

Hello Everyone!

We held a General Service Board meeting on 8/8/2012.

**Attendees:**

- Estelle H, Baltimore, MD
- Vanessa S, Longwood, FL
- Julie E, Longwood, FL
- Linda, South FL
- Rachel F, Phoenix, AZ
- Annette H, Phoenix, AZ
- Jamie, MA

**Notes:**

- 1) **We reviewed and approved minutes from the July 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.** Action items were completed except one where a clarification was needed:
  - Webmaster Vanessa S of Longwood, FL posted “Suggested Meeting Format for Online Meetings” on the Chatroll page as requested
  - Annette sent, and Vanessa posted
    - The old version of “EDA at a Glance” brochure included all 12 traditions, not just 9 as the current one does.
    - The old version of “Guidance for Difficult Situations.” The older version suggested people should “See the EDA Meeting Guide (available on [www.4eda.org](http://www.4eda.org) / Publications tab) for guidance to groups and group leaders on how to keep a recovery focus and how to deal with monopolizers, cross-talk, crying, anonymity issues and suicide talk.” Pages 9 and 10 of the EDA Meeting Guide address these issues.
  - The new Stories tab will be added immediately after the Literature tab.
- 2) **Meeting listing refresh**
  - Annette sent emails to every email address listed on our meeting page, asking for updates (if any). Many replies mean our website meetings listing is much more current than it was last month.
  - Note to people who answer [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) email: Please do not forward meeting updates to [wm@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:wm@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) unless they came to your personal email address.
- 3) **Recovery Tools: sponsorship, meetings, telephone, writing, literature and service**
  - **Sponsorship / buddies**
    - Rachel noted that sponsorship is a common tool, though perhaps not as common as in other 12-step programs
    - When done well is extremely helpful
    - Important to remember people are equals
    - Rachel brought up the Sponsorship in AA brochure available from the GSB of AA website. **Action Item: Rachel will forward the link to Estelle. Estelle will read and draft a comparable set of Qs&As from an EDA perspective as time allows.**

- **Meetings**
  - Go to them! They really help. ☺
  - Can't get to a meeting? Try the online chat or phone meetings.
  - Want to see people in person, but can't get to one or don't like the local one?
    - Start a meeting!
    - Action item: Vanessa can you please move the "Start a Meeting" tab closer to the top, or add a header that includes links to all the tabs?
  - Meeting startup guidance
    - On the Start a Meeting page, encourage people to contact [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) if they have questions.
    - Action Item:
      - Vanessa, please add the following to the Start a Meeting page: "Have questions about starting a meeting? Ask [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org). One of EDA's volunteer support staff will respond as soon as possible."
- **Telephone** – Estelle volunteered to draft this section. Some thoughts:
  - Leave your number (and repeat it) – the person you are calling will appreciate the consideration
  - Build relationships before you need them
  - Call before you need to
  - Keep conversations brief
  - If you are the caller, get right to the point and name your issue.
    - Be accountable for your thoughts, words and actions.
    - Remember it is your issue, not the other person's.
    - Listen attentively and follow guidance proffered unless there are excellent reasons why you cannot or should not: Take what you can use and leave the rest!
  - Call people back and let them know how things are going
- **Writing / Journaling**
  - Writing breaks the "inner chatter loop"
  - Writing out hot emotions helps us get some distance, perspective and clarity
  - Screaming/vomiting on paper can take away the need to do old behaviors
  - Writing can be a safe way to "talk" about feelings. No one has to know about that nasty swamp of emotions we all have in us.
  - Be sure to manage your journals
    - Don't leave things laying around where people can find them
    - Don't put your name on it
    - Don't put other people's names in it; you know who they are!
  - If you are having difficulty conversing with someone because you are both worked up, having a conversation on paper (writing back and forth) can help defuse tensions and build trust
  - Writing your 4<sup>th</sup> step, 8<sup>th</sup> step, 10<sup>th</sup> step (or even the whole workbook) can move your recovery to the next level if you are honest about your part in every situation where there was hurt or anger
  - Creative expression can be therapeutic!

