

You Are Not Alone

Monthly Recovery **Support Letter**

Filled with eating disorder recovery stories, exclusive guest interviews, inspirations, recovery and body image tips, poems, artwork, healing information and more.

June 2011 Edition



**“Please stay strong and keep on believing in yourself!
I know how you feel, I have been there!
You CAN recover!”**

Created by: Andrea Roe
<http://www.youarenotalonebook.com>
<http://www.eating-disorder-information.com>

Proofread by the wonderful Holly Orr

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Trigger Warning: Please note that the content in this newsletter may trouble some people.
If you feel you may react negatively to the content, please don't continue reading.

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My Biggest Recovery Aha-Moment

My recovery process was filled with many aha moments. And recovery taught me lots of skills and lessons, some of which I had to learn several times before I really *got* them. My **recovery taught me to be patient, persistent and kind to myself—skills that helped me break free of my eating disorder**—skills and lessons I still use today in other areas of my life. It's not just "recovery lessons/skills", it's really lessons/skills for life.

One of the biggest aha moments during my recovery process was really "getting" and feeling that **I was NOT my eating disorder**.

For the longest time, it actually felt like I was my eating disorder and my eating disorder was me. I didn't know who I was without it.

It was as if I had a non-stop negative tape recorder in my head—there was this voice constantly telling me I wasn't good enough, needed to lose weight, etc. And for years I had mistaken this voice for my own true self.

And during my recovery process, I learned to separate these two voices—mine and the toxic eating disorder one. Especially in the beginning, it was difficult at times to see where one started and the other one ended. It didn't help that in the beginning, my own voice was so small that I had trouble hearing it. The negative toxic voice was so loud and dominant.

But whenever I heard this toxic voice telling me negative things about myself, I'd ask myself if it was the "real me" talking, or the eating disorder speaking to me.

When it was the eating disorder talking, I had to learn to disobey its commands. I had to learn to take control back over my life. After all, it was MY life, not the eating disorder's. I did not want to be a slave to it any longer.

I started to pay more and more attention to my own voice. Even when I was not able to listen or trust it, I did my best to acknowledge it and be grateful for it and slowly gave it room to grow.

As I did, I found the eating disorder voice starting to grow weaker over time from neglect. The less I paid attention to it and more to my own voice, the stranger the eating disorder voice became. Over time, this toxic presence felt "sick" and out of place. And eventually, it faded away.

Yes, the eating disorder voice can be silenced. It used to be with me every waking hour. And today, it's gone, as it can be for you.

But you need to nurture your true you, your real voice first.

It took time to develop the eating disorder and it takes time to break free from it. But the important thing to remember is that breaking free from the eating disorder IS possible.

All the best,

Andrea

Congratulations! ☺ The winner of last month's "**Beautiful You**" book giveaway is Renate, 42 from Ireland.

"My name is Renate and I am 42 years old. I am German and am living in Ireland since 2001. Here is where I finally have found the support, and my own motivation, to embark on the journey of recovery after a life of no self-worth, nonexistent self-esteem and eating distress. I recovered fully with the wonderful guidance of the team from the Marino Therapy Centre in Dublin (<http://www.marinotherapycentre.com>) and am now supporting and encouraging others to start and continue traveling on the road of recovery as a moderator with the support and self-help website Iceberg (www.eatingdisorderselfhelp.com). I want to spread the wonderful message and HOPE that EVERYBODY CAN RECOVER, no matter how long you have been living with this condition. I recovered at 41...it is never too late, and EVERYBODY CAN FULLY RECOVER and live a life of freedom!!!"

Hola from Costa Rica! ☺

Earlier this month, I came back from a family vacation to Costa Rica.



Congratulations!!!☺ At my sister's high school graduation ceremony in CR.



Beautiful beach on the Pacific side.



My husband and I in front of Volcano Arenal.



We met lots of animals in the jungle.

Inspirational Quotes:

Words to help you on your journey.

“Saying is one thing and doing is another.”

