

Healthy Futures

News+Views

PUBLIC NOTICE

News+Views is the monthly newsletter of Healthy Futures. To receive a complimentary e-mail version of News+Views each month, please send a request to: News@HealthyFuturesAZ.com.

An Educational Newsletter Covering Eating Disorder Treatment and Other Mental Health Issues

~February 2013~

Vol. 1, Issue 8

Help, hope available for those with eating disorders

Eating disorders can kill.

It's a sad fact that goes mostly unnoticed, especially by the media, but it is true.

Eating disorders are complex, life-threatening illnesses that can have a devastating impact on those suffering, and on their families and friends.

In the United States, an estimated 20 million women and 10 million men struggle with eating disorders. Many will experience serious negative effects to their

health, to their school or professional careers and to their cherished relationships. Some will die.

But there is good news. Professional help is available. Hope is at hand. Recovery is possible.

Healthy Futures in Scottsdale, Ariz., is all about help, hope and offering those with eating disorders the support and guidance needed to achieve a full recovery.

Eating disorder experts have found that intensive treatment greatly improves the chances of recovery.

Healthy Futures' intensive outpatient program (IOP) is the longest-running program of its kind in Arizona.

The clinic's programs are designed to treat those with anorexia, bulimia, binge eating disorder or "eating disorders not otherwise specified."

Mia Elwood, Healthy Futures' director and founder, who is celebrating 20 years of recovery from eating disorders (see page 2), says she is passionate about helping others find a healthy future, and also about educating the public about eating disorders.

"Having an eating disorder is not about vanity or wanting to be thin," she said. "It is a pure obsession of fear that if you don't do



Eating disorders experts have discovered that intensive treatment, such as Healthy Futures' programs, greatly improves the chances of success for those struggling with anorexia, bulimia, binge eating and other disordered eating.

what the eating disorder tells you to do, something very bad is going to happen – you'll be found out, you'll be totally out of control, your life will fall apart.

"In fact, quite the opposite is true. If I didn't choose to risk recovery, my life would certainly have fallen apart, along with my

health and my relationships," she said.

Healthy Futures is at 9449 N. 90th St., Suite 210, in Scottsdale. For information, call (480) 451-8500. For more about its eating disorder programs and other mental health services, see its website at HealthyFuturesAZ.com.

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SUPPORT is cornerstone to eating disorder recovery

By Mia S. Elwood, Healthy Futures Director

I used to have anorexia and bulimia. That chapter in my life ended Feb 10, 1993.

As I celebrate the 20th anniversary of kicking ED out of my life (that's ED - Eating Disorders), I can't help but reflect upon where I am today.

I am a licensed clinical social worker. I am a wife and a mother.

Most important, I am happy. I am fulfilled. I am not consumed by food, my body or my weight.

I am the director of Healthy Futures, a treatment center in Scottsdale specializing in comprehensive, professional support for those suffering from an eating disorder.

I believe support is the cornerstone of recovery from an eating disorder.

My recovery was the culmination of accepting support from my husband, from those around me who had always been around me (that I didn't notice as I was fixated on ED instead), and support from professionals who helped me learn insight and skills.

Ironically, recovery began only when I took the risk to accept that support.

Before that decision, life was gray and numb. A truly awful side effect of an eating

disorder is the avoidance of feeling anything at all.

ED despises support. ED says, "You don't need support. You don't need those people, that medicine, that advice, that encouragement." ED says, "You are weak if you can't do it by yourself." ED says, "Don't trust, just listen to me. I have it all under control. They just want to make you fat."

If you're looking to kick ED out of your life (or know someone who might) accepting support with a willing heart and a wise mind is the best start.

SUPPORT

Here are some SUPPORT tips!

System of Support (SOS!) – Create a safety net of people, skills, groups or institutions, and internal and external resources that collectively say, "We have your back."

It doesn't depend on one person or one family, as we are all human and will not be able to assist every time. As you risk feeling, speaking your mind, taking active steps in recovery, you have a system that takes the sting out of falling. You will fall, but that's when your SOS team says, "What did you learn? Get back up. Here, let

me help."

Understanding – This means accepting your own, and others' nonjudgmental validation of your feelings, thoughts and behaviors. The message should be, "I accept you as you are AND I know you can change for the better."

Perseverance – This is being there for the short or long haul – whatever is required. Recovery is a challenge with great reward. Being there for yourself and allowing others to do the same with you is required for success in the long run, despite shame-inducing experiences in the short run.

Prayer – Prayer is code for asking for support from somewhere with more wisdom than you. This can be praying to God, to the universe, or allowing a collective wisdom of all those who have gone before you and have succeeded at this recovery thing. The road has already been paved for you; you don't need to reinvent the wheel, it already exists. Reach out for it. Avoid reaching out to ED. It has already failed you. ED is NOT wiser than you!

Opportunity – When it knocks, answer the door. Take advantage of opportunities to socialize, connect with healthy people, to learn skills, to practice self care, to notice what you can do and

what you have done that is productive and effective for your recovery. ED persuades you to stay home, saying, "Don't answer the door. The world outside the cage of the eating disorder can't be trusted."

Rest – Work, rest, work, rest, rinse, repeat. White knuckling it and just getting it done by "gunning it" works only in the short term. Without rest, you will only burn out and quit. Just remember to rest in between. Allow your support network, your SOS team to rest as well. This makes recovery doable.

Trust your Treatment Team – Trust the process, trust yourself as a person who can fail and learn from it, and eventually succeed. Your treatment team is there for you. Don't be a Lone Ranger when it comes to recovery. Professionals are trained to work as a team (physician, therapist, and dietitian). They know more than ED. Do what works. Trust recovery. It works.

