**Additional Suggestions for Recovery**

**Moving through Difficult Emotions**

* When angry, ask yourself, “What would help me feel

heard and validated?” and do it. (Ex: angry journaling, writing an angry letter [don’t send], smacking a wet towel against the bathtub, drumming, painting, talking about what is making you angry to someone who won’t be threatened, saying “I am angry. It’s okay to be angry. I will not hurt anyone. I will learn how to

handle being angry safely.”)

* Feeling stuck? Make deliberate, careful changes. Doing the same things and expecting different outcomes doesn’t work. What am I willing to change right now?
* Find safe ways to vent emotions. The point of meetings is to vent emotions and practice recovery tools so we can do life outside of meetings. If we don’t vent emotions safely our anxiety will get worse.
* . The solution is to be real and accept the consequences. Not “being real” does not mean we escape consequences! Am I sick and tired of getting the same old results? What am I willing to do differently right now?
* When anxious, do something to “get inside your body”. Do something to notice the power of your body. Moving into a different room or going outside can have the desired effect.
* Confront ill attitudes and behaviors in yourself.
* Live and let live. Don’t worry too much about the wrongs of others. Make sure you are living as happily as you can.
* Easy does it. Don’t make a bigger deal out of things

than they have to be. Get a sustainable perspective.

* Feelings are neither right nor wrong. They just are.
* We have a right to our feelings. Handling them in a safe and responsible manner makes the world a safe place. This usually takes much training, practice, and patience. It is important to understand which situations cause “problematic” emotions and to make a plan to handle ourselves in those situations. Addressing issues head-on really works.

### Self-care

* Treat yourself well. We are selfish until we get our own needs met.
* Safety is job one. Make a daily plan to get adequate sleep, nutrition, emotional support, and financial stability. Do the best you can and adapt to what is. Recovery is flexible.
* Make a self-soothing or self-care plan and stick to it.
* Find positive things to say to yourself and others every day but do not say anything you do not really mean.
* Try to maintain a sense of humor.
* Make use of daily meditation literature. Even five minutes in the morning or evening can set the tone for the day and help us keep focused on recovery and solutions.
* Keep a gratitude journal. Write in it each night and

focus on what’s working.

* “Lean on God/higher power and walk with people.” That is, do not lean too heavily on people. We all let people down sometimes. It doesn’t work to expect others to sustain us emotionally or financially. Dependence on a Higher Power / higher purpose means independence from unhealthy emotional and financial attachments to other people.
* Be gentle with yourself. Treat and talk to yourself as you would to your best friend or a loved one. Practice compassion with yourself and you will be more likely to compassionate with others.

### Building Resilience

* Trust and rely on yourself. A Higher Power is “an unsuspected inner resource” for most, according to *Alcoholics Anonymous, Third Edition,* pages 569-570.
* A failed internal protector becomes an internal prosecutor. What can I say to myself to rebuild my internal protector? We are what we practice!
* “When I focus on the problem, the problem seems to get bigger. When I focus on solutions, they get more powerful. What might be a

solution I am willing to try right now?”

* “I am not making much sense. Is it possible that I am malnourished or overtired? Am I hungry, angry, lonely, tired or in shame? I ought to deal with those first.”
* “My serenity is inversely proportional to my expectations. How have my expectations set me up for disappointment and frustration? Am I

willing to change my expectations?”

* When feeling “crappy” or uncomfortable, ask

yourself, “What would I be doing if I were feeling better?” then do one of those things.

* When scared, notice the power of your body, mind, and spirit and then ask, “What risk-taking behaviors build self-trust?” and do one. (Ex: talk to someone about what is scaring you, drop “more important” things to get perspective).
* Validate feelings, challenge old thinking, and change old behaviors.
* Afraid of rejection? Plan how to comfort yourself

when you get it: “It’s effort, not results that count.” “I took a risk and did the right thing.” “It’s not about me.” “I just did something hard

and I can be proud of that.” “I am worthy, and it is all right if not everyone thinks so.” “I will try again with someone else.” “I can talk to others about this.”

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**Maintaining a Recovery Focus**

o To live happily (and be a valuable member of society), show up, tell the truth, do the work, and let go of the outcomes.

* + Be an adult. Ask yourself “What would a rational adult do in this situation?” If you are not sure what to do, pray and/or call others and talk about it. That’s what a rational adult would do!
	+ Please remember we all need training and practice to be effective adults. Be gentle with yourself.
	+ Act, don’t react.
	+ Keep a recovery focus.
	+ Talk about your own issues rather than just providing feedback to others.
	+ Don’t blame others. It does not help to let ourselves

continue as victims.

* + There is no one thing, no magic bullet, which will make you better. But you will get better if you keep being honest, keep an open mind, and keep being willing to change your mind and behavior.
	+ First things first. That is, focus on what is most important and address that issue first—one thing at a time, and keep doing the next right thing.
	+ Ask for others’ input and make your own decisions.
	+ Remember the process of recovery feels raw and miserable a good bit of the time at first, but it is worth it. In the end, there is real recovery (peace, freedom, and usefulness) and hard work to be proud of. We grow and that feels good, right, and happy.
	+ Making a mistake does not mean, “going back to square one.” Acknowledge mistakes, try to understand what went wrong and why, plan for how to handle things differently to get a better outcome, then let go and move forward.

o Develop willingness to look at things differently.

* + Recovery is a process, not an event.

o Show up for life no matter what.

o Try to maintain a sense of humor.

* + Focus on the solutions to your issues. Don’t worry about other people’s issues.
	+ Aim for progress, not perfection.
	+ Talk about your mistakes and what you want to do differently the next time.

### Getting Involved (Service)

* + - Get involved. Helping others is a great way to build recovery. “The meaning of life is to give life meaning.”
		- Reach out to newcomers.
		- Get on the phone list. Call people.
		- Go to PA-A 12-Step meetings, read the literature and work the Steps with a sponsor. Others’ experience, strength, and hope can transform and strengthen our own recovery.
		- Trust God as you understand God. Take responsibility for yourself and serve others.
		- Help others. Ask somebody to the movies or coffee. Listen as you want others to listen to you.

# These suggestions were compiled by people in recovery from an eating disorder.

**Please take what you can use and leave the rest.**

*Additional Suggestions for Recovery*

## (Please read our brochure,

“Recovery Tools,” first!)

For more information please visit our website at:

 PA-A.ORG

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