



## Big Book Suggested Meeting Format v1.0

1. **Welcome to the {Group Name} Meeting of Eating Disorders Anonymous.** My name is \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Will everyone please join me in a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer?  
**God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change,  
Courage to change the things I can, and Wisdom to know the difference.**
3. 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?
4. **Preamble:** Eating Disorders Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problems and 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 E.D.A. membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. E.D.A. 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 and to carry this message of recovery to others with eating disorders.
5. [If there are newcomers present, ask for a volunteer to read "More on Eating Disorders."] May I have a volunteer to read "The 12 Steps of E.D.A.?" [If there are newcomers present, ask for a volunteer to read "The 12 Traditions of E.D.A."]
6. In E.D.A., we try to focus on the solution, not the problem. Solutions have to do with recognizing life choices and making them responsibly. **Diets and weight management techniques do not solve our thinking problems.** EDA endorses sound nutrition and discourages any form of rigidity around food. Balance – not abstinence -- is our goal.
7. In E.D.A., 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 and practice. Get some.
  - Ask others for input and 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 and work the steps with a sponsor or buddy.
  - Be proactive and plan your recovery
8. 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.
9. **REPORTS:** Are there any E.D.A. announcements? Would anyone like a welcome hug [or chip if your meeting has them]? Does anyone have a milestone of recovery\* they care to recognize?

**10. FORMAT:**

Today's meeting is a Big Book study and discussion meeting. The Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous outlines the 12-step program of recovery, which is the program upon which EDA is modeled<sup>1</sup>. If you do not own a copy of the Big Book, you can read along with us by going to the AA website, [aa.org](http://aa.org). A volunteer will read two to four paragraphs. Once the paragraphs have been read, the volunteer may share on the content of these paragraphs if she/he wishes. Then anyone else is invited to share on these paragraphs as well. When this particular topic is exhausted, a new volunteer reads a few more paragraphs, and so on. When sharing, please keep in mind that we are attempting to relate our eating disorder and recovery process to the disease of alcoholism and its 12-step recovery process. Please remember that the goal of recovery from an eating disorder is balance, not abstinence. Please limit your comments so everyone gets a chance to share. Please do **not** engage in crosstalk, which is providing unsolicited advice or speaking directly to another person. If you have a question or **want** feedback, please ask for it after the meeting. At the end of the meeting, a volunteer will note where the group left off in the Big Book and will contact the following week's leader to let her know where to begin. Today we begin on page \_\_, the paragraph beginning \_\_\_\_\_. Is there a volunteer who would like to begin reading?

11. **7th TRADITION:** [*Pass the basket.*] According to our Seventh Tradition, we are "self-supporting through our own contributions." Please contribute as you can.

12. **CLOSING:** It is now time to close. Would anyone care to read the **Promises?** Thank you for being here. Please make time to greet newcomers after the meeting, and **get involved:** the meaning of life is to give life meaning. Please preserve our anonymity: do not discuss personalities and problems (other than your own) with others once you leave this meeting. Take what you can use and leave the rest, and keep coming back.

**It works when you work it – it really does!**

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 group conscience.} "We" version of the Serenity Prayer:

**God, grant us the Serenity to accept the things we cannot change,  
 Courage to change the things we can, and Wisdom to know the difference."  
 Keep coming back – it works when we work it!**

<sup>1</sup> AA's Big Book, *Alcoholics Anonymous*, is published by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to adapt this material does not mean that AA has reviewed or approved this or any other EDA material. AA is a program for recovery from alcoholism only. Use of AA material in the program of EDA, which is patterned after that of AA but which addresses other issues, does not constitute endorsement by or affiliation with AA.