– Michel Eyquem de Montaigne

**“Too many people overvalue what they are not
and undervalue what they are.”**

– Malcolm S. Forbes

**“Most barriers to your success are man-made.
And most often, you're the man who made them.”**

– Frank Tyger

**“As you grow older,
you'll find that the only things you regret
are the things you didn't do.”**

– Zachary Scott

**“We can no more afford to spend major time on minor things
than we can to spend minor time on major things.”**

– Jim Rohn

**“If you want to reach a goal,
you must ‘see *the reaching*’ in your own mind
before you actually arrive at your goal.”**

– Zig Ziglar

“The walls we build around us to keep out the sadness also keep out the joy.”

– Jim Rohn

**“Healing doesn't mean the damage never existed.
It means that it no longer controls our lives.”**

– Earnie Larson

**“Pretty, pretty please, don't you ever, ever feel like you're less than,
less than perfect. Pretty, pretty please, if you ever, ever feel like
you're nothing, you are perfect to me.”**

– Pink

**“And the day came when the risk to remain tight inside the bud
was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.”**

– Anaïs Nin

**“I hated every minute of training, but I said,
Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a champion.”**

– Muhammad Ali

**“Success is a ladder you cannot climb
with your hands in your pockets.”**

– American Proverb

Inspiring Woman — Making a Difference in the World



Rachael Lauren Stern

This month, I have the pleasure of introducing you to psychotherapist and eating disorder and LGBT activist Rachael Lauren Stern. She struggled with eating disorders (ED) for many years but fought back and found the strength to fully recover from the debilitating disorder. She has now dedicated her life to helping others find the way back to health, both through her clinical practice as well as through her activist efforts in the ED world.

*Thanks so much, Rachael, for your time
and for sharing your story with us! ☺*

Tell us a bit about yourself.

Hi Andrea! Thanks so much for interviewing me. Let's see. I am just getting ready to pick up and move to Maryland after several years in New York. I have lived all over the place. I grew up in Los Angeles, spent a few years in Nebraska and a year in London, England.

In Maryland, I have taken an awesome job as a psychotherapist at the new PershingTurner center, which will include the Maryland version of Bodywise (www.stopcompulsiveeating.com). I will be seeing clients as well as doing some community building, etc.



In addition to that, I am the founder and executive director of the **Eating Disorder Activist Network** (<http://edactivistnetwork.org>) — a new non-profit that has taken off at light speed — I will be putting ample time into developing that.

I earned my Master's in Social Work from New York University's Silver School of Social Work with a dual emphasis on clinical social work and non-profit administration and policy. My undergraduate degree was from the University of Nebraska - Lincoln and was both Musical Theatre and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) studies.

When and how did your struggles with eating disorders begin?

Very young. I was put on my first diet at six months old and thus, prior to recovery, I do not remember a time when I did not have an eating disorder.

How did you get started in your recovery?

After years of bulimia and binge eating disorder, I had weight loss surgery, which, in turn, triggered years of anorexia. I hit my rock bottom during college when my treatment team would not let me go back to school. I went into a residential program and worked really hard. With a great team, a fabulous community and my stubborn personality and a lot of work, **I fully recovered.**

What helped you most in your recovery?

I remember in the beginning, I wasn't sure why I was recovering. I had a key word, which was **freedom**. When I didn't know what I was doing, why I was doing it or how to take the next step, this was the word/concept that kept me going.

Tell us more about your passion to make a difference in the eating disorder community.

I was an activist long before my recovery. I was lucky enough to attend schools based in diversity and social change

that really primed me to make a difference in the world. As for eating disorder (ED) activism specifically — there are two things that stand out to me.

One was while I was still quite sick: After having had weight loss surgery when it wasn't as popular as it is today and struggling with anorexia, I KNEW there had to be others. I started a community online and got to searching for people. It was astounding to me how few people were willing to speak. I lead this community for years.

