

Hello Everyone!

We held General Service Board meeting this evening, October 14th. The General Service Board of Eating Disorders Anonymous is an organization set up to help EDA groups carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. We meet every month on 2nd Wednesdays.

Attendees:

- Sarah – Central CA (representing phone meetings)
- Lois – Rockland County, NY
- Nuria – Palm Beach County, FL
- Becky P – Houston, TX
- Annette H – Phoenix, AZ

Minutes:

- **We discussed progress on the EDA text, Eating Disorders Anonymous.**
 - A draft of the sections completed so far is available on the EDA website at <http://www.4eda.org/EDAbigbook.html>.
 - We still need help editing the sections we have posted, and sections still in progress. If you find something in reading these that would improve our work so far, please send your comments to literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org
 - We discussed the material so far. We agreed at tonight's GSB meeting that the portion of the Chapter, "We Agnostics of EDA" that describes how to work the steps will be removed and worked into the next three chapters: "EDA Recovery: How It Works (Steps 1-4)," "EDA Recovery: Into Action (Steps 5-11)," and "EDA Recovery: Working With Others (Step 12)."
 - **Our goals are to:**
 - Ensure that the content of each of the EDA chapters reflects the intent of the same chapters in the AA text, Alcoholics Anonymous
 - Broaden the reach of the Steps to ensure that anyone (religious, spiritual, agnostic or atheist) can work them
 - Shore up the content of some of the sections, including the sections that cover how to work Steps 1-4. In the original AA text, Step 1 is covered in the chapter "More About Alcoholism," Step 2 is covered in the chapter, "We Agnostics," and Steps 3 and 4 are covered in "How it Works." Although our text covers Step 1 in "More About Eating Disorders" and covers Step 2 in "We Agnostics of EDA" we agreed it would be best to revisit these foundational Steps in "EDA Recovery: How It Works."
 - **Clarify Step 3:** Religious or non-religious, people of faith or not, we all struggle with Step Three. The truth is that mere belief in God or a Higher Power/Higher Purpose will not save anyone from their eating disorder. Faith alone is insufficient. Only active reliance on our God, Higher Power or higher purpose will save us. As long as we remain at the center of our own universe, we will not have the necessary perspective required for recovery: we will continue to be very vulnerable to emotional turmoil, and are likely

to continue to feel a deep and aching neediness. We have to put God, our Higher Power or a higher purpose, at the center of our lives, replacing ourselves and our issues as the thing of central importance. Only by making something greater than ourselves the most important thing in our lives can we develop the perspective to make sense of our lives. Only by practicing reliance on this new perspective do we find relief from our eating disorders.

Somewhat ironically, we find we cannot make this transition from self-centeredness to reliance on something greater than ourselves *until we agree to take care of our own basic needs for air, water, food, clothes, shelter, sleep and safety.*

We have to take care of basics so we can turn our attention to what really matters. It is a relief to find that what really matters is how we can use our talents and abilities to serve God and/or the greater good!

- **Clarify Step 4:** We agreed that the EDA version of Step 4 will include a brief (one-page) inventory for each of the following:
 - **Fear:** things that frightened or still frighten us
 - **Resentment:** people and institutions that regularly made or make us angry
 - **Self-Pity:** reasons we felt or feel sorry for ourselves
 - **Shame:** things for which we felt or feel ashamed, though not responsible for them (examples include sexual orientation, body type, ethnicity, being bullied or abused)
 - **Guilt or “harms done”:** wrongs we had done or are doing to others (including at a minimum: lies, cheating, infidelity, theft, emotional and property damage)
 - **Confusion:** situations where we felt or still feel abandoned or bewildered
 - **Frustration:** things that made or make us angry, even if we have no resentment in connection to them
 - **Despair:** reasons for hopelessness, past and present

On each of the inventory pages, we create a table with the following columns (we will include examples):

- **Source** (who or what was the source of the emotion)
- **Reason** (why, or what caused the emotion)
- **At Risk** (which part of us was threatened or hurt: life itself, our pride; self-esteem; ambition for reward, recognition or validation; finances, sexual or intimacy needs, family or social relationships)
- **My Error** (what was the error in thinking that led us to be sensitive or vulnerable in ways that prevented us from growing stronger)
- **Resolution** (what are we willing to do about it now, and what will we want to do the next time we feel this way)

It is very important for people not to get bogged down on Step 4. Our daily Step 10 work is sure to reveal anything that that we may have missed.

- Our chapter, “EDA Recovery: Working With Others (Step 12)” will include much of what Nuria has used to help her sponsees take still others through the process of working the Twelve Steps. Nuria makes it clear that working the Steps with someone means reading the AA text, Alcoholics Anonymous, together, not just giving assignments. When reading AA literature, we replace the words “alcohol” and “drinking” with “acting out” and we replace the word “alcoholic” with “eating disordered.” After reading a section together, sponsors make sure that sponsees really understand the content, before any specific assignments are given.
 - **We still need stories of recovery!**
 - Remember, the Twelfth Step is to carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer. There is no better way to ensure you keep your recovery than to continue to share your truth with others who need to hear it.
 - If you have worked the Twelve Steps of EDA and are in recovery, we want and need your story! In five pages or less, please tell us what it was like when you were active in your ED, what happened that got you into recovery, and what it is like now that you are in recovery. If you can suggest a title for your story, that would be even better
 - Your story will be anonymous, and you will have the right to approve the final edits
 - Please send your story to literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org
- **Sponsorship:**
 - There is a huge need for EDA sponsors. If you are available to sponsor via email or skype, please contact EDAinformation@gmail.com
 - **Suggestions for EDA sponsors:**
 - Working the Steps with someone before the EDA text is complete currently means reading the AA text, Alcoholics Anonymous, together, not just giving assignments. When reading AA literature, we replace the words “alcohol” and “drinking” with “acting out” and replace the word “alcoholic” with “eating disordered.”
 - Provide your phone number, not just your email address, to sponsees. Have them call you to arrange times when you can read together, or use Skype, to complete the readings.
 - After reading a section together, sponsors make sure that sponsees really understand the content, before any specific assignments are given.
 - An early draft of the EDA chapter, “EDA Recovery: Working with Others (Step 12),” providing specific instructions on how to take sponsees through the Twelve Steps, is attached. Thank you Nuria!!
- **Help for new and existing EDA meetings:**
 - Is attendance at your meeting lagging? Suggestion: Get the word out!
 - Ask if you can leave flyers or business cards in counseling centers.

- Local papers sometimes publish Twelve Step group meeting times for free: a suggestion is to call and find out.
- Participate in local events that bring attention to eating disorders, and hand out flyers/business cards and EDA brochures. Some companies will print 250 business cards for around \$25, and the GSB can help defray the cost. Send requests for such help to info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.
- **Example:**
 - Becky will be setting up a booth at for the annual NEDA walk November 14. EDA is not affiliated with NEDA, but carrying the message of recovery means going to the places where people interested in recovery from an eating disorder are likely to be.
 - The GSB will help provide brochures, and will pay for business cards with the Houston EDA group's meeting information on them

Action Items:

- **Becky:** send Annette sample business card for review/approval and physical address for sending brochures to support getting the word out in Houston.
- **Sarah:** finish review of "We Agnostics of EDA" (sans Steps).
- **Annette:** create "How It Works," "Into Action" and "Working With Others" drafts from existing (overlong) chapter, and incorporate Nuria's material explaining how to take sponsees through the Twelve Steps using the AA Big Book and AA 12&12.

We adjourned the meeting at 7:20 PM MST.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, November 11th, 2015.

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)

Note: This email address is checked only monthly. Please send comments and inquiries to info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.