

Hello Everyone! Happy Holidays!

Especially at this time of year, **please help carry the message of recovery.** Ideas to consider:

- Contact a local treatment center or correctional facility and offer to talk with them about EDA
- Write a review of the EDA Big Book on the Amazon or Barnes&Noble website
- Let your pastor know about the book, and offer to make yourself available to help with anyone struggling with food issues
- Contact a local therapist who works with eating disordered people, let them know about the book, and offer to make yourself available to help with anyone struggling with food issues
- Offer to sponsor (or even just talk to someone needing support) by contacting [sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org). (Please be sure to clarify whether you've worked the Steps when writing in!)

#### Newsflash!

- **The EDA Big Book [Kindle edition](#) is now available for only \$7.99!** (That's a \$2 discount.) The [Nook edition](#), not discounted, is about 50 cents more. You do not need a Kindle or Nook device to read the Kindle or Nook edition. You can download the Kindle or Nook app on your phone or tablet.
- **AWESOME news: Treatment Facilities are offering their locations as venues for EDA groups:**
  - Casa Palmera in Del Mar, California
  - Rosewood in Tempe Arizona
- Contact [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) for details if you are interested in starting or attending an EDA group at either of these locations!

Ok, back to “regularly scheduled programming:” – the General Service Board of Eating Disorders Anonymous, an organization set up to help EDA groups carry the message of recovery to those who still suffer, held a meeting on December 14, 2016.

We meet every month on 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesdays. Every EDA group should have a General Service Board representative who dials in to our GSB conference call. You are, however, always welcome to join us, whether or not you are not a General Service Board representative.

#### Attendees:

- Stacey F – Pensacola, FL
- Annette H – Phoenix, AZ
- Connie – Fort Bragg, CA
- Nuria – Florence, SC
- Cherie – Calgary, Alberta, Canada

- Jhena—Pittsfield, MA
- Liz F – California
- Julia – Chicago, IL
- Gina – Lancaster, PA
- Allyson – Delray Beach, FL

**Notes:**

- **EDA Big Book updates:**
  - If you pre-ordered an EDA Big Book, you should have it by now. Please contact us at [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) if you have not gotten your pre-ordered shipment.
  - Author copies were shipped on December 10<sup>th</sup>. These should also have arrived by now.
  - Copies of EDA's "Big Book" (Eating Disorders Anonymous—The Story of How We Recovered from Our Eating Disorders) are now available in paperback, Kindle and Nook format. Kindle and Nook formats do not require a special device: you can download an app to read these on your phone or tablet. This is super if you'd like a larger font size. The cost to produce a large-font print edition is prohibitive.
  - Copies of the EDA Big Book can be ordered from Amazon and Barnes&Noble:
    - [Amazon \(Paperback edition\)](#)
    - [Amazon \(Kindle edition\)](#)
    - [Barnes&Noble \(Paperback and Nook editions\)](#)
    - We would sure love to hear what you think of the book! Please send comments to [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org), or leave comments on the Amazon or Barnes&Noble pages. *Having reviews on these pages may help us get the word out about the book.* Remember, **EDA honors the Twelve Traditions**: please remain anonymous at the level of press, radio, film and web; please remember ours is a program of attraction, not promotion.
  
- **Discussion Points:**
  - **Getting the word out about EDA's Big Book:**
    - While honoring EDA's Twelve Traditions, we DO want people to know about the EDA text. Carrying the message of recovery is the primary purpose of every group, and our message is encapsulated in the Big Book.
    - Full recovery requires a sometimes lengthy process of back and forth as we build trust with ourselves, with others, and with our God/Higher Power/higher purpose – it takes a while to learn what we need to think and do to be safe and healthy. Our Big Book describes this process and how to guide sponsees through it.

