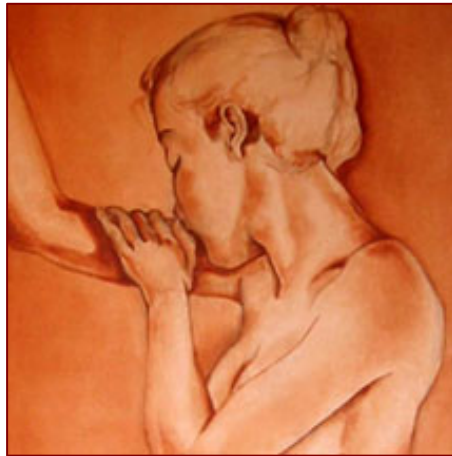


You Are Not Alone

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.

September 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>

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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.

You Are Not Alone **Support Letter** **Content**



Welcome!	3
Inspirational Quotes	4
Karen’s Healing Column — Live Life, Not Death ... <i>by Karen Cook</i>	5
30 Habits & Beliefs that Hurt Your Body Image <i>by Margarita Tartakovsky</i>	6
30 Things You Can Do to Boost Your Body Image ... <i>by Margarita Tartakovsky</i> ..	7
Goals & Steps ... <i>by Cheryl Kerrigan</i>	9
The Greater Possibilities ... <i>by Thom Rutledge</i>	11
How long does it take to recover from an eating disorder? ... <i>by Andrea Roe</i>	12
Life Saving Eating Disorder Research ... <i>Free Teleconference</i>	13
Relationships Replace Eating Disorders ... <i>by Shannon Cutts</i>	14
“You Are Not Alone” Book & CD Giveaway	15
Woman Bikes Cross-Country to Raise Support for Eating Disorders	16
What People Are Saying About <i>You Are Not Alone, Volume 2</i>	17
Do You Want to Contribute?	18

The Support Letter is back! 😊

Welcome to the latest edition of the **YOU ARE NOT ALONE Support Letter**.

I'd like to take a moment and **THANK YOU** for your **continued support** and **kind and caring words** about the Support Letter and everything else I'm doing to spread the word about full recovery. Your messages mean a lot to me and I appreciate you taking the time to get in touch with me.

**“Life without
the eating disorder
really IS possible!”**

That's what Support Letter is all about—to give you inspiration in your daily life and to help keep you motivated in your recovery. All this hard work really is worth it. It is possible to break free from the eating disorder (Ed).

All the best and take very good care of yourself!

Andrea

PS. If you'd like to share your poetry, artwork, story, or recovery tips with the Support Letter community, email me. I am looking forward to hearing from you! 😊

PPS. If you'd like me to visit your school, treatment center, support group, or special event to talk about eating disorders, how to develop a healthy body image, or to share my personal recovery story, send a message to [speaking\(at\)youarenotalonebook.com](mailto:speaking(at)youarenotalonebook.com). For more information and to read **what others are saying**, visit www.youarenotalonebook.com/speaking.php—I am looking forward to meeting you in person! 😊

European Summer Vacation



Gmunden, Austria



Zurich, Switzerland



Vaduz, Switzerland

Inspirational Quotes:

Words to help you on your journey.

**“First say to yourself what you would be;
and then do what you have to do.”**

– *Epictetus*

**“The greatest weakness of most humans
is their hesitancy to tell others
how much they love them while they’re alive.”**

– *Orlando A. Battista*

“Be careful of your thoughts, they may become words at any moment.”

– *Lara Gassen*

**“When you blame others,
you give up your power to change.”**

– *Author Unknown*

“Live your life in the manner that you would like your kids to live theirs.”

– *Michael Levine*

**“You are what you are today,
because of the decisions and the choices
YOU made yesterday.”**

– *Revt. Wayne Goonie*

**“Every day, tell at least one person something you like,
admire, or appreciate about them.”**

– *Dr. Richard Carlson*

**“It is not easy to find happiness in ourselves,
and it is not possible to find it elsewhere.”**

– *Agnes Repplier*

**“That some achieve great success,
is proof to all that others can achieve it as well.”**

– *Abraham Lincoln*

**“Sometimes someone says something really small,
and it just fits right into this empty place in your heart.”**

– *TV Show, My So-Called Life*

“The best way to get something done is to begin.”

