

Recovery Tools

Steps:

- The Twelve Steps of the EDA program of recovery are the “main tool” used to recover from an eating disorder.

Sponsorship:

- Sponsors can provide the insight and inspiration needed to successfully work the Twelve Steps of the EDA program of recovery. Sponsors can also modeling recovery through sharing their experience, strength and hope.
- When working with a sponsor, be honest, open-minded, and willing to try new ideas
- Be sure to talk about the emotions and thinking that lead to ED behaviors. Behaviors are symptoms of the issue; the underlying emotions and thinking are something a sponsor or counselor may be able to help you address.
- Remember everyone is responsible for their own actions. Sponsors are not responsible for your decisions and actions.
- Having difficulty finding a sponsor? A qualified therapist or registered dietitian who works with people in recovery from eating disorders can help with non-12-step aspects of recovery, and anyone who sponsors in other 12-step programs can help guide you through the steps.
- If you have worked the Steps and are able to sponsor others, please contact sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.

Meetings:

- Go to them! They really help.
- Can't get to a face-to-face meeting? Try the online or phone meetings, or start a meeting yourself at a time and place convenient for you! Meeting startup guidance is available on the EDA Start a Meeting page at www.4EDA.org.

Service:

- Service is a foundation of recovery in all 12-Step groups. As we recover, and work to maintain recovery, we continue to build and develop more perspective, peace and power to address our own life challenges as a result of the efforts we make to help those who still suffer as we once did.
- If we have been patient and persistent in working the first eleven Steps, we will have experienced a transformation that enables us to live at peace with ourselves and the world around us. In Step Twelve, we happily share our experience, strength, and hope with those who suffer with eating disorders as we once did, glad that even our worst experiences can now serve a good purpose.

Some ways to help:

- Greet newcomers and make a point of helping everyone feel welcome and valued
- Share your experience, strength and hope at meetings
- Work the 12 Steps and help others find recovery
- Contact a local therapist and provide literature and information about your meeting time and location
- Put a notice in a local newspaper about your group. Newspapers will often list 12-Step groups for free
- Pick up a leadership position in your group. Each group should have a leader who guides the meeting every week.
- Each group should have a Treasurer, a General Service Board Representative, and a Literature Coordinator who brings a sample of literature made available for free to visitors and new members
- Carrying the message of recovery reinforces gratitude, solidifies new habits of thought and action, and fills us with purpose and joy.

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 act out.
- 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.
- Manage your journals: don't name people in them.
- Writing your 4th step, 8th step, and maintain a written 10th step can move your recovery to the next level if you are honest about your part in every situation where there was hurt, anger, or fear.

Literature:

- Read the EDA Big Book, including the stories, at www.4EDA.org/EDABigBook.
- Avoid literature that is judgmental (black/white, good/bad).
- Flyers, brochures, a Step Workbook and more Suggestions for Recovery are available on the EDA website at www.4EDA.org/publications

Telephone:

- Leave your number (and repeat it) – the person you are calling will appreciate the consideration.
- Build relationships and 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 necessarily the other person's.
 - Listen attentively and follow guidance offered unless there are excellent reasons why you cannot or should not
 - Call people back and let them know how things are going.

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).
 - Dance.
 - Create art.
 - Wash something.
 - Weed the yard, tend the garden, or clean the pool.
- Watch out for over-exercise!

Visualization:

- Imagine your life as you would like it to be
- Imagine your life 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.

Tools help us achieve the goal of building trust – with ourselves, Higher Power, and others:

- **Trust**
 - means being conscious of our thoughts and actions, and doing no harm
 - Avoid references to numbers (i.e. weight, calories) and specific behaviors/techniques.
 - Avoid competitive thought and action.
 - Efforts toward safety build relationships of trust.
- **Honesty**
 - Fosters trust with self and others
 - Means calling ourselves out when we haven't been thinking and doing what we know we need to do. It's a springboard for 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, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

How to Find EDA

Look for meetings, publications, and more at:

www.4EDA.org or
www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org

Email:
info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org

Or write to:
Eating Disorders Anonymous
PO Box 55876
Phoenix, AZ 85078-5876

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For more information please visit our website at:

www.4EDA.org

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