

Hello Everyone!

We held a General Service Board meeting on 12/12/2012.

**Attendees:**

- Regina, Rockland County, NY
  - Julie E, Longwood FL
  - Annette H, Phoenix, AZ
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- We reviewed and approved minutes from our 11/14/12 meeting.
  - We discussed email response coordination and website support – there is **always** lots of opportunity to help in these areas. Please drop a line to [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) if you can volunteer your time and talent for a few hours a week. Your help may be the one thing that makes all the difference for someone.
    - a. Alita has been doing a wonderful job with email responses: Thank you very, very much!
    - b. It has been very helpful to have several people able to reply especially during this season of holiday travel. Thank you especially to Julie, Tami and Rachel
    - c. Vanessa completed all website action items from our last meeting:
      - 1) Meeting Starter Kit zip file has been updated
      - 2) Updated Meeting documents have been posted
      - 3) The Book “Food is not the Problem” by Michelle Morand was listed under a new “Books” section on our Links page
      - 4) Firstourselves.org has been added to the Links page
    - d. If we can find someone to update meeting information on the website, this would help Vanessa find time to make the needed updates to enhance to overall web experience for EDA members. Please send a quick note to [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) if you have html experience and can volunteer even a small amount of time per week.
  - We discussed other action items from the November meeting:
    - a. Annette updated the Meeting documentation hardcopies
    - b. Annette sent the flyer for the book “Animal Models Animal Models of Eating Disorders - edited by Nicole M Avena – to several professionals working with eating disordered clients to seek their opinion of the research and got one response back. The respondent was interested in the research but not able to comment due to unfamiliarity with the project and subsequent publication(s).
    - c. Annette agreed to forward the flyer to additional professionals, to request peer-reviewed publication references from the editor, and to bring the topic back to the Board when any responses are received.
  - We reviewed progress on “Our Stories”
    - a. Due to competing (holiday and work-related) interests vying for time, Annette is still working on the steps portion of her story.
    - b. No new stories have come in for posting to the website since “Maxx’s story”
  - We spent about forty minutes working on content for a “Guidance for Professionals” brochure. We considered the below questions and drafted some responses that will be reviewed at our next meeting in January. Some of the below content was added/modified since our meeting.

**Draft of “Guidance for Professionals” to be reviewed at January 2013 GSB meeting:**

- **Why should I refer my clients to EDA?**
  - EDA provides group support for people seeking recovery from an eating disorder, providing examples of recovery and conveying the hope of recovery to those in need
  - 12-step recovery programs have a solid record of helping people recover from addictions from which they can completely abstain; EDA is a 12-step recovery program with a difference. In EDA, we focus on balance rather than abstinence. We reject absolute, black-and-white thinking about recovery. Balance is particularly important in recovery from eating disorders because it offers a position between rigidity and being out-of-control that is both achievable and healthy. Having realistic, healthy goals enables people to build the essential relationships of trust with themselves and others that support recovery.
  - The only requirement for EDA membership is a desire to recover from an eating disorder. There are no dues or fees for EDA membership.
- **What is the relationship between EDA and AA?**
  - EDA is founded on the principles (12 Steps and 12 Traditions) of AA and offers support for those seeking recovery from an eating disorder that is similar to the type of support offered people seeking recovery from alcoholism in AA
  - A key distinction between EDA and AA is that EDA focuses on moderation and balance rather than absolute abstinence
  - Another distinction is that EDA does not embrace the disease model of addiction as does AA; people can and often do recover from eating disorders
  - Like AA, however, EDA places emphasis on experiencing life fully, without unnecessary restrictions
- **Are there "sponsors" in EDA to guide those new to the program?**
  - Some groups have volunteers with time and energy to help others work the steps, however, not all groups are so lucky
  - EDA encourages everyone to reach out and work with others, both within and outside of meetings, to build a solid recovery. We call partners in recovery “buddies” and people are encouraged to find a buddy with whom to work the steps
- **What is EDA's position on the disease model of addiction?**
  - EDA rejects the disease model of addiction; people can and often do recover fully from their eating disorders
  - In EDA, we recognize that our responses to the provocations and delights of life are conditioned by how we have and continue to respond; life-long, seemingly immutable patterns can be re-imagined and rebuilt. EDA recognizes that recovery is hard work and requires a great deal of support; recovery is a process, not an event.
- **What is the relationship between EDA and OA?**
  - Although both are 12-step groups led by members seeking solutions to the same problems, EDA and OA provide very different answers
  - In OA, members are expected to abstain from specific foods of concern and to adopt specific disciplines around eating as a precondition of recovery
  - In EDA, members are devoted to helping each other develop more resilient relationships with themselves, others and food. Diets and weight management techniques do not solve our problems coping with ourselves and our lives.