– *Author Unknown*

**“Dreams are renewable. No matter what our age or condition,
there are still untapped possibilities within us
and new beauty waiting to be born.”**

– *Dale E. Turner*



Karen's Healing Column:

Success Tips for *Living Life, Not Death*

One of the most important things you need to remember as you recover from ED (eating disorders), is that the overall goal of recovery, *is the recovery of the real you.*

When you first discovered ED, it was very likely you needed him. He was a coping mechanism that helped you handle something very difficult.

But then you found he began taking over your thinking abilities, playing with your emotions, and forcing his decisions on you. You took him on, all the while he was encouraging you to think you were doing this to yourself!

But you know, it is not okay for him to force his ways on you. In human relationships we call that controlling, abusive and in certain circumstances, even illegal.

To separate from his voice is to begin to take back the real you. It is to realize you are not the kind of terrible and ugly person he wants you to believe you are. **He is** the Terrible and Ugly One.

It is perhaps the deepest struggle—to clearly separate ED's "truths" from your own, and to realize *he wants you to believe* his voice is your own voice, and that his lies are truth.

When this separation is clear, there is no question left in your mind. He is horrible. He is a liar. And you can slam the door on his face, and begin to recover the real truth of you.

If there could be a gift I could give ED sufferers, it would be the gift to separate your voice from his, and that you could see your own true beauty.

And so my prayer for each of you this month is that God would aid you in the ability to hear ED as separate from you, and that you could see, you, for who you really are.

Have a wonderful month,

Karen

About Karen Cook, M.A.: Karen, 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. 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

30 Habits & Beliefs that Hurt Your Body Image

By Margarita Tartakovsky, MS
<http://blogs.psychcentral.com/weightless>

- ✓ Not listening to your body's needs, such as skipping meals when you're hungry or exercising hard when you're tired.
- ✓ Hyperfocusing on supposed physical "flaws."
- ✓ Making numbers like weight and clothing size your body image barometers.
- ✓ Letting women's magazines determine your beauty rules.
- ✓ Participating in physical activities that you can't stand. (Remember movement is joyful! You just have to pick the activities you like.)
- ✓ Confusing tension, unhappiness, anxiety and anger with feeling "fat" and thinking thinness is the answer.
- ✓ Thinking thinness will garner love and attention that you actually want.
- ✓ Believing body weight reveals well-being and health.
- ✓ Staying in because you don't think you look "good enough."
- ✓ Comparing your inside to others' outsides.
- ✓ Ignoring your emotions, and letting stress stockpile.
- ✓ Believing binge eating can be fixed with a diet or weight loss program.
- ✓ Not reaching out to others when you're upset or clearly need support.
- ✓ Thinking a positive body image means loving your body all the time. Even body image bloggers get down on ourselves. Avoid making your positive body image another trap for perfectionistic tendencies.
- ✓ Not turning to healthy strategies to soothe your stress or manage your emotions.
- ✓ Forgetting that beauty comes in all shapes, sizes, weights and colors.
- ✓ Skimping on sleep.
- ✓ Bonding with girlfriends over how much bigger your butt is.
- ✓ Always eating on the go.
- ✓ Blaming your body or your wilting willpower for not looking a certain way.
- ✓ Keeping clothes that don't fit.
- ✓ Wearing clothes that don't fit or make you feel unhappy.
- ✓ Viewing food restriction as a virtue.
- ✓ Waiting to accomplish certain goals until you lose weight (and presumably become worthy).
- ✓ Similarly, waiting to treat your body well until you lose weight.
- ✓ Criticizing another person's appearance, weight or shape.
- ✓ Eating what you *don't* want because it has fewer calories.
- ✓ Weighing yourself daily or weekly.
- ✓ Dieting.
- ✓ Thinking your voice doesn't deserve to be heard.

What habits, beliefs or practices hurt your body image?

What goals will you set for a healthier body image?



30 Things You Can Do Every Day to Boost Your Body Image

By Margarita Tartakovsky, MS
<http://blogs.psychcentral.com/weightless>

Building a positive body image is a daily process. As such, here are 30 tips and tools for cultivating a healthy body image every day. Each booster either directly or indirectly affects your body image.

