

# SPREAD YOUR WINGS

## Fundraising Success

We all know that fundraising is the life-blood of any charitable organisation and Eating Disorders Victoria has recently been the very grateful recipient of some fantastic fundraising efforts on our behalf.

EDV is very excited to announce that HairHouse Warehouse has recently signed on as a corporate supporter for Eating Disorders Victoria, with their major financial support going into the expansion of our helpline services and into raising awareness of our organisation.

A summer awareness campaign will be launched in January and February, to promote awareness of the Eating Disorders Helpline through Community Service Announcements, posters and leaflets in Hairhouse Warehouse stores throughout Australia. As well as a major financial donation to launch the campaign, there will be additional funds raised through special product promotions. This will also benefit people with eating disorders in other states, since funds raised in stores will be donated to the eating disorder support organisation in that state.

Special thanks must also go to Hairhouse Warehouse suppliers and franchisees who at their recent national conference, after hearing about our work, pledged an

additional \$7,000 to the EDV.

This came after a presentation by new EDV Board member Mike Hamer, on the need to support positive body image in the community. EDV is really excited about working with Hairhouse Warehouse and according to Mike, the HHWH staff and suppliers who attended the conference were equally excited about being involved in raising the profile of such an important community issue.

Thanks also to Melbourne Girls Grammar who recently chose EDV as the focus of their fundraising activities. The girls from the school attended presentations from our Education Officer Natasha Jeremieczyk and Communications Officer Megan O'Connor on our organisation and how we support the community in

areas of eating disorders and body image.

We are also very pleased to announce that the wonderful support services offered by our Family and Friends Support Officer Helen Franks, will be expanded in 2009. Helen's services will be available full-time for 2009, thanks to the generous support of the Lord Mayor's Charitable Fund.

We have started putting to good use, the funding we received earlier in the year from the Mental Health Council of Australia. The first of four funded projects has begun to develop a community awareness strategy. PR guru Meredith Kelly has joined our team and has brought with her a wealth of PR and media experience and is injecting great enthusiasm and fresh ideas into EDV.



EDV's Family Support Officer Helen Franks with Helpline Volunteer Patricia Gallagher

# Kirsty's Corner

## A note from EDV's Executive Officer

### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Fundraising Success
- EDFV News
- Caring for someone with an eating disorder
- Ben's Story
- Book Review
- Support Group News

As many of you will know, Eating Disorders Victoria is a non-government agency and membership-based association. We receive funding on an annual basis from the Department of Human Services Mental Health branch, which covers the provision of a very basic level of staffing and facilities. We stretch this as far as we can - we pride ourselves that we provide very much greater service than we are funded to give – our volunteers are responsible for a lot of this - and this service level is amply reflected in our statistics and in the grateful responses of the many people we have helped.

For all the rest of our work, and any expansion to our services, we rely on additional grants, donations, members' support, and sponsorship. In this edition of Spread Your Wings we will update you on some of the extra work we are starting due to some of these incredibly valuable funding sources.

Long overdue renovations and refurbishments at the Eating Disorders Victoria office are close to starting, thanks to a facilities improvement grant from the Department of Human Services. The chaos of the next few weeks and inevitable disruption to our services will be hard to bear, but will be worth it. A number of occupational health and safety issues are being addressed to make our office safer and more pleasant for visitors, staff and volunteers alike. As well as safety and ergonomic improvements, the library is being relocated downstairs to make it more accessible and browsable on a day-to-day basis.

The library itself, you will find, over this last year has been considerably restocked and contains a great selection of recommended books and DVDs to help people with eating disorders and their families. Members' donations have made this possible.

Members' donations and fundraising have also made possible an exciting new project which is underway to update and improve our website. A fresh new look, a great new structure which is easy to navigate, updated and expanded information pages, are all coming your way. The new improved website (same url – [www.eatingdisorders.org.au](http://www.eatingdisorders.org.au)) is due in early November - mark it on your calendar now and don't forget to log on and check it out.