Second: During the beginning stages of my recovery, I was bored out of my mind (I was used to being really busy). I looked at therapist and author Carolyn Costin (www.carolyncostin.com) and I said, "If you don't give me something to do, I am going to go crazy." She handed me a bunch of posters and told me to make sure they were all over the city. The rest was really history.

As far as other ED-specific projects I have been involved with... I served as the National Eating Disorders Association's (NEDA) New York State Representative for their STAR (Solutions Through Advocacy and Reform) program during a critical time in New York State. I helped organize press conferences, influence the creation of legislation and did community organizing. I do public speaking as well.



Also, I crossed my two interests and led ANAD's (Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, www.anad.org) first LGBT eating disorder group in New York at the Brooklyn Community Pride Center this past year.

Tell us more about the Eating Disorder Activist Network.

The Eating Disorder Activist Network (EDAN) was initially conceived sitting around a dinner table after the 2009 NEDA Conference in Minneapolis. I was having dinner with Chevese Turner (founder of the Binge Eating Disorder Association, BEDA, www.bedaonline.com), Wendy Oliver-Pyatt (founder of the Oliver-Pyatt Centers, www.oliverpyattcenters.com), Sharon Peterson (founder of the Eating Disorder Network (EDN) of Maryland, www.ednmaryland.org), Ilena Greene (NEDA/NEDA-Long Island, www.edap.org/neda-long-island) and several others. It had been formulating in my head and at the table that night, I committed to doing something before the next year's conference.

Founded in 2010, the Eating Disorder Activist Network serves to unite and provide resources, community, conversation and training for those looking to create a better world for those suffering, those who have suffered and those susceptible to eating disorders, and to the world at large.



Essentially, when I look at the existing eating disorder organizations, I see amazing people doing amazing things. As someone with a background in community organizing and politics, I saw a few things missing. I didn't see connection amongst activists. More importantly, I didn't see the social capital needed to fuel this movement as a unilateral force. I wanted to link people, organizations, clinicians — everybody — and create new resources, new trainings, and a sense of community. I reached out to existing activists and asked them what they wanted and needed and everything moved from there. I have an amazing board of directors that consists of directors of some of the most effective organizations and I am so lucky to feel supported and encouraged by them every single day. Also, they let me be ME, which is perhaps, at times, a bit more radical, a bit more open and a bit more silly than is completely appropriate!

I have always had an interest in the psychology of activism — from the inside out and outside in. Activist longevity is dismal and I hope EDAN will help with that as well. Most of all, EDAN represents every single one of you — we are men, women, transgender individuals; we are young, old; we are change-makers and those just starting to think about making change. We have had eating disorders; we have had friends or family members with eating disorders — but most of all, we are people who want to make the world a better place. We are all here to make change. We hope you will too.

Tell us more about your work in the LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) field?

LGBT issues are very close to my heart. I started teaching workshops on heterosexism and racism as a pre-teen. Like I mentioned previously, I went to schools based on social justice and diversity and it really helped shape me.

As a bisexual woman and as someone who strongly believes in the power of being yourself, I find it tremendously important that the country I live in does that as well. As of now, it does not. I have spent much of my working life in LGBT organizations promoting justice and equality.

In this country, it is still legal for landlords to evict people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity in 30 states. In 29 states, individuals can be fired from their jobs for their gender identity or sexual orientation. This is only the very tip of the iceberg of inequalities faced by LGBT people in the United States. This is not what I would call a “free country.”

Both my activism and clinical work have reinforced my belief that a human being is most free and most healthy when they are allowed and supported to express their true self. This applies across the board and it NEEDS to be legal to be yourself.



What are your goals, how do you see your future?

Right now, I want to finish packing my apartment!

Seriously, though, I am really excited to help create and build the PershingTurner center along with Chevese Turner and Amy Pershing.



Besides that, I am excited to speak at the NEDA 2011 conference in October in Los Angeles (www.nationaleatingdisorders.org) and BEDA's conference in 2012 (www.bedaonline.com).

I am excited to continue to use the Eating Disorder Activist Network to “dream in community” and empower others to create realities from dreams.