- ✓ **Move your body by doing activities you love.** Physical activities help you reconnect with your body, not to mention they're great for your health. This can be taking a walk, stretching in the morning, going to the gym, or biking around town.
- ✓ **Think of one thing your body did for you today.** Do this even if your "one thing" is as seemingly simple and small as helping you breathe or take a walk. It still cultivates a sense of gratitude and helps you realize that your body is constantly working for you.
- ✓ **Compliment yourself.** It can be incredibly helpful (and put a smile on your face) to consider one thing you love about yourself today.
- ✓ **Compliment someone else.** Share the love! Seeing the good in others and telling them so cultivates a sense of gratitude and positivity, too.
- ✓ **Smile at yourself in the mirror.**
- ✓ **Wear clothes that fit you well and make you happy, regardless of their size.**
- ✓ **Check in with how you're feeling.** Oftentimes we blame our bodies and start to nit-pick because of negative emotions that we're not even aware of. Asking yourself how you're doing throughout the day is a good way to keep yourself in check. Whenever I was feeling ugly and uncomfortable in my skin, I was really anxious, tense and unhappy with my life—which had zero to do with my body!
- ✓ **Laugh.** It does a body image good!
- ✓ **Read an inspiring quote on body image.** Here are a few: uplifting quotes from [Caitlin's book *Operation Beautiful*](#) and from my interview with [Julie from Beautiful You](#).
- ✓ **Look at or add to your inspiration body image board.**
- ✓ **Let out any frustrations from today.** Use [healthy coping strategies](#), so they don't simmer and bubble up in your body.
- ✓ **Get enough sleep.** Nothing good can come of being an energy-less shell of yourself. Not getting enough sleep over time becomes very unhealthy and can mess with your mind, too.
- ✓ **Take care of your hygiene.** This might sound like the silliest tip. But listen, I personally work from home and if I'm having a particularly busy day, you bet I very well might not take a shower or even brush my hair. (OK, this applies even if I'm not having a busy day.) Or realize at 2 p.m. that I've been sitting at my computer wearing pajamas. It's very hard to feel good about your body when you haven't done a good job caring for it. Even such minimal actions as showering, applying lotion, washing your face or putting on lip gloss, help – a lot.
- ✓ **Preserve your boundaries and adjust accordingly.** On Monday, I talked about the importance of creating and maintaining boundaries for healthy relationships. Well, part of a healthy body image is respecting yourself and protecting your physical and emotional boundaries. This is a daily practice. (Here's [that article](#) again on boundaries.)
- ✓ **Open your eyes to all the beauty around you.** We go through life without really paying much attention to blooming flowers, sunshine, funny-looking clouds, kind gestures and the smell of the air after a rainstorm. These are amazing things. Cultivating this mindfulness of the amazing not only leads to a greater appreciation of our lives but also to a greater appreciation for ourselves and the beauty of friends, family and others.