Our grateful thanks also go to our new corporate partner and sponsor, the Hairhouse Warehouse. The funding and support from HHWH will provide a much needed boost to our community profile and enable us to spread the message that if you or someone you know has an eating disorder, there is a place you can go to for help – the Eating Disorders Helpline. Equally importantly, HHWH has committed to supporting positive body image in practice as well as financially, and will work with EDV to see that its use of models, photos and imagery is supportive of a healthy body image. Getting this support from a major player in the fashion industry is heartening to see.

This year's major grant providers, the Mental Health Council of Australia, and the Lord Mayor's Charitable Foundation, have also provided much needed funds for services and capacity building projects.

**Kirsty Greenwood**  
*Executive Officer*



### Eating Disorders Foundation of Victoria

1513 High Street, Glen Iris  
Victoria 3146

Phone: (03) 9885 6563

Fax: (03) 9885 1153

Help/Support/Information:  
1300 550 236/(03) 9885 0318  
[Help@eatingdisorders.org.au](mailto:Help@eatingdisorders.org.au)  
[www.eatingdisorders.org.au](http://www.eatingdisorders.org.au)

Reg. No. A0022880J  
ABN 24 010 832 192

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of all members of EDV.

## EDV News

### Closure and interruption to office and helpline services

Eating Disorders Victoria will be closed to the public while undergoing an office refurbishment in the week commencing 29th September. We are expecting major disruption to our normal services during that week with all of our member services unavailable. Basic services will be available from Monday 6th October; however we suggest that people wanting to access services such as the library contact EDV prior to visiting to ensure availability of the books needed.

Please note that the Eating Disorders Helpline will be unavailable from COB Friday 26th September until 9.30am Monday 6th October. We apologise for any inconvenience.

### “Caring For Loved Ones With an Eating Disorder” – A carers support workshop for parents and partners of people with an eating disorder

EDV is very excited to announce that it will be hosting a 2-day workshop in early December aimed at giving carers of people with eating disorders practical skills to assist in their role as carer. Called “Caring for a Loved One With an Eating Disorder”, this carer support workshop will be run by well respected British Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Gill Todd and EDV’s Family Support Officer Helen Franks, and is based on the book *Skills Based Learning for Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder* by Janet Treasure. The book and the workshop focus on a particular method of treating a person with an eating disorder known as the New Maudsley Method.

The New Maudsley Method continues the belief that the family is an integral piece of the recovery puzzle. This approach can be applied across all age groups. The original Maudsley treatment method came out of the UK approximately 12 years ago and has proven very successful in the treatment of children and adolescents.

The workshop will feature specific guidance on caring styles, communication skills, understanding

change and interpersonal relationships. It will also give attendees an understanding of the power of role modelling, carer resilience and a chance to share experiences and knowledge with people in a similar situation.

The workshop will be held on Saturday the 6th and Sunday the 7th of December at the Edmund Rice Room, Treacy Conference Centre, Parkville. The cost is \$75 per person, which includes all refreshments and lunch, for both days.

Thanks to The Butterfly Foundation who has generously agreed to subsidise this course which means that we can offer this workshop for the lowest possible fee.

Registration can be made through EDV on 9885 0318/1300 550 236. Places are limited so please register early to avoid disappointment.



The Butterfly Foundation

Supporting Australians with Eating Disorders

### New Helpline Volunteers Needed

As most of you are aware, volunteers are an invaluable support for the EDV and we are currently calling for volunteers to be trained as Helpline Support Consultants.

Eating Disorders Victoria receives nearly 3000 phone and e-mail helpline support requests a year from sufferers and family and friends of people with eating disorders such as Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa and Binge Eating Disorder and people suffering poor body image.

All volunteers receive comprehensive training

# EDV News

---

and are required for weekly, four hour shifts for a minimum period of 12 months. The role would suit anyone who has a personal interest in supporting people with eating disorders and poor body image, such as students, people fully recovered from an eating disorder and family and friends of people recovered from an eating disorder. Experience working in a similar role is desired. Reliable and committed volunteers are a must.

To apply to become a Helpline Volunteer, go to [www.eatingdisorders.org.au](http://www.eatingdisorders.org.au), phone Marilyn Amendola – Volunteer Services Coordinator on (03) 9885 6563 ext 804 or email [marilyn.amendola@eatingdisorders.org.au](mailto:marilyn.amendola@eatingdisorders.org.au)

---

## Notice of AGM

The 2008 EDV Annual General Meeting will be held on the 29th of October. A venue has yet to be finalised, but all members will be advised of the details of the evening as soon as possible.

