

# EDA Recovery Tools

## Steps

- The Twelve Steps of EDA are transformative practices that help us gain and sustain perspective and balance. The Steps are the “main tools” of recovery for EDA members.

## Sponsorship

- Sponsors can provide the insight and inspiration needed to successfully work the Twelve Steps of the EDA program of recovery.
- Sponsors model recovery through sharing their experience, strength, and hope.
- When working with a sponsor, be honest, open-minded, and willing to try new ideas.
- 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? Check out the EDA meeting listings at [www.4EDA.org](http://www.4EDA.org). Attend EDA meetings, listen for someone who has the recovery you want, and reach out. Call or text and get to know the person, then ask about sponsorship.

## EDA Meetings

- Meetings support us with fellowship and comradery as we overcome challenges, develop new perspectives, and celebrate milestones.
- Can't get to a face-to-face meeting? Try online chat or Zoom meetings, or start a meeting yourself at a time and place convenient for you! Meeting startup guidance is available on the Create A New Meeting page at [www.4EDA.org](http://www.4EDA.org).

## Service

- Service is a foundation of recovery in all 12-Step fellowships. The efforts we make to help those who still suffer as we once did can serve to build and strengthen our recovery, helping us develop more perspective, peace, and power to address our own life challenges.
- Even the smallest effort to sustain EDA and its members supports the program's continuation, EDA members, and ourselves.
- 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.
- Show up early and stay after the meeting to welcome everyone, even on Zoom.
- 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 meeting needs a chair who guides the meeting. Active groups typically have a Treasurer, a General Service Board Representative, and a Literature Coordinator.
- 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.
- Getting heavy emotions out of our heads and onto paper helps us express ourselves authentically, which reduces the need to act out.
- Writing can be a safe way to “talk” about feelings. Getting out our deepest, darkest thoughts – no matter how bad we judge them to be – helps us feel better. Note: it is not necessary to name people in journals.
- Writing your 4<sup>th</sup> Step, 8<sup>th</sup> Step, and 10<sup>th</sup> Step can move your recovery to the next level if you are honest about your part in every situation where there was hurt, anger, fear, or resentment.

## Literature

- Read the EDA Big Book, including the stories, at <https://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/literature/eda-big-book/>. There is an audio recording of the entire EDA Big Book available off the same link.
- Useful materials are available at no charge on the EDA website at <https://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/literature/>.
- Audio recordings of EDA workshops are available: <https://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/literature/eda-workshops/>.

## Text and Telephone

- Text messaging can be a good way to get to know someone before calling. Many EDA members around the globe leverage technology to talk and text with one another directly.
- Leave your number in the chat window on Zoom meetings. Build relationships. Text or 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 be open to their ideas, then make your own decisions.
  - 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. Here are some options to consider:
  - Hug someone.
  - Hit some golf or tennis balls.
  - Go to a batting cage.
  - Go outside – get in touch with nature.
  - Play a percussion instrument such as a drum or piano.
  - Take a walk.
  - Dance.
  - Create art.
  - Wash something.
  - If you have any of these, consider weeding the yard, tending the garden, or cleaning 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.
- Create any visualization that resonates with you. Imagine yourself in this visualization regularly and you may be surprised to find yourself transforming.

## Tools help us achieve the goal of building trust – with ourselves, God/Higher Power/higher purpose, and others:

- **Trust**
  - Trust means being conscious of our thoughts and actions, and doing no harm.
  - Trust means letting go of old ideas, including weighing, measuring, and any rigid behaviors or techniques.
  - Trust means avoiding competitive thought and action.
  - Trust means taking actions that build safety, thus increasing our trust in self and others.
- **Honesty**
  - Honesty means calling ourselves out when we haven't been thinking and doing what we know we need to do.
  - Honesty fosters trust in ourselves and others.
  - Honesty is a springboard for change.
- **Anonymity**
  - The motto, "What you hear here, who you see here, when you leave 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.
  - Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## How to Find EDA

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Look for meetings, publications, and more at:  
[www.4EDA.org](http://www.4EDA.org) or  
[www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org](http://www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org)

Email:  
[info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org)

*EDA*

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For more information please visit  
our website at:

[www.4EDA.org](http://www.4EDA.org)

January 2022