- ✓ **Cut the clutter.** I know this tip is most often featured in home magazines, but I know that for me, I feel most out of sorts with my body when my environment is all out of sorts. My physical surroundings shape my inner world and when things are mostly organized, I feel calmer and happier.
- ✓ **Mind your media consumption.** Skinny “role models,” diet advice and weight-loss commercials have stolen our society and produced one ideal. Be aware of the media’s influence on you. And if a show or a magazine doesn’t make you feel good, toss it from your life.
- ✓ **Don’t weigh yourself.**
- ✓ **Keep a journal, and let it all hang out.** You can write how you felt about your body today, what you think triggered those feelings and how you might turn things around. Or you might write about general feelings and thoughts about today.
- ✓ **Learn something new.** When we learn something new, it also opens our minds and lives to the many wonders in this world. It puts things into perspective in a positive way.
- ✓ **Center yourself in the morning.** I’m notorious for being a big freak-out and downer when I get up. I’m filled with worries about all the things I have to do, all the things I haven’t done and so on. Suddenly everything looks messy, I hate my hair and the world sucks. Clearly this is not conducive to a healthy body image or outlook on life. Give yourself a few minutes of positivity to start your day by meditating, stretching or even writing down positive thoughts in a journal.
- ✓ **Avoid the fat talk with family, friends, coworkers and anyone else on this planet.** No one ever truly bonds over talking about their supposedly horrible-looking bodies. All it does is create more heartache and perpetuate the negative cycle of fat talk. Plus, there are TONS more interesting topics anyway.
- ✓ **Question health news and advice.** Over the last decade or so, there’s been an explosion of articles about the evils of fat and obesity. We even have a month dedicated to the awareness of childhood obesity. (Don’t get me started. You can probably guess where I stand on this one.) A lot of this is either exaggerated, misinformation or outright wrong. Always question what you hear, see and read.
- ✓ **Think twice before spitting out a mean comment about yourself.** Years ago, my disparaging comments were akin to breathing – as in they were just as automatic and natural for me as my body coming up for air. But after my friends noted just how frequent my negative comments were and how they knew I was hurting myself, I started thinking twice. And the comments decreased.
- ✓ **Limit the time you spend looking in the mirror.** Of course there’s nothing wrong with using mirrors to apply makeup, preview your outfit and check yourself out. But the longer you spend staring at your reflection, the greater the chance you’ll start nit-picking. I know because I’ve been there. Many times.
- ✓ **If something crappy happens, don’t start the self-hate cycle.** Instead, repeat these wise words from Kristin Neff’s book on self-compassion: *“This is a moment of suffering. Suffering is part of life. May I be kind to myself in this moment. May I give myself the compassion I need.”*
- ✓ **Have at least one meal with zero distraction.** No TV. No email. No phone calls. No work. Just you (possibly alongside your family) and your yummy food. And try savoring every bite.
- ✓ **Listen to what your body is telling you as best as you can.** This might mean skipping a workout because you’re super tired or stopping eating because you’re full. Or eating more because you can tell that you’re still hungry.
- ✓ **Listen to your fave music, and dance!**
- ✓ **Do one self-care activity that makes you happy.** Create a list of five, ten, twenty (the number is of course up to you) activities that help you feel good. Each day, do at least one thing from that list.

**What do you do every day to improve your body image?
What would you like to do? What’s your fave tip from this list?**

Margarita Tartakovsky is an associate editor at Psych Central, crafting articles on everything from [ways to find motivation](#) and [how to take medication safely to mental illness stigma in the media](#) and [living with bipolar disorder](#). She also writes book reviews and contributes to Psych Central’s main blog [World of Psychology](#). You can learn more about Margarita and her writing at her [website](#).

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Goals and Steps

By Cheryl Kerrigan
Excerpt from "Telling Ed NO!"



During my recovery, I knew I was taking steps forward, but sometimes it felt like I wasn't moving at all. I had a hard time seeing progress when it seemed like I was mostly working on learning to eat and handle difficult feelings. Plus, I wanted to be done already! I wanted recovery now!

So to help me stay focused on taking positive steps and to see the progress I really was making, I created lists of goals for myself: short term (from one day to two weeks) and long term (anything over three weeks). Then, to help me achieve those goals, I listed the steps I would need to take to accomplish each one.

Putting it all down on paper made the steps to recovery feel real and within my grasp. Checking off each step to a final goal gave me the inspiration and confidence to keep going. I could see the progress I was making, even if I couldn't feel it. Having a "plan" was especially helpful when Ed would start in on me. I had concrete things to work towards, to visualize as aspects of my new, healthy life. And when I achieved them, I knew I was moving forward and kicking Ed's butt. That put a smile on my face!

I utilized my treatment team, friends and family to help me come up with a list of goals, along with the steps necessary to achieve each one. Here is an example of one of my goals and steps I took to get there:

Goal: Eat a fear food

Steps to achieve the goal:

1. With support (from my nutritionist, Amy, and Rachel), make a list of fear foods
2. Pick one fear food and select which meal or snack (the next day) I will eat it
3. Ask Rachel to come to the grocery store with me
4. Hold, touch and purchase fear food
5. Prepare fear food with Rachel
6. Write in journal to express feelings before eating
7. Ask Rachel to sit and eat meal with me
8. Use positive self-talk, dogs as a distraction, and conversation during meal
9. Eat and savor fear food

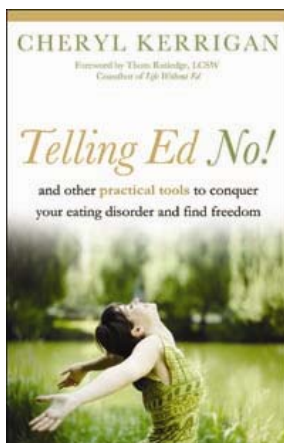
10. Journal, talk to Rachel and/or call therapist to express feelings around completing the goal
11. Make commitment to complete goal again
12. Success! Yeah!

