



#### *Note About NH:*

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- This publication is designed as an information exchange for survivors of trauma who struggle with a binge eating disorder and their supportive others and professionals. Neither its editor nor its lay-person contributors are engaged in the practice of medicine. This publication should not be construed as medical advice concerning any specific facts or circumstances. The contents are for general information purposes only. Please consult with competent professionals concerning your specific questions and needs.

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## ***Fighting Back***

Choosing to fight back against an eating disorder is a big job. It requires uncomfortable changes and a commitment to the changes that are necessary. Changes in thinking, in behaviors, and the courage to face the changes necessary.

Most of us who realize we are having complications because of our eating disorder know deep inside we need to make these changes. Many of us also know we need help and support to make them. That means taking a look at our relationships to determine who might be supportive and encouraging. We don't want them to make decisions for us, but we do want them to be there to listen and help us in ways we can share might be helpful.

For example, I may provide one of my friends a list of coping skills I came up with to help me fight for my health. I'll give that friend permission to remind me of my list of skills if I share that I'm struggling. They won't tell me what to do, but if I'm sharing I'm really struggling, they might list for a while then remind me to look at my list or remind me of the 2-3 things I shared that I've found the most helpful. This is just one way to seek support from someone.

I may have another friend who I can go and do something with—maybe watch a movie or play a board game with. Maybe I have a friend who likes to scrapbook or go bowling. It's not necessary to for me to tell them I'm struggling with an eating disorder, but it is important to keep those relationships that continue to help me grow in a balanced manner. Besides, we can all use great friends.

You can do this. You can make the changes necessary to fight for you. Know it's going to be uncomfortable and difficult, but it's impossible to do. Many have taken back their lives from both their eating disorder and their trauma. Don't let yourself give up. Take it one step at a time and applaud your small victories. Reward yourself with gentleness and a kind word. Sometimes, it's good to reward yourself with something you want when you've been work-

ing really hard for a while and have a series of victories. Remember that a positive change in our thinking is something to give ourselves kudos for.

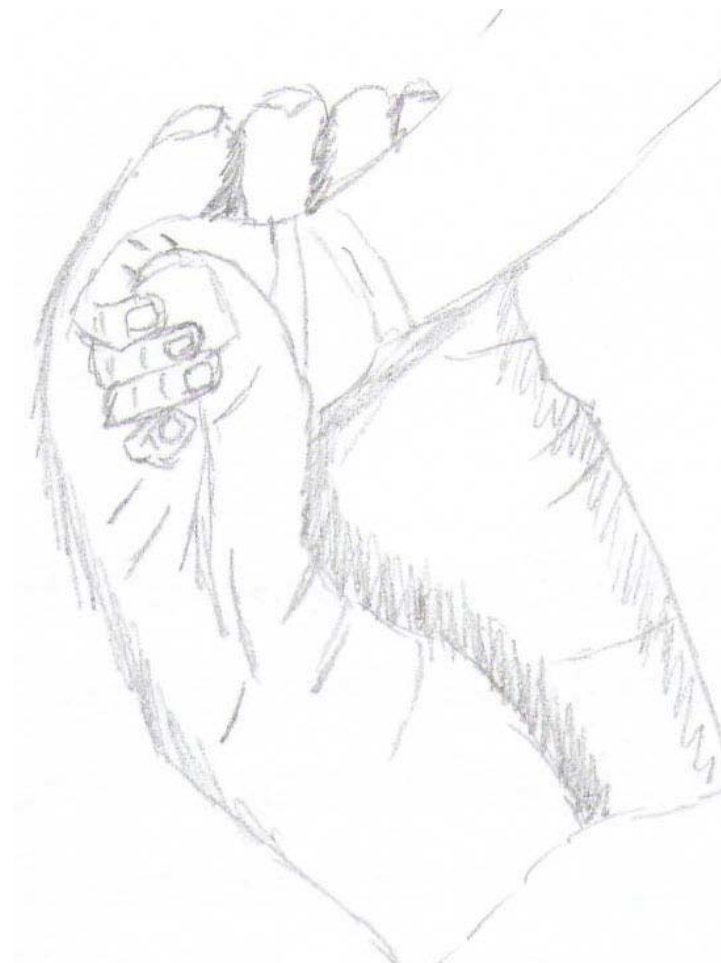
If you fall, get right back up. Pick up where you left off. Do it immediately so it's easier to get back on track. A common thought is I've already messed this up, so I might as well not try—I can't do it. Another common thought is that I've already messed up, so I might as well finish the day (weekend, week) and start again (this weekend, next week, etc.).

