General Service Board of Eating Disorders Anonymous
Meeting
Sunday, Oct. 4, 2020, 4:00 p.m. EST
Meeting ID: 2041413017; Participant Number: 2041413017; Password: 123456
Recording available

Attendees
Total number of attendees: 30

Officers on call:
   1. Chair
   2. Secretary
   3. Treasurer

Call to Order
   • Chair called meeting to order
   • Opened with moment of silence followed by the serenity prayer
   • Member read the 12 steps of EDA
   • Member read tradition 10
   • Member read concept 10
   • Chair started recording

Officer Reports

Secretary’s Report
Secretary sent out revised July minutes a few weeks ago. Step workshops clarified as sponsorship workshop and workshops in general. ACCEPTED REVISED MINUTES

Treasurer’s Report
We started this quarter at $5,340.49. We ended this quarter at $10,264.24, which is 48% in the positive.

We had a 53% total change toward the positive compared to this quarter last year. The treasurer's reports are attached to the announcement email and pictured below:
Member asked if we knew how much money came in from workshops. We have not categorized workshops in QuickBooks yet, so we don’t have that information. Literature chair said that we can look up some of the workshop donations through PayPal, which shows we received approximately $900 from the EDA Step Workshop this summer.

There was a brief discussion about GSB funding for workshops. Essentially, workshops should be self-supporting (financially-speaking). Please see previous GSB minutes for details.

**Chair Announcements**

There was a sponsorship panel discussed at the previous GSB meeting. The sponsorship panel took place in September and was well attended with 70 people on the call. There will be an effort
to hold these regularly.

In meetings, please say or post in the chat during announcements for people to check the listing for the meetings they attend. Please let the webmaster know of any updates at webmaster@eatingdisorders.org. We ask that group contacts and GSRs send updates to the webmaster as soon as possible. We are getting emails about changed passwords or meetings not being held; please help us keep our information up-to-date.

Every meeting should have a chair each week. Make sure that if you are usually chair or are scheduled for a service commitment and can't make it that you find someone else.

A brief contact list will be distributed in a few weeks which summarizes the roles sheet, so there is a handy reference of EDA contact information. We also need to update the sheet that lists open service positions. For the time being, we are looking for help with the membership and group supportive services committee and the minutes project. We have one person who is interested helping us summarize motions from the minutes and would like a few more.

I am also working on a roadmap for hosting step studies. I will invite anyone who is willing to be involved with a creation of a roadmap and checklist to email me as well. A current host has contributed a wealth of regard Zoom step workshops, but we still need more guidance on face-to-face workshops. Anyone who is interested in helping create this roadmap, please email chair@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.

Lastly, the holidays are coming up or have already arrived. This can be a stressful time for many, and we want to make sure we have plenty of meetings available. We currently have 72 meetings online. We have a schedule accessible online as well. In the absence of our membership chair, I am putting forth a service commitment request: Please look through difficult holidays and see if there is any off-time not covered by a meeting so that we can try to fill in those gaps with more meetings and have a 24-hour meeting day. Please look through the schedule and see if you or your group would be willing to host an extra speaker meeting on the holiday day.

There is also a pamphlet on holiday tools. One suggestion in that pamphlet needs to be updated, but I will submit that to the literature committee soon.

There were no questions.

**Vice Chair Report**

Vice chair not in attendance.

**Committee Chair Reports**

**Literature**

Since our July (3rd quarter) GSB meeting, the Literature Committee:

- Completed a draft chapter on Tradition Nine for the EDA Twelve Traditions book (attached to minutes email) and nearing completion of a draft chapter on Tradition Ten.
- Completed a new brochure, “To Family and Friends of Loved Ones with Eating Disorders.” (attached to minutes email)
- Worked with a volunteer who is recording the EDA Big Book; helped ensure these audio
recordings are available on the EDA website for feedback.

- Worked on draft roles and responsibilities documents for GSB Webmaster and GSB Treasurer. (attached to minutes email)
- Considered revisions to the "New to Twelve Steps and Sponsorship" brochure, then decided to wait for additional input from GSB members before finalizing.
- Began review of a revision to the EDA's suggested meeting format that encourages a focus on solutions during meetings.
- Received lots more meditations for review by our Mediations subcommittee: please keep them coming!