Recovery Tools

- Making lists of goals and steps
- Eating a fear food
- Support
- Journaling
- Positive self-talk
- Conversation
- Pets
- Eating with support

Reflection

Validating your progress in recovery is empowering. Setting goals and achieving them is a great way to see that movement and feel that power. Make a list of goals for your recovery. For example, you might want to make an appointment with a nutritionist or therapist, eat a fear food or 100% of a meal, practice self-care, or buy something for yourself. Then, with a member of your support team (family, friend or professional) brainstorm on the steps to achieve that goal. Get creative and push yourself. Don't hold back. Then commit to a goal and show Ed you are strong, you don't need him, and you deserve recovery. What will your next step be?



Cheryl is the author of *Telling Ed No! and Other Practical Tools to Conquer Your Eating Disorder and Find Freedom* (Gürze Books), an eating disorder survivor and activist. She is a Consultant with Walden Behavioral Care and works with Thom Rutledge at his “Beyond Eating Disorders” recovery retreats. She is on the Leadership Board (and mentor) of MentorCONNECT, the first online global eating disorder mentoring community. She is a contributing author to multiple eating disorder recovery books and the author of <http://getridofed.blogspot.com>, a recovery blog. Cheryl “brings recovery to life” by speaking at treatment centers and schools around the country. For more information about Cheryl, visit her website at www.cherylkerrigan.com.

For more information about *Telling Ed NO!*, visit <http://www.bulimia.com/productdetails.cfm?PC=1929>

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

The Greater Possibilities

By Thom Rutledge, Psychotherapist
Author of "Embracing Fear"

Why?

It is very easy to ask why. *Why has this happened? Why him and not me? Why do I keep running into the same problem over and over again? Why can't I ever catch a break?*

Many experts will tell you to avoid the why-question altogether, saying that it will only keep you stuck. What will really keep you stuck is asking why, and then ignoring the answer.

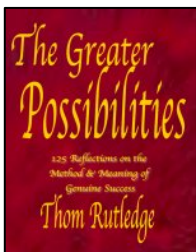
Usually the answer to the why-question involves accepting the reality of the situation --- *including that life just ain't fair* --- and challenging yourself to change your approach.

**When you ask why, listen
for an answer, then do
something with that answer.**

Some Clean Advice

Approach your life like you might approach the daily practice of washing dishes. When the dishes are washed, you feel good, but if you expect that the dishes will stay washed, you are setting yourself up for disappointment.

As soon as the last coffee cup is washed and placed in the dish drainer, we all know what happens ... another dirty dish.



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*.

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

Eating Disorders Blogs

Full Recovery IS Possible

Authored by Andrea Roe



How Long Does it Take to Recover from an Eating Disorder?

By Andrea Roe



When I started my recovery process from eating disorders, I had no idea what to expect... I only knew that there were a lot of changes ahead for me. I was really scared of the unknown that the recovery process would bring. Yet, my desire to get my life back again was much stronger than my fear of change.

So I made that important decision to “change jobs”. Before, my eating disorder was my full time job. From that point forward, recovery would become my full time job.

“I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.”

- Thomas Edison

Of course, it wasn't a smooth process, as it isn't for anyone recovering from an eating disorder. Trial and error. 2 steps forward, 1 step back.

This is where the right support team, tools and resources became so important. They helped me keep my resolve to stay on the road to recovery.

I did my best to keep an open mind to everything out there that could help me – an inspirational book, a supporting website and especially direct contact with people who cared about me.

As for most people, my recovery was a rollercoaster ride. Lots of ups and downs. But with my support structures in place, I made it *and you can too*.

That's why I encourage anyone struggling with an eating disorder to build that support team asap. It's critical for recovery. It's the theme of the Support Letter—***you are not alone***. Help and support is out there. It just sometimes takes a while till we find the support that's right for us.

So, if you haven't already, start creating your personal support team now—people who are by your side to help you through the struggle, hold your hand, comfort you, celebrate your successes and most importantly, believe in you enough to help you break free from the chains of the eating disorder.

“There is no failure except in no longer trying.”