---

## Changes to the EDFV Board

EDV has recently welcomed two new Board Members, Annabel Haslam and Mike Hamer. Annabel is a Lawyer and brings great legal insight to the board. Mike is the Victorian State Director of Stephenson Mansell Group, an executive development organisation, and brings with him a wealth of expertise in fundraising and marketing.

---

## Media Summary

We have had another busy period of media activity in the past couple of months.

- Natalie Wild, EDV's Recovery Support Officer

featured on the Richard Stubbs program on ABC Radio 774 to promote EDV's support services and raise awareness of eating disorders.

- The Sunday Herald Sun quoted EDV's Executive Officer Kirsty Greenwood in an article about the rise of "Bridal Boot Camps" promoting extreme dieting and exercise programs for brides and bridesmaids.
- The Age and 3AW quoted EDV regarding a very thin contestant on Channel 7's *Make Me a Supermodel* program.
- EDV support group convener and speaker Samantha Ratnam was profiled in the Moreland Leader about her experience with an eating disorder and her road to recovery. EDV Recovery Officer Natalie Wild was also quoted in the article, which included a plug for our new Collingwood support group.

During National Body Image and Eating Disorders Awareness Week in early September, EDV also featured in the media.

- EDV Board Member Dr Andrew Kennedy was interviewed by ABC Radio National's breakfast program on the prevalence of eating disorders amongst boys and the importance of raising awareness of eating disorders amongst the general community.
- EDV Speaker Carol Bull and EDV Education Officer Natasha Jeremieczyk were featured in Who magazine and did a fantastic job at raising awareness about eating disorders and Binge Eating Disorder in particular.
- Natalie Wild was also interviewed by Fox FM and ABC Radio Albury about EDV's support services.

# Caring for Someone with an Eating Disorder

When a person experiences an eating disorder their life is turned upside down and the physical and psychological impact is devastating. This impact does not stop at the person who is affected, with family and close friends often finding themselves sharing the rollercoaster ride of emotions that go with an eating disorder. Often the entire family works together to provide the necessary care and nurturing to help a loved one through their experience, and it is normal for family and close friends to feel the full impact of the eating disorder throughout the process of recovery - from confusion, anger, grief and desperation to the joys of gradual improvements and landmark achievements.

Caring for somebody with an eating disorder is an extremely challenging and worthwhile role, however it is important to ensure the carer is taking the time to promote their own wellbeing and maintain a sound perspective.

## A Different Perspective: Prepare for the trip!

When embarking upon the journey of helping a loved one through recovery it may be helpful to take a lighter approach by viewing the situation as more of a 'road-trip'. Below are 10 tips which we hope are helpful for an extended journey together:

### 1. Identify the goal

The goal is positive change and recovery. Remind yourself that in this case the drive is as important as the destination.

### 2. Get the car ready

Check the motivation. How committed is everyone to the process? Be aware it may not be a Sunday drive.

### 3. Check who is driving

It is best if the person with the eating disorder is in the driver's seat. However the driving can be shared, and this is usually more common at the beginning of the trip.

### 4. Identify the first stop along the way

This is usually the GP or an information service for referrals. From then on, each stop should identify the next and direct you forward on your journey. If you are unsure where to go next, go back to the previous help and re-check.

### 5. Select the team

Make sure your team (therapists, nutritionists, GP etc) are supportive, share the same destination and have suitable specialised skills. It is also good if they know how to drive and can take over the wheel if deemed necessary. Sometimes the driver's seat may be occupied by different members of the therapeutic, medical and support team

(family and/or friends).

### 6. Allow plenty of time

You might need rests or breaks in the trip and there are likely to be some detours to other interesting places. Always keep the destination in mind (and don't forget to enjoy the scenery!).

### 7. Look out for falling rocks

Be aware of potential obstacles. Be prepared to backtrack if you need to. Lapses or relapses are not uncommon and are part of the trip which will make the destination all the more worthwhile in the end.

