

## EDA SUNDAY MEETING

Welcome to the Sunday meeting of Eating Disorders Anonymous. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ & I'm in recovery from \_\_\_\_\_. Will everyone please join me in a moment of silence to reflect on why we are here, followed by the Serenity Prayer?

*{Silence}*

**God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can & the wisdom to know the difference.**

This is an open meeting of Eating Disorders Anonymous. We welcome all of you, particularly any newcomers. In keeping with our primary purpose & our Third Tradition, which states “the only requirement for EDA membership is a desire to recover from an eating disorder”, we request all who participate to limit their sharing to problems related to their eating disorder.

**Preamble:** Eating Disorders Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who share their experience, strength & hope with each other that they may solve their common problems & help others to recover from their eating disorders.

The **only** requirement for membership is a desire to recover from an eating disorder. There are no dues or fees for EDA membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. EDA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our **Primary Purpose** is to recover from our eating disorders & to carry this message of recovery to others with eating disorders. Please contact [info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org](mailto:info@eatingdisordersanonymous.org) if you are able to volunteer some of your time outside of this meeting.

*If there are newcomers...*

*[May I have a volunteer to read “More on Eating Disorders” for the newcomers? You can find it on the EDA website.]*

*[More on Eating Disorders...]*

*In our individual pursuit of happiness & success, even pursuit of usefulness & self service, we who have an eating disorder have struggled with the business of living.*

*Our problems, though many & varied, have elements in common. We have mismanaged anger, avoided growing pains that might have set us free, indulged in unhealthy forms of dependence on those around us & engaged in futile, damaging attempts to control our bodies & other people.*

*We suffered many forms of illness – physical, emotional & spiritual – as a consequence of our attempts to control our problems & ourselves through even-greater exertion of self-will. Most of us lost our self-respect, our hopes & dreams & anything like meaningful purpose for our lives. Many lost their general health or compromised their health. Many have died.*

*We tried in vain to control our emotional natures with some or all of the following behaviors: bingeing, purging, laxative abuse, over-exercising, self-denial, restricting, self-mutilation, rigidity of thought & habit; obsession with weight, food & body image. We sought escape through many other forms of obsession. We often blamed those who love us most for our agony. We were depressed, anxious, chronically irritable & unhappy. We experienced complete defeat only to emerge – just hours or days later – with renewed resolve to cling to the same attitudes & actions that made us miserable in the first place. No matter what we tried, we somehow couldn’t face reality, deal with it effectively & walk free.*

*There is no magic about recovery. It is hard work. We were powerless to change until we came to believe we could recover. We then surrendered – usually in fits & starts – to the uncomfortable process of making deliberate changes in our response to life. This process of giving up our old reactive coping mechanisms & adopting new, deliberate, active skills & attitudes gradually restores our integrity, self-esteem & authority. This is not an overnight matter. There are sure to be setbacks, moments of deep*

*unhappiness & fear, yet we found that when we work diligently & patiently, we are amazed by a quality of peace, happiness & usefulness never before imagined.*

*We wish this for each of you, whether you find recovery in or out of these rooms. We hope you will find something here that you can use & that you may find opportunity to share your experience with still others, for such work brings calm & freedom from despair when all other means fail.*

*We wholeheartedly welcome you to join us as we trudge the Road of Happy Destiny together.*

In our healing process, we use the 12 Steps, adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous, as the foundation of our spiritual journey. May I have a volunteer to read “The 12 Steps of EDA” & the 2 paragraphs after them found on the EDA website?

1. We admitted we were powerless over our eating disorder – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will & our lives over to the care of God as we understood God.
4. Made a searching & fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves & to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed & became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory & when were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer & meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us & the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others & to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Many of us exclaimed, “What an order! I can’t go through with it.” Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines. The principles we have set down are guides to progress. We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection.

Our description, “More on Eating Disorders”, the chapter to the agnostic from the Big Book & our personal adventures before & after make clear 3 pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were eating disordered & could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our eating disorder.
- (c) That God could & would if God were sought.

We also adhere to the 12 Traditions developed by Alcoholics Anonymous. May I have a volunteer to read “The 12 Traditions of EDA” found on the EDA website?

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon EDA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as God may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for EDA membership is a desire to recover from an eating disorder.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or EDA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message of recovery to others with eating disorders.
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.
7. Every EDA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Eating Disorders Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

9. EDA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Eating Disorders Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the EDA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, film & web.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

In EDA, we try to focus on the solution, not the problem. Solutions have to do with recognizing life choices & making them responsibly. **Diets & weight management techniques do not solve our thinking problems.** EDA endorses sound nutrition & discourages any form of rigidity around food. Balance – not abstinence – is our goal.

In EDA, recovery means living life without obsessing on food, weight or body image. Suggestions that help us build recovery include:

- Eat when hungry, stop when moderately full. Consistent nutrition is essential for recovery. Recovery is about feelings, not food, but we can't reason or build trust when bingeing, purging or starving.
- Get basic needs met first. If hungry, eat. If angry, find a safe outlet. If lonely, reach out. If tired, sleep. If ashamed, talk about it.
- Be an adult. This takes training & practice.
- Ask others for input & make your own decisions.
- When anxious, get physical, get outside, pray. Then deal with the problem head-on.
- Get open with others. Honesty restores integrity.
- Develop willingness to look at things differently. Recovery is not rigid.
- Go to 12-Step meetings, read the literature & work the steps with a sponsor or buddy.
- Be proactive & plan your recovery.

