

Eating Disorders Anonymous Suggested Meeting Format

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, the Courage to change the things I can, and the Wisdom to know the difference.
3. Out of respect for everyone present, please turn off your cell phones now. Is anyone here for the 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 EDA membership. We are self-supporting through our own contributions. EDA is not affiliated with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any cause.

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

5. The material we read in EDA meetings can be found on EDA's website, www.4EDA.org, under the literature tab, listed as "EDA Meeting Readings." May I have a volunteer read the Twelve Steps of EDA from the Meeting Readings (or starting at the bottom of page 112 in EDA's Big Book?) [If there are newcomers present, ask for volunteers to read "More on Eating Disorders" from the EDA Meeting Readings on EDA's literature tab, and the Twelve Traditions of EDA from the Meeting Readings or page 486 in EDA's Big Book.]
6. In EDA, 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 EDA, recovery means living life without obsessing on food, weight, body image, or exercise. 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.
 - Ask others for input but make your own decisions.
 - When anxious or troubled, do something that focuses attention on your physical senses, get outside, pray, or meditate. 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.
 - 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 EDA 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. **EDA Reminder:** Remember, recovery is not about food or weight. Please refrain from mentioning numbers or plans that might trigger newcomers. Recovery is about using the Twelve Steps of the program to live life fully—happy, joyous, and free.
11. **FORMAT:** (Please select the format used by your group)
 - **Topic Meeting:** Today we'll discuss a topic. After we've agreed on one, we'll go around the 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 relates to it and suggest that the group discuss the problem in terms of the solution.]
 - **Speaker Meeting:** Today we are happy to have _____ speak. After the speaker has shared and picked a topic for discussion, we will go around the room in the usual fashion. Please help me welcome _____.
 - **Big Book Meeting:**
 Today's meeting is a "Big Book" study and discussion meeting. The "EDA Big Book", *Eating Disorders Anonymous*, outlines the Twelve Step Program of recovery¹. If you do not own a copy of the *EDA Big Book*, you can find a .pdf version on the EDA website, www.4EDA.org/EDAbigbook. A volunteer will read 2 – 4 paragraphs. Once the paragraphs have been read, the volunteer may share on the content of these paragraphs if so desired. Then anyone else is invited to share on these paragraphs as well. When this particular topic is exhausted, a new volunteer will read a few more paragraphs, and so on. When sharing, 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 *EDA Big Book* and will contact the following week's leader to let them know where to begin. Today we begin on page _____, the paragraph beginning _____. Is there a volunteer who would like to begin reading?
12. **7th TRADITION:** [pass the basket] In accord with our 7th Tradition, we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Please contribute as you can.
13. **CLOSING:** It is now time to close. Would anyone care to read The 9th Step Promises from the Meeting Readings (page 185 in EDA's Big Book?)

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 or 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 we work it!**

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? {The "we" version of the Serenity Prayer or other prayer or statement adopted by group conscience.}

"We" version of the Serenity Prayer: **God, grant us the Serenity to accept the things we cannot change, the Courage to change the things we can, and the Wisdom to know the difference."**

¹ EDA is founded on the 12 Step recovery approach described in the AA "Big Book," *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The AA text 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 of 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.