### 8. Recruit roadside support

Look for supportive family and friends who can help with respite and time out. The Eating Disorders Helpline (1300 550 236) can be a useful resource to reach out to along the way.

### 9. Break the journey into short stages

Divide the journey into short stages and recognise that each stage, however small, is still progress and plays a role in getting you to your destination.

### 10. Keep the map handy and talk to your trip team

Keep communicating and don't be afraid to ask for help at any step of the trip.

## Centrelink Carer Allowance

In some cases, a family member, partner or friend may take time away from work to perform the role of carer, which can place enormous (and unwelcome) financial stress on the situation. Centrelink offers a Carer Allowance and/or payment to eligible carers which can remove a considerable strain on your financial situation.

The Carer Allowance and/or carer payment is available to individuals who are looking after somebody in need of a lot of additional care and attention. There are a number of factors determining eligibility, such as the care you provide must be either at your home or the home of the person you care for; and both you and that person must be Australian residents.

For more information on the Carer Allowance, contact Centrelink on 13 27 17 or go to their website at [www.centrelink.gov.au](http://www.centrelink.gov.au).

## Tips for Self Care

When taking on a caring role, it is not unusual to feel that time is a scarce resource whereby daily tasks may become the source of a great deal of stress. Time

management is an important aspect of making life as easy as possible under testing circumstances. Below are a few tips to manage the load a little easier:

- If you have friends or family members who are willing to help out from time to time, keep a handy list of small tasks – shopping lists, general errands etc, to pass onto others in order to share some of the smaller responsibilities.
- Check with local supermarkets and pharmacies if they offer home delivery, for example Coles supermarkets have an online ordering system whereby groceries are delivered to your door at a specified time and the entire shopping process can take place from your own home, saving on travelling time.
- Updating your answering machine message regularly can be a useful way of communicating to people who might try to reach you at a time you are unable to come to the phone, while eliminating the stress or guilt that can come with missing phone calls.

### Helpful Resources

There are a number of helpful resources available for those involved in a caring role for somebody with an eating disorder. The Internet is an excellent resource in accessing support as it provides the opportunity for people within a worldwide caring community to share experiences and strategies for support and development.

As well as our own website, [www.eatingdisorders.org.au](http://www.eatingdisorders.org.au), some worthwhile websites include:

- [www.feast-ed.org](http://www.feast-ed.org) (eating disorders website for Carers, online forum, American-based)
- [www.somethingfishy.org](http://www.somethingfishy.org) (eating disorders website, carers online forum, American-based)
- [www.carersvic.org.au](http://www.carersvic.org.au) (website for carers, no forum, Australian-based)
- [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk) (eating disorders website, carers message board, UK-based)

Because eating disorders often go hand in hand with other mental illnesses such as anxiety and depression (both for the person experiencing the eating disorder and their carers/family members), there is a great deal of support available from organisations who work in the associated fields of anxiety and depression. Developing a greater understanding of depression and anxiety can also help you better understand the symptoms of an eating disorder in order to best work with the needs and capabilities of your loved one.

The following Australian websites are very informative and useful for carers:

- [www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) (depression and anxiety

website)

- [www.depressionet.com.au](http://www.depressionet.com.au) (depression website with online forum and discussion group)
- [www.sane.org](http://www.sane.org) (mental illness website)
- [www.reachout.com.au](http://www.reachout.com.au) (information on depression, anxiety and eating disorders with online forum)

### EDV Supporting Carers

Eating Disorders Victoria runs regular workshops for parents and partners of people with an eating disorder. 'Hope' is a 4-part guidance and information workshop for parents and partners of people with an eating disorder, which provides assistance with understanding the complexities of the disorder, communication and interpersonal relationships, coping skills, role modelling and meals support. Contact us on 9885 6563 to find out when the next Hope workshop is scheduled.

This year for the first time, EDV in conjunction with the Butterfly Foundation, will be hosting a 2 day workshop 'Caring for a Loved One with an Eating Disorder' in early December - for full details read page 3 of this newsletter.

EDV family support groups provide a regular forum where families and friends of people with an eating disorder can meet to share their experiences and support and learn from each other. Details of Family and Friends Support Group meetings are given on page 11 of this newsletter.

