

Why should I refer my clients to EDA?

- EDA provides group support for people seeking recovery from an eating disorder, providing examples of recovery and conveying the hope of recovery to those in need.
- 12-Step recovery programs have a solid record of helping people recover from addictions from which they can completely abstain; EDA is a 12-Step recovery program with a difference.
- Having realistic, healthy goals enables people to build the essential relationships of trust with themselves and others that support recovery.
- In EDA, we focus on balance rather than abstinence. We reject absolute, black-and-white thinking about recovery. Balance is particularly important in recovery from eating disorders because it offers a position between rigidity and being out-of-control that is both achievable and healthy.
- The only requirement for EDA membership is a desire to recover from an eating disorder. There are no dues or fees for EDA membership.

What is the EDA position on the disease model of addiction?

- EDA's stance is that people can and often do recover fully from their eating disorders.
- In EDA, we recognize that our responses to life are conditioned by how we have always reacted. Life-long patterns can be changed. EDA recognizes that recovery is hard work and requires a great deal of support. Recovery is a process, not an event.

What is the relationship between EDA and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)?

- EDA is founded on the principles (12-Steps and 12-Traditions) of AA and offers support for those seeking or maintaining recovery from an eating disorder that is similar to the type of support offered people seeking recovery from alcoholism in AA.
- Like AA, EDA encourages its members to focus on the solution, not the problem.
- EDA members work the Steps, as do other 12-Step program members, to achieve the balance and calm perspective that makes a happy and purposeful life possible.
- Other 12-Step programs, including AA, recognize that "recovery is a process, not an event." EDA takes this idea to heart. When recovery entails dealing with food, something we need almost as much as air and water, any rigid approach to food-related behaviors – simply did not work for us. We think our approach is effective because it focuses our attention on changes that lead to long-term recovery.
- AA maintains a position that can be described as "once an alcoholic, always an alcoholic." In contrast, EDA members can and do fully recover from their eating disorders.
- EDA recognizes that atheists and agnostics can work a strong program of recovery. "God" in EDA literature can mean the Deity, a deity, a spiritual entity of one's own understanding (a Higher Power), or a non-spiritual conception (a higher purpose). Reliance on any one of these conceptions confers a perspective that transcends our immediate physical, social and emotional circumstances and allows us to "keep calm and carry on" with what really matters.

What is the relationship between EDA and Overeaters Anonymous (OA)?

- Although both are 12-Step groups led by members seeking solutions to the same problems, EDA and OA provide very different answers.
- In OA, members are expected to abstain from specific foods of concern and to adopt specific disciplines around eating as a precondition of recovery.
- In EDA, members are devoted to helping each other build more resilient relationships with themselves, others and food. Diets and weight management techniques do not solve our thinking problems coping with ourselves and our lives.
- EDA members discuss disordered thinking so that we can talk about solutions. This generally involves recognizing life choices, trying to make them responsibility, and learning from them as we go.

Are there "sponsors" in EDA to guide those new to the program?

Yes. In EDA, a sponsor helps sponsees work the Twelve Steps. A sponsor's experience, strength and hope can provide the insight and inspiration needed to successfully work a Twelve Step program of recovery.

For more information about sponsorship, please see "New to 12-Step Programs & Sponsorship in EDA" under the Literature tab at www.4EDA.org.

Does EDA endorse any specific food plan or program?

- In short, the answer is “No”. We encourage members to eat when hungry and stop when moderately full.
- EDA endorses sound nutrition and discourages any form of rigidity around food.
- Food is nourishment for mind, body and soul. Balance, not abstinence, is our goal.
- Food issues often surface as coping mechanisms for living the lives we have been dealt or have chosen. Members work to identify, establish and reinforce adequate and appropriate ways of responding to life. In time and with practice, new methods of dealing with life issues gradually replace the self-limiting rigidity and self-destructive behaviors that are hallmarks of an eating disorder.

I would like to audit a meeting before referring clients. How do I arrange this?

- Some EDA meetings are “open” and may be visited by the occasional friend, family member, student, or interested professional who contacts the meeting ahead of time and requests to sit in on a meeting.
- Other EDA groups are “closed” except to people seeking recovery from an eating disorder.
- Please visit the meetings page of the EDA website www.4EDA.org to find contact information for meetings, and be sure to call or write before attending.

May I facilitate meetings held at my office or clinic?

- By definition, an EDA meeting is run by and for people seeking recovery from an eating disorder.
- Unless you are in recovery from an eating disorder, facilitating a meeting means it is not an EDA meeting.
- Therapists and other professionals have kick-started some very successful EDA meetings by facilitating eating disorder recovery support groups using EDA literature, then turning the meeting over to attendees. When EDA members start running a meeting it can be considered an EDA meeting.

How does EDA work with professionals who treat eating disordered clients?

- EDA provides group support for people with a desire to recover from an eating disorder, providing examples of recovery and conveying the hope of recovery to those in need.
- EDA does not refer its members to specific professionals, but we encourage people to seek professional help.
- Early recovery typically requires a great deal of support and often necessitates the involvement of a team of professionals – physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, and dietitian – to help establish new patterns and ways of thinking.
- EDA does not provide a substitute for or alternative to professional care. EDA meeting leaders and General Service Board members work easily with members of the professional community. We recognize your importance to recovery and greatly appreciate your help.

Information for Professionals



For more information please visit our website at:

www.4EDA.org

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