

Hello Everyone!

We held a General Service Board meeting on 03/13/2013.

Attendees:

- Alita, British Columbia, CAN
- Annette H, Phoenix, AZ
- Julie, Longwood, FL
- Roger, MA

Notes:

- We reviewed minutes from our 2/13/13 meeting. All action items were completed.
- We discussed telephone and online meetings (attendance and leadership)
 - The Wednesday evening online meeting is going great with 11 to 16 people each week
 - There were no updates on phone meetings; we would appreciate hearing how they are going. Please drop a line to info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org
- We discussed EDA Email Response Coordinator and EDA Webmaster opportunities
 - Responding to EDA email is an essential service that is always needed
 - There are many opportunities and ways to help
 - The same folks have been volunteering for over a year and we could really use some help
 - **Action Item:** Annette will update the roster of invitees to the GSB meetings; the existing roster is about six months old and there have been many changes.
 - Annette mentioned the Service page our webmaster Vanessa had wanted to put up. Alita noted that she had put up a Service page for her group's office. It described the positions available and enabled volunteers to click a link that brought up a prompt for contact information that the system would then email to her. **Action Item:** Annette will attempt to add a Service page with similar features listing open GSB service positions. Alita offered to help if needed. Thanks, Alita!
- We discussed progress on literature
 - Annette updated all four Suggested Meeting Formats as well as "More on EDA" per last meeting's changes, updated the "EDA Meeting Starter Kit" with the new material, replaced the physical hard copies and posted the changed files on the website
 - We have had a submission for "Our Stories" from a young woman. This needs to be formatted and posted on the website. Action Item: Annette will contact Rachel about formatting the material.
- There have been two proposals for literature updates:
 - 'Balance, not *necessarily* abstinence is our goal'
 - We discussed the topic at length. The consensus of the group is that "Balance, not abstinence, is our goal" felt safer and more correct than "Balance, not necessarily abstinence, is our goal."
 - The proposal for change was declined. We will keep the statement as it is.
 - Replace "training and practice" with "awareness and willingness" in the Suggested meeting format.
 - One of our attendees had discussed the proposed change with her group earlier in the day. We deliberated about the idea of "being an adult." We considered leaving the idea out altogether, expanding on the idea and removing the specific "adult" reference so as to prevent alienating teens, and changing the words to be less imperative, in

addition to considering the proposed alternative phrasing, “Be an adult. This takes awareness and willingness.” The consensus of the group is that “Be an adult. This takes training and practice” was a “take what you can use and leave the rest” issue. We concurred that while the current statement might alienate or offend some members, more members thought the phrase had helped them. There was concern that changing the statement would diminish its clarity and strength.

- The proposal for change was declined. We will keep the statement as it is.
 - We reviewed two additional sections of a “Guidance for Professionals” draft flyer. Here is the work to date. Please join us at our next GSB meeting on April 10th, 2013, when we hope to finish the flyer. Here is the work to date:
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Draft of “Guidance for Professionals”

- **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.
 - Having realistic, healthy goals enables people to build the essential relationships of trust with themselves and others that support recovery.
 - 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.
 - 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 Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)?**
 - EDA is founded on the principles (12 Steps and 12 Traditions) of Alcoholics Anonymous (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, EDA encourages its members to focus on the solution, not the problem
 - EDA members work the steps, as do other 12-step program members, to achieve the balance and calm perspective that makes a happy and purposeful life possible
- **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. We strongly encourage EDA members who have made significant progress working the steps to sponsor others.
 - We call partners in recovery “buddies.” EDA advocates working with others, whether as a buddy, as a sponsee or as a sponsor, within and outside of meetings, to build a solid recovery.

- **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 life are conditioned by how we have always reacted. Life-long patterns can be changed. 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 Overeaters Anonymous (OA)?**
 - Although both are 12-step groups led by members seeking solutions to the same problems, EDA and Overeaters Anonymous (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.

We left off our review here (3/13/2013) and will continue with the remainder (below) at our April meeting.

- **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 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 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.
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Action Items

- Annette will update the roster of invitees to the GSB meetings; the existing roster is about six months old and there have been many changes.
- Annette will attempt to add a Service page with similar features listing open GSB service positions. Alita offered to help if needed. Thanks, Alita!
- Annette will contact Rachel about formatting the submission for “Our Stories” from Amanda

We adjourned at 7:00 PM MST.

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

Thank you to all who attended and to all who serve EDA!

Best regards,
Annette (aka Michelle)