- Elbert Hubbard

Recovery is a process. It takes time. And there is no rule for how long it takes for someone to recover. We all have different stories to tell, different reasons why we developed our eating disorders, and we are all at different points in our lives and have different resources available.

It's one day at a time. One step at a time. One step at a time may seem too slow some days but these small steps add up to making a HUGE difference. Each of these baby steps brings us closer to recovery and a life free of the eating disorder.



MentorCONNECT Teleconference Series Presents:



Life Saving Eating Disorder Research



You are invited to attend a **FREE** teleconference with Dr. Walter Kaye



Dr. Walter Kaye is the country's leading researcher on the neurobiology of eating disorders. He has made many contributions to the field with his primary focus on **studying the relationship between the brain and behavior and determining how we can better understand the symptoms of eating disorders**. Dr. Kaye has focused his extensive career on *developing innovative research practices to bring help, hope, and healing to recovering persons and their loved ones*.

In this teleconference, Dr. Kaye will review fascinating findings from his research on anorexia, bulimia, and other eating disorders. He will highlight information that will facilitate changing our approach to how recovering people view their disease and the positive traits that are too often viewed only in a negative light. If you are a recovering person and have ever caught yourself wondering, **"Why am I the way that I am?"** or if you are a loved one of someone who is recovering and you have ever struggled to understand why they can't "just eat more" and other such mysteries of the recovery process, then this teleconference is tailor-made for you!

When: Wednesday, October 12th 2011
Time: 9:00pm Eastern / 8:00pm Central /
7:00pm Mountain / 6:00pm Pacific
RSVP at <http://mentorconnect.eventbrite.com>



Walter Kaye, MD is a Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California San Diego and Director of the Eating Disorder Research and Treatment Program. He attended Ohio State Medical School, trained in neurology at the University of Southern California, and trained in psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles. Dr. Kaye was then a fellow and research physician at the National Institute of Mental Health for seven years where he conducted research on appetite regulation, behavior, and treatment for disorders. He was on the faculty of the University of Pittsburgh for twenty years until joining UCSD. To learn more about Dr. Kaye and his research, visit: http://eatingdisorders.ucsd.edu/faculty/psych_faculty.shtml



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 online 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:

Make the Most of What You Already Know

Ed (short for Eating Disorder) really loves to convince you that you know nothing.

It is his favorite game to play.

When he gets bored with giving you orders or arguing with your treatment team, he changes it up by repeating - *endlessly* - in your ear how hopeless your situation is, until you feel you have no choice but to believe him.

In this case, it is time to turn the tables on ol' Ed, and give him a little (or a big!) taste of his own medicine.

Let's see how this can work:

This afternoon you had a choice. You could follow your treatment team's instructions for how to spend the free hour in your schedule, or you could do what Ed's been telling you to do ever since you got up this morning.

Ed is telling you that you are going to have a horrible evening if you don't do what he says. He says that you can't possibly know how bad it will be if you follow your treatment team over him.

At first, you knuckle under. Ed pissed off is not a pretty picture.

But then you realize, you DO know how awful it will be if you follow your treatment team instead of Ed, and giving in will not be NEARLY as awful as all those times before when you've followed 'that voice' over your treatment team, only to wake up filled with hopelessness, fear, and self-loathing.

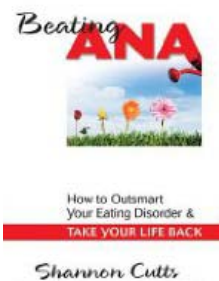
At least if you follow your treatment team, you will have people who say NICE things to you, congratulate you, and cheer you on.

Little chance Ed will give you any of that.

You know what to do. You even know what the right choice to make is.

Now all that is left is to DO what you KNOW.

Shannon Cutts is a singer, speaker and author of ***Beating Ana: How to Outsmart Your Eating Disorder and Take Your Life Back***. She is also the founder of the non-profit organization **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



"If They Can Recover, I CAN TOO!"

Book & CD Giveaway

This month you have the chance to win one of three copies of the **recovery companionship book** **"You Are Not Alone" (Volume 2) + Companion CD.**

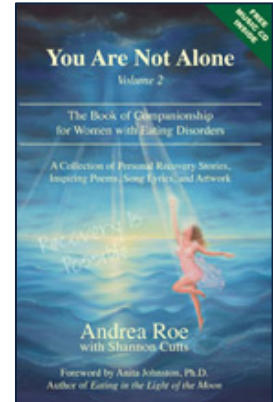
You Are Not Alone (Volume 2) – The Book of Companionship for Women with Eating Disorders is an inspiring collection of recovery stories, poems, artwork and song lyrics by women who are either fully recovered or in recovery from an eating disorder.



