

Eating Disorders

Dieting has been identified as one of the risk factors for the development of disordered eating. Obsessiveness and impulsive coping seem to facilitate the evolution of disordered eating into diagnosable eating disorders. All eating disorders are characterized by the presence of pathological behaviors and thinking in various combinations; these include restriction, bingeing, purging, fear of weight gain or fatness, and self-valuation that emphasizes the individual's perception of their size or weight.

From *Genes, Personality and Eating Disorders*
Ovidio Bermudez, MD

Because the 'language of fat' is spoken so frequently in our culture, we learn to blame our bodies for our bad feelings. To help find non-eating disordered ways to cope with feelings, we must first recognize that we are having feelings. Otherwise, we continue to feel "fat", a situation that only has one solution.

Each person has a different definition of "fat". Feeling "fat" indicates that a person is also feeling how he or she believes "feeling fat" feels. If we are *only* "feeling fat", we may be saying that because there is theoretically a solution to being fat, while there may be no solution to other feelings. We can identify these self-evaluations by identifying how we think about being fat. If we think fat people are lonely, whenever we are lonely we are bound to feel fat. If we believe fat people are ugly, whenever we feel ugly we will feel fat, etc... "Ugly" and "lonely" may not have solutions, but when you can identify your definition of fat, you can learn to handle that feeling instead of turning to the eating disorder behavior.

Ask yourself "If you were to view your eating disorder as a solution, in what situation ahs it come in handy? How has your eating disorder helped you get what you want, avoid what you hate, or express your true feelings? Your true issues are the very ones your eating disorder has helped you with. Once you identify these, you can fine non-eating disorder methods to solve them. When you are feeling strong, you wont' need your eating disorder to do your work for you.

From Jessica Stenick, MS RD, Eating Disorder Specialist

Resources for Eating Disorders

- 1) www.anred.com/prev.html
- 2) www.eatingdisordershelpguide.com/prevention.html
- 3) Book: *Intuitive Eating* by Evelyn Tribole
- 4) Nancy Curfman, psychologist specializing in eating issues:541.385.7408
- 5) Ask Cathy for many more resources

For Kids:

- 1) http://kidshealth.org/kid/health_problems/learning_problems/eatdisorder.html
- 2) www.empoweredparents.com