- EDA members discuss disordered thinking so that we can talk about solutions. This generally involves recognizing life choices, trying to make them responsibly, and learning from mistakes as we go.
- **Does EDA endorse any specific food plan or program?**
  - EDA endorses sound nutrition and discourages any form of rigidity around food.
  - Food is nourishment for mind, body and soul. Balance, not abstinence, is our goal.
  - Food issues often surface as coping mechanisms for living the lives we have been dealt or have chosen. Members work to identify, establish and reinforce adequate and appropriate ways of responding to life. In time and with practice, new methods of dealing with life issues gradually replace the self-limiting rigidity and self-destructive behaviors that are hallmarks of an eating disorder.
- **I would like to audit a meeting before referring clients. How do I arrange this?**
  - Some EDA meetings are “open” and may be visited by the occasional friend, family member, student or interested professional who contacts the meeting ahead of time and requests to sit in on a meeting
  - Other EDA groups are “closed” except to people seeking recovery from an eating disorder
  - Please visit the meetings page of the EDA website, [www.4EDA.org](http://www.4EDA.org) to find contact information for meetings by geographic location, and be sure to call or write before attending
- **May I facilitate meetings held at my office or clinic?**
  - By definition, an EDA meeting is run by and for people seeking recovery from an eating disorder
  - Unless you are in recovery from an eating disorder, facilitating a meeting means it is not an EDA meeting
  - Therapists and other professionals have kick-started some very successful EDA meetings by facilitating ED recovery support groups using EDA literature then turning the meeting over to attendees. At the point EDA members start running a meeting, it is an EDA meeting.
- **How does EDA work with professionals who work with eating disordered clients?**
  - EDA provides group support for people committed to recovery, providing examples of recovery and conveying the hope of recovery to those in need
  - EDA does not refer its members to specific professionals, but we do refer people to [www.edreferral.com](http://www.edreferral.com) and similar organizations that our members have found helpful
  - Early recovery typically requires a great deal of support, and often necessitates the involvement of a team of professionals -- physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, dietician – to help establish new patterns and ways of thinking
  - EDA does not provide a substitute for or alternative to professional care, and EDA members work easily with members of the professional community: we recognize your importance to recovery and greatly appreciate your help.
- **Update on links on our Links page**
  - Tami is still working on these
  - Two links have been added since last meeting

○ **New business**

- Action Item for Vanessa: Regina requested a change to the following meeting:
  - **From:** Pearl River, NY Wednesdays @ 11:00 AM – 12 PM and Saturdays @ 10:30-11:30 AM. St Stephen's Episcopal Church, 84 Ehrhardt Road (near intersection with Pierce Parkway).
  - **To:** Pearl River, NY Saturdays @ 10:30-11:30 AM. St Stephen's Episcopal Church, 84 Ehrhardt Road (near intersection with Pierce Parkway).  
Contact Regina for more information at 845-429-4625
- Deferred due to time constraints until January meeting:
  - Need more focus on working the steps with other people
  - Some EDA literature encourages people to attend other 12-step meetings. There has been a suggestion to remove such references
  - We have had a request to update "More on Eating Disorders" to remove "brought us to ruin" references. This type of hyperbole is not conducive to recovery; we should weed out and remove language that suggests we are engaging in cognitive distortion.

**We adjourned at 8:11 PM MST.**

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

Thanks to those who attended!

Have wonderful and safe holidays, and a happy, healthy and prosperous New Year!

Best regards,

Annette (aka Michelle)