Don't forget that the Eating Disorders Helpline exists to help ALL those affected by eating disorders – including parents, siblings, grandparents, partners and friends of people experiencing the disorder. If you have concerns and need support and information, please use the Helpline.

Finally, one of our most sought after services is the confidential support service offered by Family Support Officer, Helen Franks. Helen sees family and friends of people with an eating disorder by appointment to discuss in more detail strategies, tips and options for their situation.

To make a face-to-face or telephone appointment with Helen please call the Eating Disorders Helpline on 03 9885 0318 or 1300 550 236, or email [help@eatingdisorders.org.au](mailto:help@eatingdisorders.org.au). This is a free and confidential service.

Visit our website regularly for up to date details of other events, activities and support available for carers.

# Ben's story

## Anorexia: A Male Perspective

### Background

I am a 30 year old male. I am professionally employed and degree qualified. I have also been suffering from anorexia for the past 3 years. During this time it has taken a devastating toll on my physical and emotional health, and my professional and personal life. This is my story.

I had always had a problem with my self image. Having been overweight (although far from obese) for most of my life, I always dreamed about being fit, toned, muscular, and attractive. In my late teens I made a conscious effort to lose weight, and simultaneously hit the gym, ate healthily and in moderation.

I was proud of my efforts to reach a healthy weight, but was increasingly concerned about putting weight back on. Some unorthodox eating habits crept into my lifestyle and eventually I started to make myself vomit after some meals if I felt that I had overdone it. This behaviour didn't last long, fortunately, and any unhealthy eating habits that I had temporarily taken up were gone and forgotten for many years.

### The lead up

By the age of 27, I was making a lot of progress in my career, had bought my own apartment, had a wide circle of friends, and was in a steady relationship. However, I was still not happy in my body. Like many males my age, I didn't have a great deal of time or interest in preparing healthy food, and added to this I regularly enjoyed good food and plenty of drinks on the weekend. My weight had crept up gradually over the years. Standing at 1.78 metres, I was certainly above my most comfortable weight.

Around this time, several things happened which negatively impacted my life. My grandpa, with

whom I was very close, died a slow, horrible death. My mum attempted suicide a few times, which affected me greatly. My relationship fell apart, as my girlfriend explicitly told me that she was no longer attracted to me due to my weight. My house got robbed. A drunk driver crashed into my parked car and wrote it off. I could have dealt with these incidents in isolation, however all these things happened over the space of a few months.

### Falling into it

It seems strange to think about it now, but food actually became less of an issue for a while in the lead up to anorexia. I was far too busy dealing with the problems listed above, but found myself gradually eating less of the unhealthy foods, and less volume of food. Every couple of months I might weigh myself and found that I was losing a reasonable amount of weight. It was a bonus more than anything. When I had lost a number of kilograms I decided to take it a bit more seriously and started exercising.

I then bought some scales, and started weighing myself regularly. In hindsight, this was the beginning of the end.

From there, my life degenerated extremely rapidly. Food started dominating my thoughts and feelings. Losing weight became an obsession, a very dangerous one. I restricted my food intake, eating very little throughout the day. Within a few months, my life consisted of a severely restricted food intake, compulsive exercise after the few meals I actually had, and weighing myself many times per day.

Life had become a set routine. I never had to think about what my next activity was, it was all planned out for me. I knew what I was going to eat, when I was going to eat it, when

I would exercise, and when I would weigh myself. Nothing was left to chance. After several months my weight had dropped further. I was so focussed on my weight loss that I didn't even realise how my life was falling apart. Being overweight was all that I had known, and having now lost a large number of kilograms, I would literally do anything to jealously protect the weight loss I had achieved.

### **The effects professionally**

Eating now dominated every part of my life. Almost every waking moment bore some relationship to eating. I had to eat on my own, and couldn't stand eating with people. Considering that I had breakfast and lunch at work, and that a lot of 'working lunches' were required as part of my job, this was highly stressful. Also, as I felt the need to compulsively exercise after mealtimes, I would never schedule meetings around the times that I ate. If someone else scheduled a meeting, I would be very restless.

Once or twice a day, I would leave the office and walk next door to the building which adjoined my workplace and run from the basement to the top. I would sometimes do this twice in one session.