Anything else you'd like to share?

I can be reached at Rachael.Stern@pershingturnercenters.com. I look forward to hearing from people and creating the world we all want to live in. It is all possible — the future starts now.

For more information about the **Eating Disorder Activist Network** (EDAN), visit <http://www.edactivistnetwork.org> — you can also connect with EDAN on Facebook (http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_169096836461654).

For more information about **Bodywise**, visit their website at www.stopcompulsiveeating.com. You can also connect with Bodywise on Twitter (<http://twitter.com/BodywiseProgram>) and Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Bodywise-Annapolis-Ann-Arbor/117649438299756>).

For more information about the **National Eating Disorders Association** (NEDA) and their upcoming conference in October 2011, visit www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

For more information about the **Binge Eating Disorder Association** (BEDA) and their conference in 2012, visit www.bedaonline.com.

For more information about **Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders** (ANAD), visit www.anad.org.

I'm Done

By Michelle

Strongly standing before you

We are finished

My dear Ed, screw you

I'm more than this disorder

friendly and caring

Some days I'm weaker

But I promise you right now

I will defeat you.

Michelle, 16, has suffered from EDNOS for over two years. She attends weekly therapy (both group and individual) and is fully motivated to recover. Some days are not the best; however, Michelle is determined to escape the suffocating world that her eating disorder has created.



Karen's Healing Column: Live Life, Not Death

A male friend of my daughter told her yesterday he was done talking to pretty females. He said they are far too worried about being fat and ugly.

Did you get that? He said this of pretty females.

Every client I have worked with has admitted to me they know on some level they are not the large and/or unattractive person they see in the mirror. As the ED (eating disorder) progresses, they see this reality less often, but at times they still do.

This is a hard truth. I know. And it is a truth that frees you.

I am asking you to be honest with yourself today. **Honest about the truth you know in the deeper, more hidden layers of your self.** To acknowledge the glimpses you have had and still on occasion get.

And then take hold of the truth in those glimpses and refuse to let go of them.

Yes, you will have to fight to keep this truth. Nothing worthy comes easy. The weeds grow while we sleep. They take no effort on our part. To maintain a garden takes weeding, watering, the right amount of sunshine, the greenery planted in the right location, the right amount of sunshine, and it needs nutrition.

You are the same. You require weeding, watering, the right place to live, a certain amount of sunshine, and nutrition. It's called work. (I can hear the moans!)

Begin today to weed out the lies that say you are of a size and unattractiveness which you are truly not. (We call the altered body image *distorted body image*.)

And then keep weeding them out tomorrow and the tomorrow after that, and so on...

Till you live in the truth that you are a real female. With your own set of strengths and weaknesses, both physically and personally. And **that** makes you matter, and it makes you worthy in this world. Your weaknesses allow your strengths to flourish if you let them.

Let them.

The alternative is to focus on the weaknesses. And then you are back to ED thinking. And you stop seeing your own beauty.

Which is a living death.

Choose living instead.

Have a beautiful month,

Karen

Karen Cook, M.A., who is an eating disorder survivor herself, has over fifteen years of counselling experience in private practice working alongside women in a variety of their life's concerns and difficulties, including eating disorders. She is a professional counselor serving the **Langley and Vancouver community in BC, Canada**. If you are interested in getting in touch with Karen, please send an email to kcservices@shaw.ca or visit her website at www.karencookcounselling.com

Excerpts from Thom Rutledge's e-book called...

The Greater Possibilities

By Thom Rutledge, Psychotherapist
Author of "Embracing Fear"

Be Realistic

To be successful you must become both optimistic *and* realistic. This requires that you come to terms with your own human imperfection. To pretend that your very real human flaws do not exist is certain self-sabotage, as is thinking of yourself as nothing but flaws.

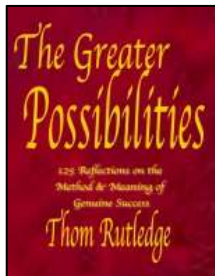
Letting Go of Perfection

A perfectionist is not someone who does things perfectly; a perfectionist is someone who believes she is supposed to do things perfectly. Perfectionism is a condition of constant pain and self-absorption.