Goals for the Literature Committee in our 4th quarter include:

- Add Traditions Nine and Ten (mentioned above) to the EDA website drafts to elicit feedback.
- Update the "New to Twelve Steps and Sponsorship" brochure and send it out for GSB review. Ensure website content is consistent by updating our test site and sending links to GSB members.
- Submit the "Friends and Family" brochure to the GSB for review.
- Complete drafts of Traditions Eleven and Twelve for the EDA Twelve Traditions Book.
- Disseminate chapters of the EDA Big Book audios to Literature Committee members to enable more careful review and feedback to our volunteer narrator. We'd like to invite everyone to check them out! Positive reviews are especially welcome; however, any comments that help us improve are strongly encouraged.

Anyone is welcome to join the literature committee to review or help create literature as your time allows. Please contact literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org if you are interested.

No questions were asked.

**Membership and Group Supportive Services**

The membership chair was unable to attend, but the chair filled in and shared the following report.

1. I have emailed a template "Letter to groups" to all of the addresses that were on the spreadsheet from 2018 from the Google drive.
   - This letter asks folks to review the contact information that we have on the website and asks for updated information.
   - It also directs folks who are interested in volunteering their experience with workshops and on the Membership committee to contact the appropriate EDA folks.
   - As I get responses about inactive email addresses, and folks who no longer run meetings at all, I am crossing them off my list.
   - As folks send me updated information, I'm creating a new list and sending to the webmaster.

2. I also emailed the folks listed on new groups 0401 in the Google drive with a "Welcome letter" asking them to elect a GSR, prompting them to provide meeting and contact information, and directing them to “Starting a meeting.”

   As we get new requests for Zoom numbers for new meetings and notifications that people have started meetings on their own, I am sending the “Welcome letter” and adding them to the new list.
3. Having an GSB email address, I have been one of the recipients of requests to join an EDA meeting. It appears folks feel the need to request permission to join meetings. I have created a template “response to meeting inquiries” to welcome them with the direct link to meetings from the website, and I tell them they are free to join meetings using Zoom or phone. I also suggest they visit the complete website.

4. Please announce or put in the chat during meetings: Please review the information for your group/meeting online and make sure your contact information is correct.” Email dominiqued@eatingdisordersanonymous.org to confirm or change your contact information. Please be sure to check:
   - Group name
   - Contact name/GSR name
   - Email
   - Phone number
   - Day/Time of meeting
   - Address of group meeting &/or Zoom/phone

5. I will be sending our webmaster monthly updates to confirm the information matches what we have on the website. I am not sure what contact info the webmaster has, or “we” have associated with listed meetings on the website for live, phone, zoom meetings

Issues/Concerns
   1. We are getting emails from folks who have tried to join many meetings without success. I will try to reach out with the information I have and ask the webmaster to do the same. I will begin a list of meetings with no contact information at all. Any suggestions for how to handle this?
   2. Time zone confusion seems to be a common problem. Maybe make some mention of using Google or other app to make conversion?

Webmaster

There is a 9pm EST Friday meeting that people have had a hard time getting onto. Nothing else is arising as an issue. A member concurred that she had trouble getting on the 9pm EST Friday meeting.

Try to email wmg@eatingdisordersanonymous.org at least 3 days before your meeting starts to give her time to put the meeting information online.

Email Response Coordination

A member of the team has left. There are now two people doing the job plus one learning, so a total of three people are doing this work. If we maintain three email response coordinators (ERCs), we should be good. All three individuals have been doing this work for less than a year. It was wonderful working with the ERC who left, and I very much enjoy performing this service. The ERC who started in September is doing a wonderful job. The new ERC is still getting up to speed but will be able to start soon, when she feels comfortable. She is receiving EDA emails and just observing for now. We are generally able to answer emails within 24 hours, and we appreciate the help we get from the GSB, membership, literature, other committees, and individual members when we need to ask a question.
**Professional Contact Coordination**

Chair noted that there is a professional contact coordination person doing work for us to help spread the message. The literature chair mentioned that we recently sent more books to our professional contact coordinator, and we need to keep sending big books to her. The chairs also thanked those who picked up service positions in the last few months to help with response and outreach.

**Actions Committee**

Please review the actions committee motions that were sent out by email. Those motions are summarized below, too. Make sure you express any issues or questions by emailing chair@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.

