

COMPULSIVE DIETING *** ANOREXIA NERVOSA *

STAGES OF DESCENT

STAGE1 ORIGINS

*** PRECIPITATING AND PREDISPOSING FACTORS**
-Cultural emphasis on thinness and dieting
-Stressful family patterns such as over control, overprotection, enmeshment, perfectionism, abuse, or other family dysfunction
-Individual stress, anxiety, and fears - Insecurity
-Low self worth
-Overwhelming and stressful changes - Feeling a lack of control over life

*** UNMET NEEDS, UNEXPRESSED FEELINGS**
-Belief that core self is defective and unacceptable -Lack of awareness of one's own needs and feelings -Difficulties with anger and conflict -Perfectionistic

***DRIVEN: ALL THINGS TO ALL PEOPLE**
-Desperate need to be accepted often to the point of giving up self
People pleasing, a focus on needs of others to the exclusion of one's own needs (codependence) -Human doing (self worth depends upon performance)

*** QUICKER PACE, DEEPER FEAR, TIGHTER CONTROL -**
Increasing pressure and anxiety -Fear of failure
-Not good enough
-A need to do better
-A need to be in control
-Dieting as a way of being in control and being acceptable -Constant concern with weight and body image

STAGE 2 FALSE HOPE, FALSE FRIEND

*** A NEW OBSESSION;
A PERILOUS ILLUSION**
-An obsession with weight control, in reality a way of having a sense of control, a way of dealing with anxiety that seems overwhelming
-Dieting means weight loss, beauty, popularity, achievement and success, safety and control
-Non-dieting and eating mean failure
-Control over body gives a sense of control over life

*** OVER-CONTROL
OUT-OF-CONTROL**
-A war between self and body -Denial of food leads to increased hunger and desire to eat -Restraint and guilt lead to craving forbidden foods
-Hunger seems insatiable
-Terror of losing control
-Feeding self means failure

*** DESPERATION, DENIAL,
DESPAIR**
-Deeper issues are obscured. Food and weight become the only issues -Dim awareness that something is terribly wrong and getting worse

*** ISOLATION
AND A DECEPTIVE FRIEND**
-"White knuckle" control seems the only alternative to out of control eating
-Fear driven obsessional control crowds everything else out of life

*** COMMON NEEDS AND FEARS;
DIFFERENT WAYS OF COPING**
-Some dieters alternate between collapse into compulsive eating and renewed attempts at heroic restraint -Some become bulimic -Some use even more restraint and develop Anorexia Nervosa - Some are bulimarexic and starve, as well as binge, and purge

STAGE3 AWARENESS AND DECISION

***SICK AND TIRED**
-Fear
-Isolation
-Hopelessness
-Depression
-Running from self
-Running from feelings
-Sick and tired of feeling sick and tired - Full depth of eating disorder

***THE MOMENT OF CHOICE -**
Conclusion that things are out of control and that nothing will change without help
-Recognition that food and weight concerns are not the only issues -A decision to seek treatment

*** SEEKING SOLUTIONS; REEFS,
SHOALS, AND SAFE HARBORS**
-Finding appropriate help may be difficult
-Some choices, bad advice, limited information may impede recovery
Recovery work, to be successful, must remove focus on food and weight and deal with painful core issues
-A comprehensive program with an eating disorder professional is needed

*** CONFUSION
AND DISSONANCE;
THE BEGINNINGS OF HOPE**
-Difficulty telling good programs from counterproductive and destructive approaches
-Much time may be spent looking for effective help -Cautiously hopeful that the right help can be found

STAGES OF RECOVERY

**STAGE 4
DISORIENTATION;
LOST AND ADRIFT**

- ""LIGHTLY BELIEVING;
RESISTANCE TO CHANGE**
 - Fear of weight gain
 - Difficulty hanging on to optimism -Fear of change
 - Disorder no longer works yet afraid to give it up -Radical changes to thinking and behavior considered
 - A paradox; getting better but feeling Worse
- *LIMBO; CAN'T GO BACK,
AFRAID TO GO FORWARD**
 - Old defenses crumble
 - Loss of old illusions
 - Flooded with pain and anxiety - Uncomfortable emotions, previously numbed by eating disorder, are now on the surface
 - Can't go back, but would like to regain the comfort and security of old illusions and defenses
 - Afraid to go forward
 - Little sense of direction -Realization that help won't be found in a diet
 - Can't imagine STAGE 6
- *TOO MUCH PAIN;
WANTING TO QUIT**
 - Feelings can no longer be numbed or avoided
 - A daily decision to continue or quit -An intense desire to escape pain -Sometimes overwhelmed and losing ground
- *CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM;
TENTATIVE STEPS**
 - Facing pain creates an opportunity for growth -Beliefs begin to change - Dysfunctional thoughts increasingly recognized and disputed -Growing awareness and acceptance of needs and feelings
 - Increasing trust, openness and honesty - Growing optimism

**STAGE 5
TAKING RESPONSIBILITY
AND REFUSING TO QUIT**

- * AN END TO DENIAL**
 - " I have an eating disorder and it's not about food and weight" -"There is no alternative to recovery" -"I can't do it alone"
 - *IMPATIENCE FOR CHANGE;
SLOWING TO GROW**
 - Tentative hope gradually becomes solid commitment
 - Impatience with imperfect recovery may cause setbacks
 - Difficulty accepting long-term nature of recovery and the need for pacing
 - *NO MAGIC; TAKING
RESPONSIBILITY**
 - Recovery is uneven and difficult - Recovery is hard work
 - There is no substitute for personal responsibility
 - Perseverance pays off
 - Gradually tools are developed for forging and maintaining inner unity and strength
 - *PRIORITIES**
 - Accept needs and feelings as legitimate and important
 - Become self-nurturing and self accepting
 - Find support
 - Assertiveness, honesty, integrity -Stop avoiding painful issues and conflicts
 - Resolve family and relational issues - Learn and practice corrective self-talk
 - Make recovery the top priority
 - As new priorities are accepted, there is a healing of old wounds through self re-parenting, corrective self-talk, and healthy new patterns of relating. And the final priority -----
- NEVER, EVER QUIT!**

**STAGE 6
A NEW LIFE**

- *LETTING GO OF THE PAST**
 - Freedom from old tapes -Guilt-free choices
 - Elimination of "musts" and "shoulds"
 - Giving up old food rules
 - New interests, new friends - Relaxation and fun
- *COMMITMENT TO SELF;
SELF AFFIRMATION**
 - Ego strength; the ability to think, feel, and act as a healthy individual, regardless of the expectations of family and others
 - Being your own best friend
 - Being able to say comfortably and honestly" I'm not perfect but I'm enough"
- *ASSERTIVENESS AND
BOUNDARIES**
 - Assertiveness as a way of gaining self respect and respect from others
 - Anger and conflict no longer feared and avoided
 - Honesty without guilt and fear -An end to giving up self in order to be loved and accepted by others
- *THE REALITY OF SELF-LOVE;
ONGOING RECOVERY**
 - Belief that all food is legal
 - Eating without guilt or fear, eating with enjoyment
 - Relief from anxiety and depression - Empowerment
 - Confidence
 - Optimism
 - Self acceptance
 - Self esteem
 - Healing, loving, and growing as an ongoing process

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