Contrary to popular opinion, striving for perfection is not productive; it is destructive — at its worst, suicidal. By constantly expecting the impossible of yourself (perfection), you set yourself up to fail — over and over again.

**The big let-go is made of
lots of little let-go's.**

Thom Rutledge is a psychotherapist and speaker from Nashville, Tennessee. He is the author of *Embracing Fear: How To Turn What Scares Us Into Our Greatest Gift* and co-author (with Jenni Schaefer) of *Life Without Ed: How One Woman Declared Independence From Her Eating Disorder And How You Can Too*.



For more information about Thom and his work (including his recovery weekend retreats), visit www.thomrutledge.com. You can also connect with him on Facebook.

For more information about *The Greater Possibilities*
— *125 Reflections on the Meaning of Genuine Success*,
visit www.thomrutledge.com/books/default.asp?page=Ebook

Declare Independence from your Eating Disorder! Beyond Eating Disorders—Weekend Retreat for Eating Disorder Recovery with Thom Rutledge. For more information about Thom's next retreat from July 26th to 29th, get in touch with him at thomrutledge@earthlink.net

Eating Disorders Blogs

Full Recovery IS Possible

Authored by Andrea Roe



“Failure is an event, not a person”

By Andrea Roe

My journey to full recovery from eating disorders and depression was filled with many ups and downs. I had many setbacks, but whenever I fell, I did my best to get back up again as fast as I could.

Sometimes I felt too weak to get back up all by myself — I was tired of the whole recovery process and ready to give up and give in to my eating disorders... and in moments like these, that's where my recovery support team was especially important. They didn't give up on me. They believed in me, no matter what.

Back then I didn't know what they saw in me — why they thought that I could succeed. Why did they believe in me so much when I had such a hard time believing in myself? What did they see that I didn't see?

One of the people from my support team once shared this Zig Ziglar quote with me:

“Failure is an event, not a person.”

Powerful! And so true!

Having setbacks in your recovery journey is normal. Don't beat yourself up over them — rather, do your best to be kind to yourself, learn to forgive yourself and do your best to reach out for help whenever you feel that the eating disorder's grip is getting stronger on you.

“Just because you make mistakes, doesn't mean you are one.”

– Author Unknown

Even if it often doesn't seem like it, eating disorders really can be overcome. The important thing is to not give up, but to keep working on your recovery. It really is worth it.

All the best,

Andrea

PS. To read more of my pro-recovery writings, visit my “**Full Recovery IS Possible**” blog at http://www.eatingdisordersblogs.com/full_recovery_is_possible/

"Give ED a Voice"

One on one with Mary Pat Nally



Tell us a bit about yourself.

My name is Mary Pat Nally and I currently live in Southern, California. I am a Certified Life Coach and I hold a Master's Degree in Spiritual Psychology as well as a Master's Degree in Experiential Education. I am also a writer and poet. You can find out more about my books on [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com).

When and how did your struggles with eating disorders begin?

My eating-disordered behaviors began when I was around twelve. I now realize that I needed something to focus on so that I didn't have to deal with all the anxiety that I was feeling at the time.

I am the middle of six. I have an older brother, an older sister and three younger brothers. Four out of the six of us have an issue where our bodies do not absorb calcium and if your body doesn't get enough calcium, then you can have seizures. I thought it was my job to take care of my sister so she didn't get seizures. That took up all my time. When she was in the eighth grade and I was in the sixth grade, the doctors figured out what was wrong and fixed the issue. That was when I joined gymnastics. **It gave me the opportunity to be a part of something and at the same time it gave me an opportunity to strive for that perfection that I so badly wanted in my life.**

It was also during this time that my doctor told my sister and I that we were overweight for our height and that we had to weigh a certain number. I strived for that number my entire life. I also found out that one of the effects of our calcium issue is short stature and possible "mental retardation" or learning disabilities. It was then I made a pact to myself that — although I might be short for the rest of my life — I was not going to be "fat," and I was going to prove how smart I was so no one would ever call me dumb.