Work trips away were par for the course, but I actively avoided them for several reasons. It was difficult to take my scales with me, I would have less control over what I was eating (as food was arranged at the conference/hotel), and my compulsive routine would be broken.

I was chronically fatigued due to my lack of energy, and whilst putting in as much as I could, it was severely hampering my efforts at work. Also, although it took around 18 months to take effect, my immune system finally gave up on me and I would get sick frequently and have to take days off work. My lack of energy meant that I was intolerant of other people's issues and problems. It was a less than ideal situation.

### **The effects personally**

My social life dissipated very quickly when anorexia took hold. My routine didn't allow me to vary my food or drink consumption outside of my set plan, so I refused almost every social invitation that was extended to me. Even if I did attend a social outing or function, it would be to 'make an appearance' for an hour, and then to retreat back to my secure comfort zone which I knew so well. Friends, after making several attempts at getting in touch with me, understandably started to drift away. I would take the phone off the hook to avoid having to speak to people. I was unable to visit my dad on Father's Day as it would have interrupted my routine. I was a slave to the routine.

My love life withered during this time. From a physiological perspective, I can look back now and understand why. Meeting people, loving people, becoming aroused, and all other parts of relationships take energy and effort. When you starve your body, it retreats into survival mode. The very little energy that you actually introduce into your body is used just to keep your heart pumping and your major organs working, and there is none left for other parts of your life which you would usually require energy, such as your love life and social life. Basically, your body recognises how little energy you are receiving and devotes all this energy into keeping you alive, meaning there is no energy or motivation for any other part of your life.

Then, anxiety hit me. I can honestly say that I had never known fear like this before. I would not wish it upon my worst enemy. One day, as usual, I had parked about 10 minutes away from work so that I could burn up some energy before driving home. Upon reaching my car, I was struggling for breath. I panicked, and started hyperventilating. I thought I was having a heart attack or stroke, and literally believed I was going to die. This was my first experience of a panic attack. After that, although I learned to

control them to some extent, the panic attacks have been a daily occurrence for the past two years. Fear is now a standard part of my day. You cannot imagine the impact that this has had on my quality of life.

## Health

I almost died from anorexia. Some of the physical effects of anorexia include when your body has been starved for so long that your major organs such as your heart or liver basically give up on you as they become so weak. My heart became severely weakened by the years of starvation. I started seeing the doctor on a monthly basis as I was so scared by the consequences of what I was doing, but could not bring myself out of the habits, which perpetuated the health dangers. Several times my blood pressure was dangerously low, which was indicative of how little energy I had and how weakened my body was.

I could hardly drag myself out of bed in the morning, yet exercised compulsively throughout each day. Life had become an absolute nightmare.

My mental health suffered immeasurably during this time. Apart from the constant fear and anxiety, I was lonely and depressed. On many occasions, I had to ask myself whether I was dead or alive due to the fact that I was numbed to any thoughts or feelings. I gained no joy out of life. Due to my health concerns, the prospect of losing more weight terrified me.

The prospect of putting on weight also terrified me. Maintaining my weight meant that nothing would change and that my life would continue in such an unhealthy state, being constantly ill, lonely, scared, depressed and anxious.

## Recovery

As I felt powerless to do anything about my situation, such was my fear of putting on weight

or interrupting my routine, I was unable to be proactive in making changes to my life. Instead, I would only make changes when I felt that I had no other option. Examples of this would be when my body would regularly ache and be in so much pain that all I could do was lie on my bed and cry. I would be so sick that I felt I had to change or I would die.

Health professionals have since told me that it was sheer luck that I didn't succumb to the disease. Gradually, I learned to trust other people, particularly my doctor and my psychologist who were there to help me in my journey to recover. I could not trust my own thoughts and feelings, as instinctively my default reaction to any situation would be to avoid food, or to avoid the prospect of putting on weight.

Over time, my quality of life had deteriorated to the extent that I felt I had no choice but to recover. I increased my food intake, slowly at first, and then realised that putting on weight is actually hard to do. I have now put on a few kilograms and reached my first milestone in terms of weight gain, which is at the lower end of the healthy body mass index range.