- **Literature**
  - Search for 12 step literature that appeals to you
  - Avoid literature that is too black/white, good/evil
  - EDA stories of recovery are desperately needed. Please help!
- **Service**
  - We just did flyer on Service – let's use information from it for this section
  - Service, humbly performed, generates peace and comfort for oneself and others
- **Relationships of Trust (Safety)**
  - 1<sup>st</sup> relationships of trust are with Higher Power and program
    - Confers hope of recovery
    - Forms a stable platform and frame of reference for recovery
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> relationship of trust is with self
  - Safety means being conscious of our thoughts and actions, and doing no harm
    - Avoid reference to numbers (i.e. weight, calories) and specific behaviors/techniques
    - Avoid competitive thought and action
    - Personal recovery in EDA depends on EDA unity of purpose to carry the message of recovery: Keep things safe for your fellow group members!
  - Safety with self comes from building trust with oneself and others
    - Engaging in old attitudes and actions is not safe; these hurt us and others
    - Engaging in attitudes and actions of recovery builds relationships of trust
    - Relationships of trust
  - Accountability
    - Means being honest with oneself and others
    - Calling ourselves out when we haven't been thinking and doing what we know we need to do
    - Fosters an adult perspective that enables us to change
  - Anonymity
    - The motto, "What you hear here, who you see here, what you say here, let it stay here," reminds us that we need to make our meetings safe for people to be honest and open with each other
    - Is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, every reminding us to place principles before personalities
- **Visualization**
  - Imagine your life as you would like it to be in recovery
  - Imagine how happy you will be in specific situations when you are in recovery
    - Untroubled by situations that used to bother you
    - Able to negotiate the curves one finds in the road of life with grace and agility
    - Grateful for new opportunities and adventures
  - Work on this vision regularly and you may be surprised to find yourself transforming into your best self
- **Physicality**
  - Do something physical to get past those rough spots when you can't think straight
    - Take a dog for a walk

- Hug someone
- Whack a golf ball or tennis ball
- Go outside – get in touch with nature
- Play a percussion instrument (i.e. bang a drum, play the piano)
- Wash something
- Weed the yard, tend the garden, clean the pool
- Watch out for over-exercise!

#### 4) Literature update

- We still need to write “Guidance for Professionals working with EDA members”
- Annette and Rachel are working on their stories of recovery (August 22<sup>nd</sup>)
- When contacted about sharing their story of recovery, many people express concern that they do not have much to share. We would like to challenge that belief!
  - **Have you worked your steps** (or are you close to finishing your first pass through)?
  - **Have you been able to make amends** for negative impacts your attitude and behaviors may have had on others?
  - **Have you been able to avoid disordered behavior** (for at least a few weeks at a stretch, with only occasional difficult days over the last several months)?
  - **Do you regularly feel a quality of peace and happiness** that is markedly different from when you are actively engaged in your eating disorder?

**If so, we encourage you to share your story of recovery!** Please contact [literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) with your story (preferably five pages or less) as soon as possible. We ALL really need to hear what it was like, what happened and what it is like now. To all you perfectionists out there: Please know that we are all “works in progress” and that no one is ever perfect!

#### 5) Email response coordination

- Julie, supported by Vanessa and Rachel, and occasionally Tami and other, continues to do an amazing job responding to EDA email. We are so grateful to have someone doing such a great job.
- This is where we reach people most in need of direction and needed human contact and guidance. We always need EDA volunteers to help carry the message.
- Please drop a line to [info@eatingdisordersanonyous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonyous.org) if you are interested and willing to respond to email (generally just a few a day) for one week a month for a three months.

#### 6) Website update

- Webmaster Vanessa S. is caught up with the influx of meeting information change requests and action items from last month.
- There are many important and useful changes that could be applied to the website, but we need a volunteer to take over the easy, once-a-week task of helping EDA groups communicate date, time and location of their meetings.
- If we had someone to help with website maintenance, Vanessa could devote time to the upgrades we know would help the user experience. This is a great service opportunity for

someone with some exposure to website maintenance and access to a computer. If interested, please email [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.com](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.com).

## 7) Treasurer's report

- Current balance is \$1,293.94
- Currently holding one undeposited check for \$100.00
- An annual plan for utilization of funds has not yet been discussed

## 8) New business

Linda requested that we discuss a sponsor pool

- The General Service Board has tried to support a roster of sponsors in the past.
- It is actually a great idea and one that comes up regularly. The GSB would love to have an amazing and deep bank of potential sponsors to whom we could connect potential sponsees
- The role of Sponsor Coordinator within the GSB required a lot of time and effort and too many people overloaded sponsors with potential sponsees. We lost a lot of sponsors that way.
- When the GSB tried to line up sponsors with sponsees, there was an expectation that the sponsors were somehow vetted or certified. The GSB has no power to do any such thing and also became concerned about possible legal implications.
- It was troubling to deal with fallout from bad situations
  - One person had over two hundred sponsees and then abruptly stopped sponsoring – a situation that left many people confused and angry
  - In some sponsor-sponsee relationships, the sponsor was competing with their sponsee in a way that was very unsupportive of recovery.
- Jamie suggested the Board consider adopting a “first responder” model; someone who would be willing to talk to people on a one-time basis to provide guidance on how to find a local sponsor.
- We’ve heard some great ideas and need more volunteers to make this happen!

**Meeting adjourned at 7:19 PM MST (8:19 PM MDT, 9:19 PM CDT, 10:19 PM EDT)**

Please send these minutes to members of your group if your group maintains an email contact list!

Thanks to all who attended!  
Best regards,  
Annette / Michelle