You can do this. Will you join me in making the changes necessary in our lives to deal with both our eating disorders and our lives?

Kristen

**You can do  
this. Will you  
join me...**

### ***She Holds His Thumb***



## ***To Be***

Up and down  
Turned around  
Trying hard  
Playing a card  
Struggling with life  
Want to cut with a knife  
It's all new  
This recovery do  
All that I can  
Man oh man  
So very difficult  
To a fault  
Learning to think  
Will I sink?  
Hold on tight  
Set my sight  
On something good  
If only I would  
Challenge to me  
I want to be  
Better now  
I need to learn how

**Hold on tight  
Set my sight**



## Relapse

I was doing so well in my recovery from binge eating. I had to move and with the move I fell off track. I started buying foods I hadn't eating in 2 years. I went off the structure I had put in place to help me with my recovery.

A year and a half later I've found myself completely in the binge cycle. It seems harder to get back to the basics than it did the first time. I think a large part of the struggle is that I had support because I was able to admit I was doing poorly. Now, my support system thinks I'm doing well but I'm ashamed to admit I've lost the ground I had gained. I'm right back where I started.

I'm afraid of the disappointment they'll have in me. Thing is I'm more disappointed with me than anyone could be I'm sure. I'm embarrassed at how bad I've lost the progress I had made. I've been trying to get back on track by myself, but I keep failing at it.

I know the tools I need to use, and I know what kills have worked for me before. Support was a big part of that. I know I need that back, though it just hit me now as I'm writing this. It's going to require being vulnerable again. It also requires saying goodbye to my security blanket I've gone back too. Food.

If you relapse, don't wait as long as I have to get back on track. If I can start over and begin to pick of the pieces, surely others can too. I can't be the only one.

Submitted by:  
Erica

*I know the  
tools I need to  
use...*



## ***Tips for Fighting Eating Disorders***

Facing the fact that you have an eating disorder can be an eye opening experience. There are some ways to work toward finding balance and hope for recovery from eating disorders. Here are some tips that might help. They are in no particular order.

1. Admit you have an eating disorder. You'll need to do something to stop it's progression. This is incredibly difficult to do, but it is the first step to taking back your life.
2. Enlist help. It's rare to recovery from an eating disorder without professional help. Finding a mental health professional who specializes or have a lot of experience in trauma and eating disorders is best. A therapist who is willing to educate themselves, attend workshops as well as asking for supervision is an option when a specialist isn't available. Enlis the services of both a medical professional knowledgeable about eating disorders as well as a nutritionist or dietitian who can help to evaluate your eating and physical health.
3. Enlist support. Seek out support groups and friends who are willing to be supportive of recovery and changes you need to make without being judgmental or "know it alls." Friends who can gently remind you of your goals, and who can listen and who can help you in ways you may need support.
4. Utilize Mindfulness. Use mindfulness when you are eating. Use mindfulness when you are experiencing emotions that impact the struggle with the eating disorder. Fighting for recovery requires several changes. A very helpful change is learning to eat mindfully. Taking time to choose foods that focus on nutrition is a great start. Paying attention to eating, how you're eating, what you are eating, and what it tastes like. Slow down how fast you are eating. Putting your silverware down between bites helps to allow you to notice body signals that you've had enough or you need more. It's not about what we feel emotionally, but physically. When you do eat, avoid technology and multitasking to stay in tune with your eating and your body.
5. Educate yourself. It's important to understand yourself and your eating disorder. While not every source on the internet is reputable, there are several eating disorder sites that have a wealth of information. Learn about your eating disorder symptoms, the types of treatment that are recommended as the best treatment for your eating disorder. Learn about recovery, what to expect, and look for the an-

***Enlist  
support. Seek  
out support  
groups and  
friends...***

swers to questions you may have.