We use a phone list to contact people between meetings. Please see me after the meeting to get a list or get on the list. **We build trust with ourselves by being authentic with others.** Make a plan to use the phone.

We would now like to welcome any newcomers. Is anyone here for a first, second or third time? If so, would you please tell us your first name so we can welcome you?

*If there are newcomers say...*

*[Would anyone be willing to stay after the meeting ends to be available to the newcomer(s) or others who have questions or need to talk?]*

Now, let's go around the virtual room & the rest of us will introduce ourselves. I will start. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, I am in recovery from \_\_\_\_\_ & I am from \_\_\_\_\_.

### **REPORTS:**

Are there any EDA announcements?

Would anyone like a welcome hug?

In EDA we recognize what we call “milestones of recovery”. A “milestone of recovery” is a self-defined marker on our journey in recovery. It is essential to recognize that even on our worst days we do things that are right & good & supportive of our recovery. Milestones – which take myriad & often surprising forms – are bright spots in our meetings that inspire us with their honesty & reality. We find, often in retrospect, that our milestones express how we are working the principles of the program in our lives. The principles – embodied in the 12 Steps of EDA – include Honesty, Equality, Accountability, Love, Trust & Humility (HEALTH: the EDA motto). We claim as many milestones as we can!

Examples:

- “I ate pizza last night for the first time in 3 years & it was great!”
- “I took responsibility & let go of one of my boyfriends.”
- “I refused to let my wife tell me what to think about this issue.”
- I’m looking at how miserable I am & I need to know what I’m getting from staying stuck. Maybe if I know what works about it, I can make a different plan to get those needs met.”
- “I thought about what might make me happy & decided to take dance lessons.”

- “I forgave my friend for disappointing me. I felt very mature about that”
- “Ugh! I’m obsessing again, but at least I know it & I’m being open about it.”
- “I finally weaned myself off laxatives. It’s been 12 years since I’ve gone without them for this long.”
- I was feeling very hurt & rejected & I said so calmly without expecting any particular response.”
- “My need for security always seems to conflict with my need for self-expression. It makes me mad & I want to escape! But I realized I’ll never be safe until I allow myself to have & express ugly thoughts.”
- “I screamed what I was thinking on paper & then I found I could talk about it calmly without blaming.”
- “I wanted to run & hide by being really busy, but I sat down & asked myself what I was afraid of. I made a new plan. My fears evaporated & I felt terrific!”
- I was sad yesterday & I just let myself be sad.”
- I almost ate something I hate because I didn’t want to look eating disordered, but then I decided I care more about what I think than about what they think of me.”

Does anyone have a milestone of recovery they care to recognize?

### **FORMAT:**

Today is a topic meeting. After we’ve agreed on one, we’ll go around the virtual room. Please limit your comments so everyone gets a chance to share. Please do not provide unsolicited advice. If you *want* feedback, please ask for it after the meeting. After the first round, I’ll ask if anyone has a burning desire to speak or we can start a new round.

### **Does anyone have a topic or issue to discuss?**

[If someone brings up a problem, identify a recovery topic that related to it & suggest that the group discuss the problem in terms of the solution.]

*Wrap up the sharing at about 9:55am to close*

## **7<sup>th</sup> TRADITION:**

According to our 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition, we are “self-supporting through our own contributions”. If you would like to help EDA carry the message & you consider yourself an EDA member, you may send a voluntary contribution on the website through PayPal under the “support EDA” tab. You may also mail in a donation with the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition Contribution Form also found on the website under the “support EDA” tab. Please contribute as you can.

## **CLOSING:**

It is now time to close. Can I have a volunteer to read “The Promises” found on the EDA website?

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development, we will be amazed before we are halfway through. We are going to know a new freedom & a new happiness. We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it. We will comprehend the word serenity & we will know peace. No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others. That feeling of uselessness & self-pity will disappear. We will lose interest in selfish things & gain interest in our fellows. Self-seeking will slip away. Our whole attitude & outlook upon life will change. Fear of people & economic insecurity will leave us. We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us. We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.

Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being filled among us sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. They will always materialize if we work for them.

Thank you for being here. Please make time to greet newcomers after the meeting & **get involved**: the meaning of life is to give life meaning. Please preserve our anonymity; do not discuss personalities & problems (other than your own) with others once you leave this meeting.

Take what you can use & leave the rest & keep coming back. It works when you work it – it really does!

Can we please have a volunteer to lead the next meeting?

Will those of you who wish please join me in saying the closing prayer? ["We" version of the Serenity Prayer or other prayer adopted by the group conscience.]

**God, grant us the Serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the Courage to change the things we can & the Wisdom to know the difference.**

**Keep coming back – it works when we work it!**