How did you get started in your recovery journey?

I think my recovery started when I went to my cousin's wedding. *Yeah, I know, a wedding of all places!* Well, one of the bridesmaids was frustrated because she couldn't fit into her dress and she wanted a little assistance. So we went to the store and I was sharing my knowledge of why she would want one product and not something else to help her lose weight. Another cousin's wife was with us, she is a doctor, and asked if she should be hearing what I was telling my cousin. I smiled and we walked away.

Later, at the rehearsal dinner, I was having anxiety over the food and asked my cousin if I was going to blow up from eating something. She smiled at me and asked me if I was ok. I smiled and we let it go.

After the wedding, I confided in my cousin and told her everything. She suggested I share with her mom, my aunt. I thought she had already shared everything with her mom, which she had not. I opened up to her about my struggles and she responded with, "Well, it sounds like you are not ready to deal with the tough

stuff just yet,” (she doesn’t remember this) and I thought, “I’ll show you,” and I went and **checked myself into treatment.**

I went into treatment to prove someone else wrong. Well, I spent 30 days inpatient (15 days were spent slowing down and getting myself to focus on my own recovery instead of helping others with theirs) and that was supposed to be it: *recovery*. Instead it seems as though it was only the beginning of my journey.

What helped you most in your recovery?

The things that have helped me the most are:

- ❖ **My writing:** Writing gave me a way to get all the feelings out of me. It was a way for me to feel as though I was purging without actually purging.
- ❖ **Getting out:** Isolation has been a dear friend to me and although I enjoy time alone, being with others is a great way to get out of my head.
- ❖ **Sharing with others:** When I open my mouth and share, I am able to get clarity from others who have a better perspective on the reality of what I am saying.

Congratulations on your latest book, "Give ED a Voice." Tell us more about it.

Give ED a Voice is an experiential guide to healing eating disorders and embracing life. It is filled with stories and activities to engage the reader in the healing process. I wrote *Give ED a Voice* as a way to share my own story and as a sort of therapy for myself. I used the skills I learned in my Master’s of Spiritual Psychology courses as well as Master’s in Experiential Education and combined them.

Life is a journey and it is a journey where we learn by experiencing life.

I begin by sharing who can be affected by an eating disorder, then move into a journey of my healing process and then provide journal questions for the reader. There is so much to learn and I would like to hope that I can give others a bit of hope along the way.

Even with all your background and education, do you ever struggle with eating-disordered behaviors today? How do you support yourself?

I am learning that the process of healing can take time and sometimes I grab hold of old ways of coping and need to talk myself through it just like anyone else. Sometimes I even find myself asking for extra support as well. I have used the eating disorder as a way to cope since I was twelve and now, almost 40, I realize that I need to be even more gentle with myself during times of stress and transition. Life is a rollercoaster of sorts and sometimes we need to hold on to each other to make it through.

Remember, we were not put on this planet by ourselves — You are not alone.

For more information about Mary Pat and her work, visit www.giveedavoice.org

For more information about *Give ED a Voice*, visit www.amazon.com

Poem by Mary Pat Nally:

The Power of Eating Disorders

I want to get close

I am afraid.

Afraid of what you might see.

My eyes.

My thoughts.

My dreams.

My heart.

My soul.

Everything that makes me who I am.

My feelings.

My emotions.

The truth of my own reality.

The reality that I am scared.

Every second.

Every minute.

Every hour.

Every day.

Scared of not being perfect.

Scared of looking stupid.

Scared of being in the way.

Scared of getting comfortable.

Getting comfortable means stability,

Stability means forever.

I dread forever.

So, I am ready,

to move on,

to continue my journey,

To continue my life...

I AM READY!



MentorCONNECT Teleconference Series Presents:



Navigating Insurance for Eating Disorder Recovery!