6. Be gentle with you. This pathway of recovery is going to have both struggles and successes. When you struggle, be kind to yourself. Remove name calling and being negatively critical of yourself. Give yourself kudos for the successes, even when they are little. You didn't get to this point in one day, and it's going to take multiple steps to get healthy again.
7. Get up and try again. It's really common to struggle with relapse. At that point it seems easy to give yourself excuses to delay trying again until a future date. Start back on your meal plan, your good decision immediately. The same day if it's not over yet. The next meal, not the next several meals.
8. Mentally prepare yourself. The changes you'll make requires a decision. Any time we decide to do something, at the minimum there are changes in our decision making. Usually that is just the start of the process. Choosing recovery from eating disorders generally come with several changes. The way you eat (or don't eat), what you eat, and basically the relationship with food. Perhaps changes may be in places you go, places you avoid going, friends you spend time with or avoiding. It could also be what you take or don't take to work, and of course your thinking about food and about you.
9. Don't give up. Your eating disorder was a progression. It isn't going to be an instantaneous change. Struggles are expected. Resistance to change, not liking the change, as well as feeling a loss or pressure that goes with the change. It may be feeling of loss of a relationship with food, or loss of control if you're needing to introduce control. You'll get through it. It's hard, but it's doable.

***Don't give up.***

Don't rule recovery out for an eating disorder. It is recommended to work on both the trauma and the eating disorder as long as you are medically stable. If you aren't medically stable, that is the first change that needs to be addressed. Give yourself a fighting change physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

Give yourself as much help as you can by integrating multiple facets of help, support, treatment and changes. You can do this.

## Anger

I have always been afraid I would be like my abuser. He was a very angry man, filled with words that were painful to hear. Because of my fear, I never showed any anger. In fact, I was not only striving to be any way except remotely like him. I was terrified of hurting others like he did both physically and emotionally. I got really angry one time as a teen and that was the end of my anger, or so I thought.

As I grew older, I learned that I was angry but rather than directing it on others (thankfully), I directed it at me (unfortunately). I was self-injuring by cutting, binging and purging. I was sitting in the midst of depression that wouldn't quit. I had no clue that under all of that was intense anger. I had denied getting any where close to anger inside.

Once I learned that inside of me was anger, I was able to start looking at it. It was a new experience. It was terrifying and incredibly overwhelming. I felt so guilty. "I shouldn't be angry" because that was my abuser. When I realized that the behaviors of anger didn't need to be hurting myself or others, I started to pull strength and energy from it. I started using it to speak up about abuse. I spoke up to educate others about what abuse was and to reach out for help. I found that it gave me a positive energy to stand up against injustice and behaviors that were hurtful.

It wasn't easy to face the anger. It was incredibly difficult to stop the self-injury, the binging and the purging. It seemed like an eternity to stop these. I still get angry and find myself tense in a negative way sometimes. When I recognize it though, I look for some positive way to use the energy. Sometimes for myself, and sometimes for others.

Submitted by:  
Anonymous

*It was  
terrifying and  
incredibly  
overwhelming.*



### STATEMENT OF FAITH

Psalm 147:3 He heals the broken-hearted and binds up their wounds.

### MISSION

The mission of Hope Recovery is to provide Christian-based support in the lives of adult survivors of abuse and sexual trauma.

### VISION

To offer support and compassion as survivors make their way on the journey of recovery and healing.

## Hope Recovery

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When all seems like a struggle,  
there is hope.

## Subscribing to Nourishing Hearts

### Fees:

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als is requested to cover  
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**You Are Not  
Alone!**