The Companion CD is filled with healing songs by female eating disorder survivors (*produced by eating disorder survivor, author and award-winning singer & songwriter Shannon Cutts*)

Forward by Dr. Anita Johnston—Author of "Eating in the Light of the Moon."

For more information about "You Are Not Alone" (Vol 2), and to read reviews, visit www.youarenotalonebook.com



How to enter the contest....

Simply send an email to giveaway@youarenotalonebook.com

and put **"I Can TOO!"** in the subject line.

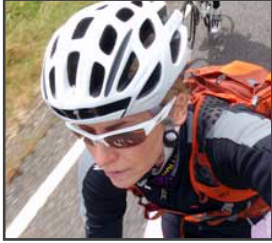
The draw will be held on **October 15th**
and the winners will be contacted via email.

Feel free to also include feedback about the Support Letter—what you like the most, topic suggestions, etc. And if you want to share your poems, recovery stories, body image and recovery tips, or inspiring artwork with the Support Letter community, feel free to email them as well. A big thank you in advance from your fellow Support Letter readers!

😊😊😊 **Good luck!** 😊😊😊

Woman Bikes Cross-Country to Raise Support for Eating Disorders

A remarkable example of ONE person making a profound difference!



"My name is Emi Berger. I am a 34 year old woman, veterinarian, athlete, musician, daughter, sister, friend and advocate. This fall, I am riding my bike across the USA, from the lighthouse in Montauk, NY to San Diego, CA. I hope to push my body and mind to its limits, see parts of this beautiful country I've never seen and raise money for a wonderful organization called *MentorCONNECT*."

Why a Cross-Country Bike Ride?

The idea to bike across America came about last year from a conversation with a friend. We both shared a love of endurance events and felt biking across America would be a great way to tap into our endurance potential while raising money for causes that were dear to us. So we began brainstorming routes across the country and organizations we could raise money for. ***Right away I knew I wanted to raise money for an eating disorder support and recovery program. I just had to find the right one.***

My Heart for Eating Disorders Awareness

When I was in high school a **dear friend of mine developed bulimia**. For over fifteen years she battled with recurrent bouts of bingeing and purging and was literally consumed by the disease. Thankfully she is in strong recovery now, but her years of illness took a tremendous toll on her emotionally, socially and physiologically. Through my friend and others I have since met who struggle similarly, I have been witness to the terrifying and devastating effects of an eating disorder. I have learned that eating disorders do not discriminate and those they affect suffer deeply and often in silence. **For many it is this silence that is the biggest hurdle to overcome.** *I believe that there needs to be more public awareness of eating disorders and more opportunities for those suffering with them to reach out for help.*

Why MentorCONNECT?

After spending weeks researching eating disorder recovery programs, I found an organization called *MentorCONNECT*, which is a non-profit organization that provides an online support system for people with eating disorders. *MentorCONNECT* is the first organization of its kind to use online and phone mentoring and relationship-building between recovered and recovering persons as a means by which those afflicted with an eating disorder can get help, and those in recovery can help others. Members share personal experiences, provide feedback and encouragement and help each other through their recovery.

"I chose *MentorCONNECT* as the beneficiary of the funds I raise from my ride because this organization provides those struggling with a safe and easy way to ask for help, confront their disease and, with the help of a community of others, find ways to recover and rebuild their lives."

Read Emi's Ride Journal!

Follow Emi on her cross-country bike ride at <http://transamericaslipstream.blogspot.com/>. Her ride began on **September 23rd** in **Montauk, NY**, and ends (approximately) on **November 20** in **San Diego, CA**.

If you'd like to support Emi's cause, go to <http://www.mentorconnect-ed.org/tourdementorconnect/>





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, is 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!**"

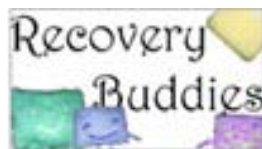
—**Stephanie, from North Wales, UK**

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 help 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 pro-recovery 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 get in touch with me via email.

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 recovery 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! 😊