

It's National Eating Disorder Week. Today, we are going to dispel some myths, broadcast some truths, share some resources, and, of course, advocate!

Here are 9 Truths About Eating Disorders *\*we encourage you to pause and reflect throughout these truths and also input your own facts that line up... for example, there are multiple subtypes to anorexia nervosa\**

Truth #1: Many people with eating disorders look healthy, yet may be extremely ill.

Truth #2: Families are not to blame, and can be the patients' and providers' best allies in treatment.

Truth #3: An eating disorder diagnosis is a health crisis that disrupts personal and family functioning.

Truth #4: Eating disorders are not choices, but serious biologically influenced illnesses.

Truth #5: Eating disorders affect people of all genders, ages, races, ethnicities, body shapes and

weights, sexual orientations, and socioeconomic statuses.

Truth #6: Eating disorders carry an increased risk for both suicide and medical complications.

Truth #7: Genes and environment play important roles in the development of eating disorders.

Truth #8: Genes alone do not predict who will develop eating disorders.

Truth #9: Full recovery from an eating disorder is possible. Early detection and intervention are important.

WAIT...did you just say that people with eating disorders

Yes

Less than 6% of people with eating disorders are medically diagnosed as "underweight." Eating disorders have the HIGHEST risk of death of any mental illness, and 95 percent of people with eating disorders are between the ages 12 and 25...so, how can we change these statistics and create an ED-free world?

The best-known environmental contributor to the development of eating disorders is the sociocultural idealization of thinness.

By age 6, girls start to express concerns about their own weight or shape. 40-60% of elementary school girls (ages 6-12) are concerned about their weight or about becoming too fat.

Of American elementary school girls who read magazines, 69% say that the pictures influence their concept of the ideal body shape. 47% say the pictures make them want to lose weight.

Up to 40% of overweight girls and 37% of overweight boys are teased about their weight by peers or family members. Weight teasing predicts weight gain, binge eating, and extreme weight control measures.

EDs are bio-psycho-social conditions. We may not have the power to control the bio-psycho effects, but we sure do have the power to control the SOCIAL effects.

WATCH WHAT YDon't Say...

“Wow! You've lost/gained so much weight, you look great!”

“I wish I had your discipline. What's your secret?”

“That has a lot of calories, are you really going to eat all that?”

“Have you considered going on a diet?”

“Sometimes I wish I had an ED, it seems like an easy way to lose weight.”

“You just need a little self-control. Just don't binge, it's simple.”

*\*give time for questions... why is it bad to say “you look great”\**

*Instead...*

Give compliments that are UNRELATED TO PHYSICAL APPEARANCE !!!

1. You make people feel good about themselves.
2. You're such a good listener.
3. You're really going to make a difference in the world.
4. I'm so glad I met you.
6. I never get tired of being around you.
7. You make people feel important.

8. I feel like I can tell you anything.
9. You're a strong person.
10. Your happiness is contagious.
  
11. Our conversations always make me feel better.
12. I can always count on you to be there for me.
13. It's amazing how far out of your way you go to help people.
14. You're a selfless person.
15. You are always so much fun to be around.
16. You can make people laugh on their worst days.
17. You're so good at making people feel welcome.
18. I couldn't imagine my life without you.

Also...

**IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANYTHING NICE TO SAY, JUST DON'T SAY IT.**

Believe it or not, your little "harmless" jokes aren't so harmless.

What you may have thought of as a "harmless" joke could be the very reason someone is now insecure

**HELP US CREATE A BETTER WORLD.**

Call out others if you hear them promoting ED myths or toxic culture. **THINK GLOBALLY, ACT LOCALLY.** Share these unfortunate facts with family and friends through social media. **SPREAD AWARENESS !** Watch what you say. **YOUR WORDS MATTER.** Use them wisely to create safer environments.