

My name is Trish and I am a recovering anorexic, bulimic, compulsive eater, emotional eater, well... you get the point. I've been all over the board with abusing food. I began my battle around the age of 11, and I am now almost 22. I have wasted almost half of my life on this awful disease, and I am not willing to let it have another minute of my precious life. I have been actively seeking recovery for about a year.

So many things contributed to my eating disorder, that I don't know exactly where to begin. There wasn't one magical moment when I decided that I was a piece of crap, fat and useless- therefore I was going to starve myself. I was never a thin child. Always a little chubby. Very strong, in mind, body and spirit. I was tall for my age, always towering over everyone in school. I developed early, around 10. Got my period and breasts that were all of the sudden a DD cup. I wasn't really even uncomfortable with my body at that point. I became uncomfortable when people close to me began pointing things out. My stepfather remarked that I was "busting out at the seams" of my jeans- which had been handed down twice. My best friend, for reasons unknown, put a picture of me in a bathing suit on an envelope that contained an "I hate you" letter, and wrote that I didn't just need a thigh master, but a tummy master too.

Around this time, my stepfather left, and my mom had 3 kids to support. We moved in with various relatives until we got government assistance to have a place of our own. In order to get privacy, I turned the walk in closet in the master bedroom into my room. Bed, nightstand, dresser- it was huge! My mom worked nights at a local bar, and I watched the kids. I felt guilty about eating at around this time, because I knew my mom was skipping meals so there would be enough food for us kids. I started skipping meals too. I also stole food for me and my siblings from my friends and families homes. I thought it was the least I could do. Besides, I was fat enough, I didn't need to eat with all the reserves I had built up. My uncle who was helping to provide for us, also happened to be molesting me. Through all of this we moved and moved and moved and well... you get the idea.

Not much stability in my life. I continued to starve, and skip meals, fast for days at a time, and exercise excessively. I went to the library to research ED's so I could be better at it. I didn't start purging until about 14 or so, I caught my friend doing it and thought--- - AHAH!!! Now, I don't have to be hungry, and I can get even thinner like her. It didn't register that we were already wearing the same size clothes, and she was 6 inches shorter than me. When I was 16, I had a weird condition with my spleen. It caused my stomach to shrink, and I lost a lot of weight before and after surgery. I went a good 2 or 3 years without being acutely active in my disease.

When I was about 19, I went to a Psychiatrist for help, and he told me that it was obviously a control issue, that I didn't have an eating disorder, I hadn't lost enough weight. I started purging again when I was in an abusive relationship and this was my first experience with overeating. Our whole relationship was based on food. When he and I finally broke it off, I was free. It felt fantastic. He had been so controlling. Sometimes, the only way to get away from him, was to make myself throw up, because he couldn't stand the sound or smell. I lost a lot of weight when we broke up, because

food wasn't my only outlet anymore. I went for another year, and then it crept back up again. I began restricting and purging everything I ate. I would spit out food before I swallowed it. I lost 30 lbs in 3 weeks. I fessed up to this guy at work. He and I had a really great friendship. Very loving and supportive, but so far nothing outside of work. He was very supportive.

I went to a treatment center (AMA) and signed on the dotted line in June 2001. I left AMA after 5 days. I hadn't seen a nutritionist, a therapist, or an internist. It was a mistake to leave so early, but I was frustrated. I haven't had any follow up care, but am trying to line them all up now.

As for the real recovery story. I've always known that God has me here for a reason, so in times of desperation, when I wanted to give up, throw in my towel, even end my life... I plunged forward. My brothers and sister were also a great source of strength for me. A laugh, a thank you, to see them sleeping, it kept me going. The guy at work I told you about is now my husband. He's a member of another 12 step fellowship. He suggested I look for an anonymous group. I found EDA. Now, I attend face to face OA meetings, online EDA and OA meetings, and do service for both fellowships. Honesty has been the biggest difference for me. I used to lie and manipulate, but now, I show up, shut up, and do the next right thing. I am honest with myself and honest with others. I pray daily, I journal, and I eat real food. Sometimes not enough, sometimes too much, but that's okay, because the difference is, now... I notice. And I am able to deal with it honestly.

I work a program of progress, not perfection... everyday. One Day At A Time. Perfection is what got me into this mess. Only God is perfect. I am not God. He brought me to it, He'll bring me through it. Reach out, help is up there, out there, and in there.