The actions committee decided to:

- Post the audios of the big book online.
- Set an autoresponse to the webmaster wm@eatingdisordersanonymous.org email address that tells the sender that the message has been received and that the webmaster will respond within a reasonable time (determined by the webmaster).
- End the sponsee waitlist use of sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org for people in North America and Europe. The 77 people still on list will be matched with sponsors, but we will not add anyone new to the waiting list unless they are considered a “remote” member who does not have access to attend meetings in any form (e.g., people in prison, people in time zones where meetings are unavailable during waking hours). The sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org address is now reverting to its original purpose: to provide support for sponsors. (The reasoning for this move was based largely on the fact that people were getting matched with others they didn’t have a real connection with and that asking someone to be your sponsor is an act of personal responsibility and willingness—an essential component of recovery.) This change took place as of Sept. 1, 2020. People considered “remote” should email sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org for help finding a sponsor. We also have a phone number and a P.O. Box where those in prison or in other locations without internet service can reach us. If you are a sponsor and want to be matched with someone who was still on the waiting list when that service ended, please email sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org. See Appendix A for the latest information on people requesting sponsors and people matched with sponsors.
- Write a new response to those emailing sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org for sponsors (see Appendix B).
- To revisit the Sponsorship tab on the EDA website and the Sponsorship pamphlet to ensure that it matches our EDA group consensus about what sponsorship is.

The GSB meeting took time to discuss the final bullet point above at length, with the participation of group representatives who had joined the call. This discussion is summarized below.

**Sponsorship Discussion**

Two main issues emerged in board discussion between GSB meetings:

1. Some members were operating under the assumption that once a sponsee has finished the steps, they are on their own (and no longer sponsored).
2. The board agreed that sustainable recovery is often a result of working with a sponsor on a continual, one-on-one basis and that those working the 12 steps in other programs are not necessarily prepared to be EDA sponsors just because they attend an EDA step
workshop.

However, the board wanted to discuss these issues at the larger GSB meeting to better understand what the entire group consensus is.

Please note that issue 1 above is somewhat related to a line in the sponsorship pamphlet that says a sponsee should not expect a sponsor to remain their sponsor after they finish working the 12 steps. The board felt that this line should be removed, and this is a major reason why it was decided that the sponsorship webpage and pamphlet needed to be revisited. The literature chair explained that that line was originally included because of an instinct to protect sponsors from feeling too overwhelmed or too committed. We are reconsidering the wording and feel that changes need to be made to clarify that the role of a sponsor is ongoing and will continue until either the sponsor or sponsee decides the relationship is no longer working.

Another concern expressed was that sponsees often need guidance and support as they begin to sponsor and enact steps 10-12 on an ongoing, long-term basis. If sponsees do not get support for sponsorship, they may decide not to sponsor anyone at all.

Another opinion was expressed that it might be necessary to end the sponsor relationship after step 12 because only by “moving on” could sponsors be freed up to accept new sponsees. However, others made comments such as: Sustained recovery is associated with sustained support in sponsorship.

Moving on to issue 2, members expressed that despite extensive time and experience in another 12-step program, a person might not have a deep enough foundation in EDA principles to keep sponsorship to those principles. Emails we have received reporting that sponsors asked sponsees to weigh themselves or report their food might indicate that those sponsors are not steeped enough in the EDA principles of balance and a focus on stepwork and personal transformation rather than food or body size.

Some of the uncertainty some sponsors might have could be related to not having had the experience of 1:1 sponsorship in EDA (for instance, if someone has only been through the workshop and does not have a sponsor). Without that 1:1 experience, how could someone really give that to a sponsee?

Literature chair pointed out that EDA has suffered from a dearth of sponsors, largely because members tend to want to feel more recovered before they sponsor. However, if you have some traction and have gained more balance in your recovery, it is okay to sponsor. You can share your experience, even if your recovery is not perfect or even where you want it to be. If the balance in your life has increased and you have been through the steps with a sponsor, you can sponsor. Sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org is for people who need more support as they sponsor and aren't sure what to do. Please reach out.

The literature chair also commented that, according to EDA traditions, we do not engage in outside issues, and diets, food plans, and exercise plans are considered outside issues. Our principles are about working the steps. We encourage people to work with professionals to develop reasonable food and exercise plans. The EDA program is not about the food. We deal with solutions to issues of balance and recovery. We provide accountability. We cannot take a position on outside issues. It was asked whether or not we need to include anything about this on the sponsorship page or in the brochure. (This possibility was not discussed.)
A member asked if it is within our purview to suggest a nutritionist. The response was that EDA’s policy is to encourage people to seek out whatever outside support will help them. We especially encourage professional connections. We don’t endorse or refer. We encourage people to reach out when they need.