- Please post your favorable comments on the Amazon and Barnes and Noble websites.
- **We urgently need people willing to sponsor others via phone and/or email:**
  - Since the release of the EDA Big Book, the demand for sponsors has been increasing!
  - Nothing will help you strengthen and solidify your own recovery more than carrying the message to others.
  - Most people need help and support as they follow the difficult path to full recovery. It's messy process! Have you been through the Twelve Steps of EDA? We sincerely need your help.
  - Sign up to sponsor others to by emailing [Sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:Sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) and letting them know if you are able to sponsor by phone or email. We have about 25 people on our waiting list. Remember, our commitment is to be there to extend a hand to everyone with a desire to recover from an eating disorder.
  - Want to sponsor but feeling a little unsure of what to do? Chapter 7 in EDA's Big Book provides specific guidance on how to take a person through the Steps.
- **Corrections Committee Proposal:**
  - The General Service Board voted unanimously to start a committee dedicated to carrying the message off to people in correctional institutions.
  - Many people who are incarcerated suffer with multiple challenges, eating disorders among them. Service to help such individuals can be challenging, but very rewarding.
  - Jennifer B, one of our amazing EDA email correspondents, has volunteered to help chair the committee
  - Additional volunteers:
    - Allyson in Delray Beach, FL and
    - Liz in California
  - Interested in helping? Contact [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org)
- **Request to update the standard EDA Meeting Format:**
  - The General Service Board voted unanimously to amend the standard meeting template to change from "In EDA, recovery means living life without obsessing on food, weight or body image" to "In EDA, recovery means living life without obsessing on food, weight, body image or exercise."
- **Updating other EDA literature:**
  - Some of EDA's literature (including EDA's Step Workbook) contains material that needs to be updated to align with our EDA Big Book.

- Nuria volunteered to take a look through the EDA Step Workbook, editing out some ideas that are not in step with the EDA Big Book and proposing revisions.
- We think we still need an EDA Step Workbook because we do not have enough sponsors to address the need: people need help working the Steps, but we provide very clear direction on how to do this in Chapter 7 of the EDA Big Book. The Step Workbook should follow the same approach. A huge win with the Step Workbook is that we can provide the voices of EDA **sponsors** describing their own experiences with the Step and outlining what worked with their sponsees.
- Other material needs revision as well. Want to help? Send suggestions for revision to [Literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:Literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org).
- Additional volunteers:
  - Stacey offered to review the EDA brochure *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*.
  - Jhena offered to review a few other EDA brochures.
- **Big Book Conference Proposal:**
  - Last month, a GSB member proposed that we hold a weekend Big Book Step Study conference somewhere in the US, sometime in the next six months, to celebrate the introduction of the book.
  - The GSB cannot subsidize airfare or accommodations but would be delighted to provide other support.
  - Stacey F. suggested University of West Florida (Pensacola Florida) as a possible venue sometime between July 4<sup>th</sup> and August 15<sup>th</sup>. UWF recognizes EDA as a campus “club” so we can reserve rooms on campus for an EDA event.
  - Jill R. suggested Chicago, Illinois: it’s a central location, and there are low-cost hotel rates and free shuttles from O’Hare airport.
  - Arizona and California are also options. The GSB discussed these. Folks on the east coast mostly preferred UWF as a location over the west coast options, however, Chicago was viewed more positively overall since it is more centrally located. More people in California and Canada would be able to travel to Chicago than people in CA going to FL, or people in FL going to CA/AZ.
  - Liz F volunteered to create a survey, however, subsequent conversations with Liz and a few others seem to confirm that Chicago in late April/early May (or Chicago in late July) might be optimal. We’ve discussed various formats:
    - **Big Book Step Study:** an intensive 2.5-day workshop taking people through all Twelve Steps.
      - This could help prepare people to conduct similar workshops in their local areas, helping to carry the message of full recovery to all who need to hear it.

