

Hello Everyone!

We held a General Service Board of EDA meeting on Wednesday, February 7th. 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 1st Wednesdays. We strongly encourage every EDA group to elect a General Service Representative (GSR) to represent and vote at GSB meetings.

Attendees:

- Allison – Delray Beach, FL
- Annette H – Phoenix, AZ
- Cat – New York, NY
- Connie W – Fort Bragg, CA
- Corrine W – Wichita, KS
- Emory – San Francisco, CA
- Karen – Jackson, MS
- Kelsey – Palm Beach Gardens, FL
- Lea – Oklahoma
- LeAnn – Mississippi
- Nuria S – Florence, SC
- Jamie K – San Diego, CA
- Julie M – Lancaster, PA
- Margaret – Colorado
- Rosie – Sydney, Australia
- Sam – Boston, MA
- Sarah – Reno, NV
- Sue A – Massachusetts
- Seren B – Monday Zoom meeting

New and Noteworthy!

- ***New* Sponsorship Tab (and brochure update):**
 - Please ask your group to review the new tab on the EDA website titled [Sponsorship](#). The brochure “*New to 12 Steps and Sponsorship*” (attached) has been updated to match (only the part on sponsorship changed). Please review and pass the word to your groups—we will be voting on adoption of the sponsorship tab and the brochure update (the old brochure is still on the EDA website) at our March meeting.
- **EDA Step Workshops 2018: Please pass the word to your groups!**
 - [Lancaster PA: EDA Step Workshop \(Steps 1-12\) - March 16-18, 2018](#) (Flyer attached—please circulate!)
 - [Delray Beach, FL: EDA Step Workshop \(Steps 1-12\) - May 18-20, 2018](#)
 - [Philadelphia PA: EDA Step Workshop \(Steps 1-12\) - June 15-17, 2018](#)

- Can't make it to one of these workshops, but want to sponsor someone so they can attend? Go to the [Support EDA](#) link and click the PayPal button to donate to our EDA Step Workshop Scholarship fund.

Notes from our February 7th meeting:

- Bylaws Adoption: Unanimous approval.

- We held a formal vote on the adoption of the new General Service Board of EDA bylaws – sent to GSB members on January 1st with the vote announced on January 3rd – after 3 months of subcommittee reports and GSB feedback.
- The General Service Board of EDA, with all members representing, voted unanimously to adopt the new bylaws now posted on the EDA website. The bylaws have been registered in the General Service Board's corporate minutes book.

- April Elections:

- The General Service Board, per its new bylaws, will reserve its April meeting for election of officers of the board. Since this is an odd-numbered year, we will be electing volunteers for the following roles:
 - Vice Chair (currently Julie M)
 - Secretary (currently open)
- Treasurer. Because we have an acting Treasurer and the role is not up for election until next year, we are actively seeking a volunteer to serve in this capacity until April 2019 (only a one-year commitment!). The GSB is small enough that we can file a Form 990-N instead of anything more complicated. Plus, we've already filed for 2017—so there's not that much to do. Qualifications: must be a CPA (in addition to the normal requirements for GSB officers.)
- April elections will include voting, recognition, and swearing in for all incoming GSB members and officers. There will be time for officers to present annual service goals, which will be discussed at the May GSB meeting.
- What you can do now: please submit nominations for the following roles!
 - **Chair (one-year term, since next year is an election year): currently Annette H**
 - Supervises all operations of the General Service Board
 - Coordinates effort among members and committees
 - Presides at GSB meetings
 - In cooperation with other Board members, set goals for the General Service Board that reflect the long-term interests of EDA as a whole
 - Communicates above goals
 - Sets up GSB meeting times and locations
 - Makes sure GSB members know about GSB meetings
 - Ensures each GSB member understands what is expected and has the requisite resources and support to do it