My social life has improved considerably in conjunction with my weight gain. I have more energy than before, and more interest in going out and socialising. I am catching up with people I have literally not seen for years. My productivity at work is increasing. I am more flexible with my eating patterns. I am getting back into the dating scene. Life is improving, and I look better, feel better, and have hope for the future where previously there was none.

I still have a long way to go before I can consider myself recovered. Every day is still an huge struggle, filled with anxiety about my eating habits, putting on weight, and health concerns. In hindsight I wish I had been more proactive about making changes to my life. I only made changes when I felt that things were so bad that I had no choice but to amend the

way I do things. If I had been brave enough to take more risks, I could have saved myself so much physical illness and mental anguish.

As I've mentioned, I would not wish this condition on my worst enemy. Anorexia is an extremely debilitating, distressing, and above all, life threatening illness. It will take away any quality of life that you have, and consume every waking moment of your life. If you recognise any of the symptoms that I have described, please arm yourself with a strong support network of health professionals, family and close friends. Without the assistance of these people, I am unsure if I would be writing this story today.

---

## **Book Review**

### **Biting Anorexia - Lucy Howard-Taylor**

**Reviewed by Natalie Wild, EDV Recovery Support Officer**

Biting Anorexia is a detailed, journal-style account of Lucy's story while in the grips of Anorexia and Bulimia Nervosa and depression. It is a poetic, honest and very personal account of her struggle with the disorders and the emotions surrounding and supporting them.

There are no weights, measurements or techniques on supporting an eating disorder mentioned in this book, which reduces the temptation of comparison and competition.

As reading material for a carer, Lucy has created an insightful account of what life is like for a person with an eating disorder and depression, and worth a read if you want to get a feel for what it may be like to experience the world from this state of mind.

From the perspective of a person who is contemplating recovery, in recovery or recovered from an eating disorder, the first three-quarters of this book may conjure up some mixed emotions, as Lucy graphically expresses the links between the physical and mental turmoil that take place within the mind and body of a person suffering from an eating disorder.

The last part of the book, The Light? (pg 191 to 205), has some common and very effective strategies to assist and support anyone who is in recovery and needs a few new ideas or memory joggers to try out.

This section is also helpful for carers to read, as it gives a greater understanding of the importance of "slow and steady" in the recovery process. As long as things are staying stable or going forward, regardless of pace, it is a positive step.

When reading this book, keep in mind that Lucy wrote it when she was 18 years old and today, at 19, is still in the early stages of recovery.

# EDV Support Services

## Update on Collingwood Support Groups

To cater for the needs of family and friends of people with eating disorders in Melbourne's inner north, the Collingwood Support Group will now alternate fortnightly between a Recovery Group and Combined (Recovery and Family and Friends) Group. All dates for the next few months are listed below.

Contact the Eating Disorders Helpline for further information.

### COLLINGWOOD SUPPORT GROUPS

Dates for Sept/Oct/Nov/Dec

Support Groups run from 7.00pm (sharp) – 8.30 pm

#### Recovery Support Group:

Open to any person over 18 experiencing an eating disorder.

**Dates:** 8th Oct, 5th Nov, 3rd Dec

#### Combined Support Group:

For people recovering from an eating disorder and family and friends

**Date:** 24th Sept, 22nd Oct, 19th Nov, 17th Dec

**Yarra Community Health Centre (Factory Room), 365 Hoddle Street, Collingwood, Melways ref: 44 E4**

### MALVERN EAST SUPPORT GROUPS

Dates for Sept/Oct/Nov

Support Groups run from 7.15pm (sharp) – 8.45 pm

#### Recovery Support Group:

Open to any person over 18 experiencing an eating disorder.

**Dates:** 15th Sept, 6th Oct, 20th Oct, 3rd Nov, 17th Nov

#### Families & Friends Support Group:

Open to family members or friends of a person with an eating disorder.

**Date:** 27th Oct

#### Combined Support Group:

Attendees of both groups are welcome at combined meetings.