A member asks if a sponsor can say, “I won’t sponsor you unless you have a dietitian.” Literature chair has an opinion (not EDA policy): If a sponsor thinks it is medically necessary, they have every right to say that they need the sponsee to get medical help. You cannot be kicked out of EDA for not seeking professional help, but any sponsor can set their boundaries and limits. A member commented: We promote responsibility, not codependency.

A member asked how we handle being a sponsor when we don’t feel very confident in our own recovery or if someone asks us to sponsor them and it seems like they might even be “further along” in recovery than us. The response was that even if you’re newer in recovery, you can engage thoughtfully and with an inquiring mind with any sponsee at any level. Don’t be frightened of being triggered. Triggering moments can be opportunities to work through things in recovery. Sponsorship is about taking your recovery to the next level. A member pointed out that you can always follow the instructions in the big book chapter on sponsorship. The sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org email address is also available.

The chair encouraged everyone to contact the board with revisions or comments on sponsorship and the sponsorship webpage and pamphlet. We want to know what the group thinks. If your home group/meeting has an idea about something related to the program, you can email chair@eatingdisordersanonymous.org. Please submit your suggestions and edits. You all—the members and groups—are in charge. The board is here to serve you.

New Business

Elections

Elected new webmaster who lives in Arkansas, moving to Texas. Elected Unanimously

Swearing In

All general service board members said the swearing in statement.

Motions

- Literature Chair: Instead of bringing everything through the GSB when literature is finished or ready for review, can we post new literature online for feedback from all members rather than waiting for GSB meeting?

Chair clarified: Group custom carries the same weight as something that is written. It is established practice for the literature committee to bring traditions to the GSB first. Now, we want to change that custom so that the committee can submit new text directly to the membership for review online.

Invited opposition/dissent to the motion. Majority agreed. No opposition. Passed
What is on your mind?

A member inquired about starting a sponsorship support group. We are currently supporting sponsors through sponsors@eatingdisordersanonymous.org. It was mentioned that a 12-step meeting could be started—or some other kind of specialized meeting that addresses sponsorship more directly.

Member asked if there is a way to record the speaker at a speaker meeting and then post it online on the website. Literature chair responded that there is the EDA speaker feed podcast (https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/anchor-podcasts/eating-disorders-anonymous-eda-speaker-feed), where speaker stories are shared outside of the EDA website without taking them through the GSB. The GSB does not directly publish speaker stories because it would require extensive review to make sure the stories do not engage in outside issues and otherwise match the spirit of EDA. In the meantime, you can request to post on the EDA speaker feed podcast. However, the person in charge of the EDA speaker feed needs to hand off maintenance of that feed to someone else, so please contact literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org to ask for the contact information of the person maintaining the speaker feed if you are interested in taking that over.

The General Service Board tab has a link to open service positions if you are interested. Please see the Service Needs Summary at the end of these minutes for information about what is needed. The website will be updated accordingly.

A member asked where the newcomer/beginner’ meetings are listed. You can find them easily on the meeting roster, but there are also some on the Online Meetings tab of the website. Search the web page or the roster for “beginner.”

Closing

Next GSB meeting will be on January 3, 2021.

Please take the info discussed in this meeting to your group.

Meeting closed at 5:38 p.m. EST.

Motions Summary

- Instead of the literature committee bringing new written traditions to a GSB meeting before posting it for the membership to review, the literature committee will now be able to post new tradition language on the EDA website as DRAFT COPY for the membership to review without presenting it at a GSB quarterly meeting first. PASSED
- Please review the Actions Committee report section for a bulleted list of items that were passed between board meetings.

Service Needs Summary

- Email response coordinator position has been filled.
- Webmaster role (both for meetings and technical issues) has been filled.
- Motions archive – We have one person who has agreed to go through previous GSB meeting minutes to record the motions that were presented. We would like two more people to help with compiling this list of motions. Email
chair@eatingdisordersanonymous.org to help.