- Creates agendas for GSB meetings
- **Vice-Chair (two-year term): currently Julie M**
 - Serves as Chair when Chair cannot serve
 - Supports the Chair in all capacities as needed and directed by the Chair
 - Oversees publication of EDA materials online and in print
 - Makes sure Chair has resources and support to perform expected duties
- **Treasurer (interim one-year term, since next year is an election year):**
 - Qualifications: CPA
 - Manages GSB monies
 - Reports quarterly balances to the GSB
 - Completes 501 c3 yearly tax documents (already done for fiscal 2017)
 - Prepares annual financial statement
- **Secretary (two-year term):**
 - Maintains GSB meeting minutes
 - Posts and shares GSB meeting minutes
 - Keeps records in a central, secure, and confidential location
 - Works with other GSB members to introduce any new public-facing material or content
- **Committee Chairs.** The GSB approved the following committee chairs in 2017.
 - Professional Contact Coordinator (Jenni S)
 - Membership and Meeting Services Coordinator (Julie M)
 - Email Response Coordinator (Julie M)
 - Literature Committee Coordinator (Jamie K)
 - Website Coordinator (Sherian S)
 - **Not listed:**
 - *Resources who were elected but who have not actively participated for the past six months*
 - *Approved roles that have gone unstaffed (been inactive) for the past six months*
- **Qualification.** A GSB officer must:
 - Be an active member of EDA, the General Service Board, or an Advisor to the Board for minimum of two years
 - Be nominated to the GSB officer role
 - Have accepted the nomination
 - Have agreed, in writing, to adhere to the bylaws of the GSB
 - Be elected by the GSB, and sworn to office
- **Terms**
 - GSB officers shall serve two-year terms, with elections held on alternating years as follows:

- Chair and Treasurer: odd-numbered years
- Vice-Chair and Secretary: even-numbered years
- Committee Chairs: as determined by the GSB
- **Nomination**
 - Any EDA member may nominate a candidate for any functional or leadership role on the GSB or its Advisors to the Board through writing info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org
 - Nominees to leadership and functional roles within the GSB, and Advisors to the Board, must swear in writing to uphold and respect EDA’s fundamental ideas, expressed in section 1.c.i through 1.c.ix, before being added to any ballot for election
- **Election**
 - Election meetings are announced at least one month in advance of elections
 - Elections are staggered so that half of the GSB maintains continuity while the other half is undergoing election
 - Elections are held annually (with an allowable shift of one month, plus or minus, at the discretion of the board)
 - After election, GSB members are sworn into their positions. Those who wish can propose service goals for the next year.
- **“Full Recovered” brochure development, and [full recovery survey](#) results**
 - The foreword to the 1st edition of *Alcoholics Anonymous* (page *xiii*) states that the text was written by “men and women who have **recovered** from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body.” They state that the purpose of the AA text is to “show other alcoholics *precisely how we have recovered*.” (Italics were in the original text and in all subsequent editions. Bolding and underlining added to bring home the point that this idea of full recovery is at the heart of the AA as well as EDA program.) EDA has embraced the idea of full recovery since its (current) inception, in Phoenix in 2000. The purpose of the General Service Board has always been to help EDA groups carry the message of full recovery (as reflected in the original GSB bylaws adopted in 2001, and in our new bylaws adopted February 7, 2018.) We wrote about full recovery in our 2016 EDA Big Book. We’ve done our best to carry the message in our EDA Step Workshops. Yet, we know we need to do much better job of helping people connect the dots.
 - **Full recovery is possible.** A recent longitudinal study done at 9 and 22 years, published in the Journal of Clinical Psychiatry in 2017, found that **approximately two thirds of people with anorexia and bulimia recovered, even those who had lived with an eating disorder for decades.**

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/28002660>. Conclusion: **Never give up.** The testimony of those who are in full recovery is that being recovered is a by-product of right thinking and right action. We learn these by working the Steps of EDA, and we grow more resilient and flexible as we go along. It helps to share our experience, strength and hope with others.