To speak with someone from the Healthy Futures support team, please call (480) 451-8500.

Healthy Futures is at 9449 N. 90th St., suite 201, in Scottsdale. Our Intensive Outpatient Program is the longest-running eating disorder IOP in Arizona.



The Healthy Futures team, from left (back), Heather Henderson, Kelley Aungst, Jessica Meinhart, Sheri Robenstine, Tori Del Vecchio, Kim Guenther, Sam Kurkjian, Jeanne Phillips and Kathi Freemann; and (seated) Anna Contor, J.R. Evans, Mia Elwood (holding Gus), Kim DiRé and Dena Wombolt. Not pictured: Laurie Geraghty and Karyn Hendricksen.

HF turns 10, adds obesity care to services

Healthy Futures in Scottsdale recently celebrated its 10th anniversary.

The company saw its first client Dec. 2, 2002. Now a decade later, Healthy Futures has grown by leaps and bounds, but the mission remains unchanged – to offer the highest quality care and support to those struggling with eating disorders.

Today, that care and support also is offered to those struggling with obesity, through Healthy Futures' "Emotional Eaters Intensive Outpatient Program" (EE-IOP).

Healthy Futures began offering its EEIOP nearly two years ago. The company's founder and director, Mia Elwood, said those with binge eating disorders share many characteristics with those who have anorexia or bulimia.

"Instead of eating to nurture the physical body, 'emotional eaters' fall into the trap of using food in attempts to regulate feelings," she said. "We fully understand the underlying reasons for emotional eating, and we are proud to offer a program that specifically deals with

those reasons."

Meeting two nights per week, the EEIOP offers comprehensive support, with group and individual therapy from trained and licensed counselors, coaching, exercise support, DBT (dialectical behavioral therapy), "mindful meal" experiences, nutrition support and more.

The Healthy Futures team remains at the forefront of education in the field and continuously works to dispel myths about obesity. Chief among them – fad diets are never a solution for those struggling with emotional

eating.

"Our EEIOP is about a healthy and happy relationship with food, and breaking unhealthy relationships with food, especially yo-yo dieting," Elwood said.

HF history

Elwood remembers the company's humble beginning.

"Healthy Futures got started because I wanted to have a little private practice," she said. As a mom of two young boys at the time, Elwood said her hope was to

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create a practice that gave her schedule flexibility to spend more time with her family, and then to build the practice over time.

Fate had other ideas. Less than a year later, she was laid off after Banner healthcare system closed Willow Creek, an eating disorder clinic where she had been employed for seven years.

Suddenly that “little private practice” had her full attention.

Near the same time an insurance company contacted Elwood asking whether she'd be willing to develop an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) to treat eating disorders. IOPs are an attractive option for insurance companies because they can help patients avoid costly inpatient hospital care, or can help those who have been released from inpatient from relapsing back into the hospital.

So what started in a little one-room suite with Elwood, and a colleague named Kim Feinstein, helping individuals in private therapy sessions, soon blossomed into a full eating disorder IOP.

The first IOP met twice a week, with adolescents and families, and adults receiving group therapy, individual therapy and nutrition education.

Laurie Geraghty – who also was with Willow Creek – joined the small company. Geraghty remains part of the Healthy Futures team today.

Over the years Healthy Futures has adjusted the IOP based on what works best for the client and has added aspects to the program to help support the client's success.

“We know the success is best when people are in the program four to five months, so we developed a 20-week program,” El-

wood said.

“We do before- and after-outcome studies and clients experience lower anxiety, lower depression and lower scores on the Eating Disorder Inventory 3, so all the eating disorder symptoms are lower, as well,” she said.

Today the IOP offers clients two, three or four day treatment per week, based on the individual's assessment and continued review throughout the program.

After the 20-week IOP, Healthy Futures continues to support the client with an “aftercare” program, which includes its “Moving Forward” group, as well as individual sessions with dietitians and therapists.

Today Healthy Futures has 16 providers, including dietitians, nutritionists, exercise specialists, psychologists, counselors and coaches. While the company specializes in eating disorder treatment, it also offers professional help for trauma healing, weight care for kids, nutritional counseling, Somatic Experiencing, family counseling, life skills training and even equine therapy.

Elwood said the 10th anniversary has given her a good chance to contemplate.

“I've been doing a lot of reflecting with myself, the staff, and my family about all that's happened and how we've grown and become a Healthy Futures family,” she said.

Oh, and about that first Healthy Futures client 10 years ago?

“That client now is doing very, very well,” Elwood said, smiling.

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Healthy Futures

First-Ever

Pups & Peeps

FUN WALK!

In recognition of National Eating Disorders Awareness Week (Feb. 24 – March 2), Healthy Futures invites all our “peeps” to our first-ever Pups & Peeps Fun Walk.

All friends of Healthy Futures, past and present clients, colleagues and associates are invited to **Healthy Futures** on **SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 23.**



The purpose of the walk, very simply, is to have fun. So bring your puppies* and join us on a short, enjoyable walk along Scottsdale's Greenbelt. We'll start strolling around 9 a.m., leaving from Healthy Futures' parking lot.

This fun event is FREE for everyone! If you're bringing your pet, please practice responsible dog ownership

(don't forget the leash and the poop baggies!)

For more information, please call us at (480) 451-8500, or see our website at HealthyFuturesAZ.com.

* No puppy? No problem! You're welcome to walk with us!