**Date:** 29th Sept, 24th Nov

**The Uniting Centre, 54 Serrell St, Malvern East 3145, Melways ref: 68 K2**

## Rural and Regional Support Groups

- **Leongatha** Support Group runs every first and third Thursday of the month in school terms. Contact Judy on 5674 3105.
- **La Trobe Valley** Family and Friends Support Group meets on a four-weekly basis. Contact Liz Jones on 5171 1407 or Julie Martin on 5127 9100.
- **NEADS** meets every second Wednesday of the month in Watsonia Neighborhood House. Contact Jacinta on 0409 588 551.
- **Ballarat** Support Group meets on the second Thursday of every month. Contact Nola Kervaree 5320 3635, Email: NolaK@bhs.org.au
- **Geelong** Group runs on the last Monday of each month at the Geelong Clinic. Contact Dr. Ross King on 5227 2781.
- **Albury Wodonga (ACORN)** Group, for Families and Carers of people with an eating disorder. Contact acornsupport@optusnet.com.au

## ENJOYED THIS NEWSLETTER?

If you enjoyed this issue of Spread Your Wings, you may like to become an EDV member and receive six issues per year.

Other benefits of membership include free access to a comprehensive library of books and DVDs on eating disorders, body image and related issues; concessions for seminars and other EDV activities, voting rights at the AGM and the right to stand for election to EDV Board of Directors.

### EDFV Membership Form – Tax Invoice

Complete the form below and mail it to:  
EDV, 1513 High Street, Glen Iris Vic 3146  
(All information is for EDV records only)

Surname: .....

Given Name:.....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

Phone: (H)..... (W) .....

e-mail:.....

Do you wish to be contacted by e-mail about EDV news and events?

Yes  No

What is your interest in EDV?

Professional  Personal  Student

### Membership Subscription

In signing this form I understand that I am responsible for returning or replacing any items (books, videos, etc) that I borrow from EDV. Membership includes annual subscription to EDV newsletter, library borrowing card, voting rights at the AGM and reduced rates of entry to EDV events. Family membership entitles multiple family members to borrow material from EDV library.

Date .....Signature: .....

All memberships and subscriptions are valid for 12 months from date of subscription. 10% GST included. ABN 24 010 832 192

- Individual/Family \$44.00
- Individual/Family Concession \$27.50
- Professional/Organisation \$55.00

**Membership** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Donation** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**Total:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- My cheque/money order payable to EDV is enclosed OR
- Please charge my credit card:

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date ...../.....  Visa  Mastercard

Cardholder's Name (caps) .....

Cardholder's signature: .....

Amount \$ .....

### EDV wouldn't exist without its volunteers.

Please send me more information about:

- Volunteering for the EDV
- Becoming a member of the Board of Directors

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

EDV is a charitable organisation, and a Deductible Gift Recipient. All donations, major gifts and bequests will be used to support the direct services of EDV.

### Key areas of expenditure for funds donated:

- Helpline costs
- Chatroom and Messageboard costs
- Eating disorders community education program
- Support for EDV volunteer training program
- Special projects

**Are donations tax deductible?** Yes (\$2 or more)

**Will I receive a receipt for my donation?** Yes, all donations of \$2 or more will be receipted. Donations of \$1,000 or more will be acknowledged in our newsletter and on our website (unless otherwise requested).

There are many ways to donate - select your donation method below.

### Donate Online

Donate through the "OurCommunity" secure online donations service. Donating online ensures 100% of your donation reaches EDV (less normal bank fees). OurCommunity takes no commission or fee for this service. Follow the link at [www.eatingdisorders.org.au](http://www.eatingdisorders.org.au).

### Donate by Phone

Call 03 9885 0318 / 1300 550 236 with your credit card details.

### Donate by Fax or Mail

Complete and fax this page to: 03 9885 1153; or mail to EDV, 1513 High St, Glen Iris VIC 3146

Surname: .....

Given Name:.....

Address: .....

..... Post Code: .....

Phone: (H)..... (W) .....

e-mail:.....

My donation: \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

- My cheque/money order payable to EDV is enclosed OR
- Please charge my credit card:

Card No: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiry date ...../.....  Visa  Mastercard

Cardholder's Name (caps) .....

Cardholder's signature: .....

**Donating regularly can be an easy and effective way of supporting the EDV with minimal impact on your budget.**

Please send me more information about:

- Making a bequest
- Becoming a monthly/annual donor