- **Most of us, upon arriving at EDA, did NOT think full recovery was likely: in fact, most of us thought we were doomed to never recover at all.** Full recovery may not have been a goal for most of us; we wanted peace and freedom, but we'd have been happy with a daily reprieve of our symptoms! In full recovery, have durable peace and freedom from our eating disordered thoughts and behaviors. When thoughts come up, we handle them like normal people.
- And, although we improve on the EDI scales used by clinicians in assessing dimensions of eating disordered thinking and behavior, we are hardly freed of normal human problems. The Steps (and our fellowship) help us handle life situations with increasing grace and strength, and give us confidence that our own truth—who we are, what we believe, how we chose to act and think—as well as our experience, strength, and hope—are gifts we bring to life every day. We are never “perfect,” but we can be useful, helpful, happy, joyous, and free *exactly as we are*.
- Pages 84-85 of the AA text affirms AA members who continue to take personal inventory (Step Ten) “...have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. If tempted, we recoil from it as if from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically.”
- **Isn't being in full recovery from an eating disorder the same?** Don't we respond to eating disordered thoughts the same as those in AA respond to ideas of drinking? **Yes, absolutely!** Just like AA members (page 85), “We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we have been placed in a position of neutrality—safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us. We are neither cocky nor afraid. That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.”
- EDA members' experiences show it takes **time** and **effort** to build a foundation of trust and resilience that embraces our ideas about **balance**. **In EDA we find that recovery is a by-product of thinking and doing the right things**, and also focusing on and reinforcing the positives—recognizing what we are doing right by celebrating these as milestones of recovery.

- So far 84% of respondents agreed with EDA’s definition of full recovery as “the state of being resilient, flexible, free from eating-disordered thoughts and behaviors, and restored to sanity (described in the EDA Big Book on pages xii, xvi-xvii, 127, 185, 191-192, 228, and 258.)
 - 100% of the 27% who described themselves as fully recovered agreed with the above definition, although several noted that thoughts occasionally do come up when under stress; they regard this as normal and easily addressed—much like the AA text quote above describes “if tempted, we recoil as if from a hot flame.”
 - Of the 16% who disagreed with the definition, 100% remarked that an eating disorder is a disease they view as a chronic condition: they disagreed that anyone can ever be “fully recovered.”
 - Significantly, some of those in full recovery noted that they had *continued to stay partially engaged with their old ways of thinking until they realized that full recovery was possible for people with eating disorders*. That is a big deal, and it is why, specifically, the General Service Board is taking up this topic: we want everyone to understand that recovery *is* possible. We do not have to continue to engage with old behaviors *or* old ways of thinking!
 - The idea of full recovery does *not* substantially differentiate EDA from AA, as per the foreword (quoted above) to the AA text, nor does it differentiate us from NA (which does *not* hold that the adage “once an addict always an addict” to be true)—however, full recovery does distinguish EDA from other Twelve Step fellowships that focus on abstinence *from eating disordered behaviors*.
 - At least one person responded to the survey twice, was overwhelmingly negative about the idea of full recovery. We were able to identify the person because of the uniqueness of their experiences (cited in an email as well as from both survey responses). SurveyMonkey is set up to permit only one response per ip address, but obviously, this doesn’t prevent people from foiling the system. **Folks, don’t be “that person:” please play fair and submit just one survey response per person!** Thanks! Here’s a [link to the survey](#) in case anyone hasn’t taken it. The survey will close March 4th.
- A draft of the EDA “**Fully Recovered**” brochure is “in the works” and will be out for review by the subcommittee in a few weeks.