- Submit short meditations to be included in an EDA daily reader. Choose a quote from EDA literature and write a short meditation. The quote and meditation together should be no longer than 220 words, although slightly longer submissions will be accepted. These can be submitted on the Meditations tab on www.eatingdisordersanonymous.org.
- The Membership and Group Services committee is looking for members. Please email chair@eatingdisordersanonymous.org to help.
- We need someone new to manage the EDA speaker feed podcast (https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/anchor-podcasts/eating-disorders-anonymous-eda-speaker-feed). The speaker feed is not maintained by the GSB but is a help to members of our community. Please contact literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org to ask for the contact info of the person maintaining the speaker feed if you are interested.
- Please listen to the new EDA big book audio files on the EDA Big Book tab of the website, and send any feedback (positive or constructive) to literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.

Additional Notes and Action Items

- Review the “Sponsorship Discussion” in the Actions Committee report section of the minutes. Please review the Sponsorship tab on the website as well as the sponsorship brochure. Please email literature@eatingdisordersanonymous.org or chair@eatingdisordersanonymous.org with any feedback or suggestions.
- Should we include something about food plans and exercise plans being considered “outside issues” somewhere on the website or in the sponsorship materials?
- We may need to consider where excess money generated by workshops should go. Does a portion go to the GSB? When? What can that money be used for? Thoughts on this can be mailed to membership@eatingdisordersanonymous.org.
- Consider adding a search feature to the EDA website. This would make it easier to find information on sponsorship or on anything else! (Literature chair suggested this during our sponsorship discussion.)
- Check your meeting listings, and make sure the contact information is correct. Announce during your meetings that others should check their favorite meeting listings to make sure they are correct as well. Email membership@eatingdisordersanonymous.org with any changes or to confirm the information is correct. We need confirmations!
- What do we do with meetings for which we have no contact information? At what point do we remove a meeting from the list? Do we have other ways of contacting these meetings? Email membership@eatingdisordersanonymous.org with suggestions.

Appendix A: Sponsorship Waiting List Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>September 2020</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emails sent on 1st of the month to those on waiting list to confirm continued interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative responses to first of month email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inquiries who were eligible for waiting list &amp; confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New sponsors available who requested to be matched through the waiting list</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who were matched by us</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reason</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who were removed due to finding sponsorship elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who were removed due to non-response to first of month email (or mid-month follow-up)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who asked to be removed for other or unspecified reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of those waiting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of sponsors signed up to sponsor through the waiting list</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B: New Sponsors@ Response to Those Seeking Sponsors

Below is the text that will be sent to those looking for sponsors. It is an amalgamation of information that already exists on the EDA website, in the EDA big book, and in other EDA literature.

Hello, welcome to EDA and thanks for reaching out to us!

In the past, emailing this address was a way to be added to a waiting list for a sponsor; however, we are no longer adding members to the list. Instead, we are returning to the original purpose of this email: for sponsors to inquire if they are looking for additional support.

If you are looking for a sponsor, we highly recommend that you attend EDA meetings and seek sponsorship in that manner; asking for sponsorship is often a key step in recovery, and a better way to find a sponsor who you have a meaningful connection with.

If you are outside of North America or Europe, please let me know your country for additional ways we may be able to assist you in connecting with a sponsor.

Please note that a sponsor is not a replacement for therapy or professional help.

I understand the frustration and anxiety that can come with searching for a sponsor, so I want to emphasize that you CAN begin your journey in recovery at any time! The EDA website ([http://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/](http://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/)) contains a wealth of information about meetings, workshops, and literature. Use it all while you look for a sponsor.

Some tips for finding a sponsor through meetings: The best way to start is to regularly attend the same meeting(s) each week. You'll get to know others in the meetings, which may connect you to a sponsor directly or indirectly. Listen for things that others say that you connect with. Usually meetings will have an open fellowship time after the meeting, so stay for that (stay online, on the phone, or in person). Often people will share their phone numbers or there will be a meeting phone list so you can communicate. Reach out and let the potential sponsor know that you want what they have and wonder if they would sponsor you. You may also mention during the fellowship time that you are looking for a sponsor, and even if no one present is able to sponsor you, they may know someone who can. You'll be amazed at how far asking can go!

The more fellowship connections you make in the program, the more apt you will be to connect with a sponsor. Keep coming back!

Here are some links to additional helpful resources:

Pre-recorded step workshops: http://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/audios/
Online meetings: https://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/online-meetings/
Phone/zoom meetings: https://eatingdisordersanonymous.org/phone-zoom-meetings/

Let us know if we can do anything else to help.

Minutes prepared by the Secretary on October 12, 2020.