- Also, since many people have been through the Twelve Steps in other programs, an intensive workshop on the EDA approach would enable such people to feel more comfortable sponsoring others in EDA.
    - **Step Study Plus:** same as above, but with an expanded format, featuring additional topics and speakers.
  - Let us know if you and/or members of your groups would be able to attend a Chicago or Pensacola event by writing [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org). We'll probably create a survey soon.
- **Food Allergies**
  - The General Service Board received a letter of concern about the statement on page 73 of our EDA Big Book regarding food allergies. The statement reads:

It is important to mention here that over time all of us in EDA, including those who are the most ill, discover that the source of our eating-disordered behavior is not our body, but rather our *thoughts and the mental and emotional states they produce*. Certainly, severe malnourishment and electrolyte imbalances can render us physically incapable of rational thought and action; such issues require immediate attention. Yet we need to be very clear about this point: In our experience the issue is never a physical allergy or addiction to any food. People can certainly treat food like an addiction, but food is not addictive in and of itself. If you believe that a diet or disciplined program of eating will cure you, you will find no support for this idea in EDA meetings or literature. Once we are nutritionally stable, food is completely beside the point -- even if it does not feel that way at first.

- EDA doesn't deny that real food allergies exist: they *do* exist. No one would suggest that someone with a peanut allergy should challenge themselves to move beyond what looks like rigidity with respect to peanut exposure. Genuine food allergies should be treated as any other basic physical need. We take care of basics so we can turn our attention to what really matters: it's part of putting first things first.
    - However, for most people, ordinary physical allergies have no clear or demonstrable relationship to thinking or behavior. The AA text was written before allergies were as well understood medically as they are today, which is not to say they are all that well understood now. In any case, the authors of the AA text seem to have been far

more concerned with conveying the idea that they had developed an extreme sensitivity to alcohol than with affirming that they had a medically verifiable physical allergy.

- Valid medical tests and peer-reviewed research have never demonstrated any causal relationship between any food and a systemic histamine reaction that involves the extreme, dangerous, and self-limiting behaviors we see with eating disorders.
- EDA does have something to say about food allergies, because we find many people are distracted by what they think are food allergies. Fear-based rigidity creates an impediment to forming the relationships of trust we genuinely need for full recovery.
- Avoiding foods to which one is truly physically allergic is reasonable, not unreasonable.
- We sincerely hope everyone who joins EDA finds support as they seek to understand, respect and honor their own truth. Respecting and honoring our own truth includes understanding—and doing our best to take care of—our bodies. EDA recognizes that we are not all the same. We say is our own truth that sets us free. EDA affirms that taking care of basics—putting first things first—is an essential part of establishing the fundamental trust required to let go of concerns about food, weight, body image and exercise, and to fully recover.

- **The GSB unanimously approved the below statements:**

- We cooperate with medical authorities. We don't want to engage anyone in debate.
  - No one has the right to judge anyone else's recovery.
  - It is EDA's position that a food allergy has no causal relationship to an eating disorder.
- We also reviewed some content from our GSB-approved EDA FAQs brochure:
    - EDA endorses sound nutrition and discourages any form of rigidity around food. There are no food plans in EDA.
    - Balance—not abstinence—is our goal.
    - Our organization is devoted to helping our members develop more resilient relationships with ourselves, with others and with food.
    - Rather than recognizing periods of continuous abstinence, we in EDA celebrate self-defined milestones of recovery. These milestones, which take myriad – and often surprising – forms, are bright spots in our meetings that inspire us with their honesty and reality.
    - In EDA meetings, we discuss our disordered thinking that we might also discuss how to work a solution, which has to do with our recognizing life

choices and making them responsibly. Diets and weight management techniques do not solve our thinking problem.

- **Online and Skype meetings:**

- Did you know we have at least one online meeting a day?
- Check out our listings at [www.4EDA.org/online.html](http://www.4EDA.org/online.html) and [www.4EDA.org/phonemeetings.html](http://www.4EDA.org/phonemeetings.html).

We adjourned the meeting at 8:04 PM MST.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, January 11, 2017.

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!

Wishing you peace and joy in recovery,  
Annette (aka Michelle)

*Note: This email address is checked only monthly. Please send comments and inquiries to [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org).*