- **Q&A on having professionals on the General Service Board and as presenters at EDA Step Workshops:**
 - EDA's General Service Board (like the AA General Service Board) has a long tradition of inclusion. AA's General Service Board explicitly requires a third of its members to come from outside AA. EDA's General Service Board does not, however, there is no reason to exclude professionals from service provided they commit to uphold EDA's Bylaws (which include EDA's Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions).
 - Just like the authors of the AA text invited Dr. William Silkworth, the director of a renowned clinic for treatment of alcoholism, to write a forward ("The Doctor's Opinion") to the text *Alcoholics Anonymous*, EDA's General Service Board invited respected eating disorders treatment professionals to introduce the EDA text. The medical community is highly supportive of EDA's approach. In both cases, the point was to draw attention to the acceptance of our ideas by medical professionals.
 - When the General Service Board conducted the EDA Step Workshop in Chicago last July, we invited Dr. Julie Friedman, the director of a treatment center for binge eating disorder, to talk with us to provide her (Doctor's) opinion. The response from attendees was very enthusiastic: it was wonderful to hear from professionals just how "right" we got it, and to hear about relevant medical research. We had to cut the questions short, because so many of the attendees had great ones. Dr. Friedman was so impressed she became even more interested in the EDA approach than she had been before. After the July workshop, EDA members conducted a retrospective assessment of what we wanted to keep doing, stop doing, and start doing. One of the takeaways was to continue to engage the medical community in future events of this sort.
 - We also conducted a survey of attendees after the Chicago workshop; we asked what worked well for people, what they liked the most about the presentations and panels, and what didn't work so well for them--what they liked the least. The responses were overwhelmingly positive. We got zero responses that expressed dissatisfaction on any of the quantitative (Likert-scale), questions, and only a couple of neutral responses. One thing that many attendees cited positively was Dr. Friedman's presentation.
 - With respect to Tradition 6 (An EDA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the EDA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose):
 - In the case of EDA Step Workshops, the General Service Board is inviting professionals to come talk to us. In Chicago, the slides projected behind the keynote speaker and Dr. Friedman noted that EDA does not endorse, finance, or lend the EDA name to any related facility or outside enterprise. Having the equivalent of "Doctors' Opinions"

- **Chatzy:**
 - A representative reported complaints about Chatzy ads being inappropriate. At our March meeting, we will discuss options:
 - Upgrade to an ad-free version of Chatzy
 - Replace Chatzy with another similar service that doesn't have ads

- **Phone meetings for Western US:**
 - Anyone want to start a phone meeting convenient for people in the western US? A GSR reported a need.
 - This might be your or your group's opportunity to create something and see if people come.
 - Please talk this over with your group; phone (Zoom) meetings have been a huge boon to recovery for many.

- **EDA Daily Meditation book (365 days of the year)!**
 - **To submit a meditation for consideration:**
 - Please include a quotation from the EDA Big Book or other EDA literature at the top of your meditation.
 - Following each quote, include your personal reflection on the quotation.
 - Please remember to be concise – the quote plus reflection should fit onto one small page (think of *Daily Reflections* or *Inner Harvest*).
 - Send your submission via email to meditations@eatingdisordersanonymous.org **or** click on [EDA Meditations](#) and add your meditation to the bottom of the existing Google Doc.
Please do not edit or delete anyone else's submissions. All entries will be reviewed and edited before being submitted for consideration by the literature team.
 - We would love everyone to submit one or more meditations for consideration.

- **EDA Sponsorship: we are in urgent need of EDA sponsors.** What can we do to foster and support sponsors? Answers:
 - Conduct an EDA Step Workshop in your area and
 - Encourage sponsees to start sponsoring
 - Write to sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org if you are able to sponsor someone online or by phone.

- **Great news:** if your group is willing to **order 24 or more books through the GSB, you can get a 50% discount.** If you use the PayPal link on the [GSB website EDA Big Book tab](#) (this only applies to EDA groups!), the cost is \$210 *including shipping*. **This means each book costs \$8.75, delivered.**

On deck for our March 2018 meeting:

