



## Difficult Situations

**Having troubles with your online group, in-person meeting or leaders? It will happen from time to time. Here is guide** to groups and group leaders on how to keep a recovery focus and how to deal with monopolizers, cross-talk, crying, anonymity issues and suicide talk.

### What to do if...

**What is a group to do when a leader regularly engages in old (or new) addictive behavior(1), or fails the group in some significant way?**

#### ADVICE FOR LEADERS:


**On Addiction:** Stop the behavior. If you can't stop completely, right now, then step down. Your judgment has become affected in areas that directly impact your credibility, authenticity and message.

**On Failure of Leadership:** see Steps 8-11.

#### ADVICE FOR GROUP MEMBERS:

**On Addiction:** Confront. If there is any kind of regular pattern of addictive behavior, demand the leader step down. Recovery requires examples of freedom and joy, not misery and self-deception.

**On Failure of Leadership:** Confront. Then support your leader, replace the leader or start a new group.



**What is an ONLINE meeting group to do when a participant regularly breaks rules that the group has established for the common safety?**

#### ADVICE FOR LEADERS:

- Post and communicate group rules regularly.
- Revisit rules during regular (monthly, semi-monthly or quarterly) group conscience (2) meetings.
- In extreme circumstances, put the meeting under moderator control or remove offenders when rules are purposefully broken.

#### ADVICE FOR GROUP MEMBERS:

- Attend meetings regularly.
- Attend group conscience meetings.
- Support your leader, replace the leader or start a new group.

**What can sponsors and sponsees to do to prevent difficulties?**

#### ADVICE FOR SPONSORS:

- Avoid sponsoring more than five people at a time. Per its traditions, EDA shall remain forever non-professional. Sponsoring more than five people, even in a volunteer capacity, verges on professionalism.
- Avoid promoting any service for the reasons given above.
- Read the Sponsorship flyer available on the [www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org](http://www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org) Literature tab.



#### ADVICE FOR SPONSEES:

- To recover, you need honesty, open-mindedness and willingness, guidance on steps especially if you are new to the 12-step method, and buddies with whom to share your experience, strength and hope. None of those things are inherently or necessarily sponsor-based, and no person should allow themselves to become too dependent on another. A sponsee relationship, however, is a better form of dependence than many alternatives.
- See advice for group members above.
- Read the Sponsorship flyer available on the [www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org](http://www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org) Literature tab.

1 Regular can mean at least twice with an interval of less than a month but the definition should be determined by group conscience (see below).

2 A group conscience is a meeting during which a quorum of eligible group members considers and votes on subjects of concern to all. "Quorum" and "Eligible" are terms to be defined by the group's founders, applied after ratification by the majority of all attendees at the regular meeting, and maintained thereafter by group conscience vote.





## The Twelve Steps of EDA

(Adapted with (pending) permission from pages 59-60  
in A.A.'s Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous)

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 and our lives over to the care of God as we *understood God*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and 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 and 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 and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we *understood God*, praying only for knowledge of God's will for us and 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, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.



## The Twelve Traditions of EDA

(Adapted with (pending) permission from pages 59-60  
in A.A.'s Big Book, Alcoholics Anonymous)

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon E.D.A. 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 E.D.A. membership is a desire to recover from an eating disorder.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or E.D.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry its message of recovery to others with eating disorders.
6. An E.D.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the E.D.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every E.D.A. 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. E.D.A., 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 E.D.A. 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 and web.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



A Guide to Groups &  
Group Leaders When

*Difficult Situations*  
Happen