You are invited to attend a **FREE** teleconference with Insurance Attorney and eating disorder advocate Lisa Kantor

People seeking treatment for eating disorders seldom have the resources to pay for appropriate therapy. They often need extended residential treatment followed by proper step-down treatment. Few health plans understand eating disorders to appreciate the standard of care and are reluctant to pay for the proper time in residential treatment. This tension creates an undesirable atmosphere at a time when cooperation between patients, treatment professionals, and insurers is essential for a patient's full recovery. **In this teleconference, the leading eating disorders litigation specialist in the country outlines how patients and treatment providers can learn to better navigate insurance to obtain eating disorders treatment.**



Lisa Kantor is a principal with the law firm of *Kantor & Kantor LLP* in Los Angeles, CA. She is a tireless advocate on behalf of eating disorder sufferers who have been unfairly denied insurance coverage and reimbursement for necessary expenses related to medical care for recovery from an eating disorder. Lisa received her Juris Doctor from University of Virginia School of Law and was awarded a Dillard Fellow. In her own words, this busy and prolific professional says, "I always have time for eating disorder matters." For more information about Lisa Kantor and her work, visit www.kantorlaw.net



When: Wednesday, July 13th 2011

Time: 9:00pm Eastern / 8:00pm Central /

7:00pm Mountain / 6:00pm Pacific

RSVP at <http://mentorconnect.eventbrite.com>



MentorCONNECT is the first global online eating disorders mentoring community. Membership and all services are always free to members, and certain events are also opened up to the larger community. In addition to offering one-on-one mentoring matches, membership includes access to a password-protected, moderated, PRO-recovery community forum with live weekly e-support groups and one Houston-based book study support group, periodic retreats and special events, a wide variety of online themed support groups, recovery blogs, personalized profile pages, the ability to upload photos/video/songs/artwork, and moderated chat / email services. To volunteer your services as a caring mentor, be matched with a mentor,

or find general support, visit us at www.mentorconnect-ed.org



"Relationships Replace Eating Disorders" with Shannon Cutts:

What Would Recovery Do: Rally!

Recovery sure can be hard work.

And exhausting.

And sometimes it just feels like we are not getting anywhere near to where we envision we need to go, anywhere near fast enough.

But we are.

In these moments, more than ever, we need to rally.

We need to give ourselves a pep rally, invite every anti-Ed cheerleader from here to wherever we've never been before to stand in front of us, pom-poms waving, celebrating all the work we've already done.

All the work we are doing now.

And all the work we have yet to do.

Otherwise Ed [the eating disorder] will invite himself over (again) and give himself a pep rally.

Right in front of us.

As usual.

He is never shy to praise himself, even for doing nothing.

So if we want to get better, we are going to have to RALLY on our own behalf.

Let's see how this can work:

Today you got stuck inside your head, ruminating yet again about all the long way you still have to go before you are fully "Ed-free".

Ed invited himself along for the rumination party. He loves thinking about Ed. He agreed with every point you made too.

Before long, you started to feel REALLY down in the dumps. Ed, of course, was happy to crouch down in there with you, giving you "encouragement."

To stay there. Forever.

At the last minute, before you were about to let Ed just take over for the evening, you finally caught yourself. "Hey wait a minute!" you said to Ed. But really more to yourself.

"Just this time last year I was REALLY struggling, and look at me now. I'm doing MUCH better now."

Ed was startled — for a moment he actually fell silent. He wasn't used to this behavior from you.

"Go me! Go me! Go me!" you started chanting.

Ed started to pout.

That just made you happier.

"Go me! Go me! Go me!" you chanted louder and louder. The louder you chanted the better you felt. Soon you looked around....hmmmm. Where had Ed gone?