- **Vote on [Sponsorship](#)** tab on the EDA website, and New to 12 Steps and Sponsorship brochure (attached): please review with your groups!
- **Request to authorize an expenditure for the Lancaster EDA Step Workshop**
 - The Chicago EDA Step Workshop broke even, but required up-front investment
 - The Lancaster EDA Step Workshop will require the same.
 - The purpose of the General Service Board is to support EDA Groups in carrying the message of full recovery.
 - The purpose of EDA Step Workshops is to increase the number and strength of EDA sponsors, which helps build stronger EDA groups.
- **April Election Process Review**
 - Nominations for officer roles are due three weeks before the annual election. This year's election will be held on April 4th; **nominations are due March 14th**.
 - This year, the roles up for election include the Vice Chair and Secretary, however, we are also looking for a Treasurer to fill in until next year's election.
 - Nominees should send a brief paragraph explaining their qualifications and desire to serve to info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.
 - Information about nominees will be sent to EDA groups no later than March 18th. This gives groups just over two weeks to review the slate of nominees.
 - Each GSB officer and representative role is a two-year term, however, groups may rotate representatives more frequently.
 - Nominees should send a brief paragraph explaining their qualifications and desire to serve to info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.
 - Election will occur after each nominee has an opportunity to speak to the GSB members about their ideas for GSB service goals for the upcoming year.
 - After election, all new officers, representatives, and advisors will be sworn to their respective offices and roles.
- **Nominations for Officer of the Board:**
 - Annette H – Chair (continuing; role is up for election next year)
 - Julie M – Vice Chair (offered to continue)
 - Cale O – Secretary (new volunteer!)
 - Treasurer (role is up for election next year, however, we need an interim volunteer for the current year)

- **Nominations for Advisors to the Board:**
 - Gisele B – EDA Founder
 - Jenni Schaefer – author (including letter of support in EDA’s Big Book) and international speaker on eating disorders recovery

- **What committees and functional roles do we need in 2018-2019?**
 - Which committee chair and functional roles should be up for election next year vs 2020?
 - Professional Contact Coordinator
 - Membership and Meeting Services Coordinator
 - Email Response Coordinator
 - Literature Committee Coordinator
 - Website Coordinator
 - Others?

- **Leadership issues discussion**
 - What should an EDA member do when a leader acts as if a group conscience was taken and a matter decided, but that didn’t actually happen?
 - What, if anything, should the General Service Board do when an issue like this is reported? Please note: *this is not a hypothetical case.*

- **Update on “Fully Recovered” brochure**
 - We hope to have a draft out to the literature committee soon!

- **“Fatism”: what is it, and what should you do when it shows up in your EDA meeting?**
 - What distinguishes body acceptance from fatism? Examples:
 - Body acceptance: “I am a fat-bodied person. It is not a value judgement, nor is it a relative perspective; it is an objective fact. I am not stupid, lazy, or debilitated. I am a normal human being with loves, joys, talents, a decent sense of humor, and verve.”
 - Body acceptance sounds like the right stuff!
 - Yet, if the speaker stopped at the end of the first sentence, “I am a fat-bodied person,” a newcomer might be forgiven for thinking the statement sounds like an eating disordered “voice.” That could feel pretty hopeless to a newcomer. Now imagine a phone or online meeting where people cannot see each other. This could be a little concerning.
 - Fatism: “Before starting into recovery, I was terrified I might end up being xxx lbs!”
 - The speaker, in effect, is saying they are (or were) terrified of being like a person who might be sitting right beside them!
 - And worse, they used a specific number to represent the threshold of terror. Not so welcoming, is it?

- Shall we encourage meeting chairs to comment, or ask clarifying questions, when someone says something that could be interpreted as body acceptance, or fatism?
 - Does the General Service Board have suggestions for what a meeting chair should do when someone explicitly attaches a negative value to being fat?
 - Does the General Service Board want to create a brochure on this?
 - And/or shall we add a paragraph on this to the EDA Meeting Guide?
- **Inappropriate Chatzy ads** – what are our options? Bring your ideas!

Thank you to all who attended and to all who serve EDA. Please pass this on to members of your groups.

Wishing you peace and joy in recovery,
Annette H

Chair, General Service Board of EDA

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