is where we forgive ourselves and others. If we have carefully followed the directions of the first nine steps, we will experience a psychic change or a spiritual awakening.

At this point we will now begin to be at peace with the people and the world around us.

Step 10 - Continue to apply Steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 moment by moment, day by day.

This is how we stay free of old ideas that do not work and keep us emotionally ill.

This is also the beginning of spiritual growth.

Step 11 - This is how we learn to talk to God—pray, and to listen to God—meditation.

Step 12 - This is the promise of the program, spiritual awakening. We continue to discover what our life purpose is and learn how to apply these steps to every area of our lives. This is where we live this Program...*Smitty*