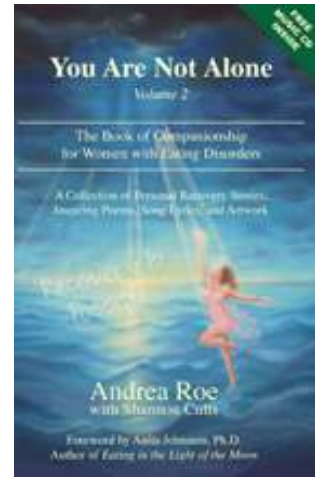
Shannon Cutts is the author of ***Beating Ana: How to Outsmart Your Eating Disorder and Take Your Life Back***. She is also the founder of **MentorCONNECT** (www.mentorconnect-ed.org), the first global mentoring community to connect those in strong recovery from eating disorders with those who need recovery support. For more information about Shannon and her work, visit www.key-to-life.com





FREE Gift Included: Also included is the *You Are Not Alone Companion CD* (produced by eating disorder survivor and award-winning singer & songwriter Shannon Cutts), which is filled with healing songs by women who are either fully recovered or in strong recovery from an eating disorder (**value of \$9.95 — yours for free with *You Are Not Alone, Volume 2* book purchase!**)

What People Are Saying About *You Are Not Alone, Volume 2* (plus FREE Companion CD)



"One of the major barriers to recovery from eating problems is loss of hope. This book will inspire you to overcome your eating problems no matter whether you're only contemplating beginning the work, have just started, or are in the midst of transformation. **I recommend it!**"

– **Karen R. Koenig, LCSW, M.ED, Author of *The Rules of "Normal" Eating***

"Through music, prose, and poetry this book and CD give all suffering with eating disorders **inspiration and clarity to seek recovery**. [...] This book and CD will make those who are in the midst of struggling know 'they are not alone.' This book and CD **should be in every treatment center.**"

– **Stacey Prussman, Comedian, actress speaker and eating disorder advocate. (www.staceyprussman.com)**

"It really touches my heart to know that I am not the only one fighting with my recovery from an eating disorder. *You Are Not Alone, Volume 2*, also **gave me new hope and courage** to keep on with my recovery. **This book is a safe place** you can come to when you are having an awful day, one of those days of fighting your eating disorder."

– **Carly, 26, from Atlanta, Georgia, in recovery from bulimia and binge eating**

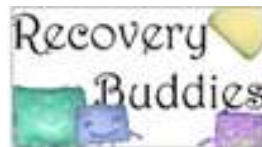
"This book is formed by truly inspirational 'artists' in their own right. Whether it be through a story, poem, visual art and/or music, *You Are Not Alone, Volume 2*, conveys its message throughout. This reassuring and comforting, 'real life' book reaches out to all those battling with, and in recovery from, an eating disorder, **reminding them that there are other people in this world who are experiencing similar struggles and that they ARE NOT ALONE!** Messages of joy shine throughout this book, providing its readers with inspiration and hope to begin/continue along their path to recovery — within it is written proof that **eating disorders can and will be beaten and that RECOVERY is POSSIBLE!**"

– **Stephanie, from North Wales, UK**

You Are Not Alone, Volume 2 + Free Companion CD is available at
www.youarenotalonebook.com/youarenotalonevol2.php (**FREE shipping to anywhere in the world**)

Profits are donated to eating disorder help and support organizations to raise awareness and help others in their recovery.

***You Are Not Alone, Volume 2* is a proud sponsor of:**
MentorCONNECT, The Recovery Buddies Project, The Joy Project



Do You Want To Contribute?

I am always looking for submissions for the monthly **YOU ARE NOT ALONE Support Letter**. If you are interested in submitting any material for future editions of the Support Letter, please feel free to send your submission to the following email address: andrea@youarenotalonebook.com

Submissions will be considered for future **YOU ARE NOT ALONE Support Letters** and I will get in touch with you as soon as possible.

What can you submit?

Personal eating disorder stories, inspirational moments, poems, artwork, articles, helpful tips, resources and book submissions, inspirational quotes and meditations, inspirational short stories, important information, nominations for the “Inspiring Woman” segment, and so on. **Feel free to send me whatever it is you want to share!**

I'm looking forward to hearing from you! 😊