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PERSONAL STORIES

PART I

Pioneers of EDA

1 FREE AT LAST	243
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When this third member of EDA recognized that full recovery would remain out of reach until she rebuilt self-trust, she consciously accepted responsibility for addressing her own basic needs and began taking small risks to express emotions safely. As trust grew, so did love, joy, peace, and freedom.

2 A LIFE SOLUTION	262
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Accepting powerlessness over her eating disorder and responsibility for her actions helped her find an answer that works in all aspects of life.

- 3 A PROGRAM FOR PEOPLE WHO WORK IT 271
Going to any length for recovery is just the beginning of her story.
- 4 ONE DAY AT A TIME 278
True honesty has her showing up for life—one day at a time.
- 5 ONE STEP AT A TIME 282
By taking and working one Step at a time, she found a power greater than herself and said goodbye to her eating disorder.
- 6 OVERCOMING UNMANAGEABILITY 293
Taking responsibility for her commitment to balance and recovery led her to work through the layers...and find a life of richness and joy.
- 7 RECOVERY IS A JOURNEY 303
Letting go of the need to be in control, she stopped judging herself and discovered self-acceptance, honesty, and the power of service.

PART II

They Stopped in Time

- 1 AS SICK AS MY SECRETS 313
She showed up, did the work and, most importantly, told the truth. In return she was met with compassion, encouragement, and support that shaped her recovery.
- 2 A TREATMENT PROFESSIONAL SHARES HER STORY 322
When she began to communicate out loud, her eating disorder quieted; she became comfortable with being perfectly imperfect. Happy and free in recovery, she shares that surrender meant “joining the winning team.”

- 3 AUTHENTICITY FREED ME TO FIND MY PURPOSE 329
Just as her connection to a Higher Power inspires her to pursue recovery every day, she inspires others to find their true worth.
- 4 FAITH IN THE FELLOWSHIP 333
In her first meeting, she was amazed at the beautiful kindness and openness of the people who recovered; then, through working the Steps, she became one of them.
- 5 FREEDOM BEYOND MEASURE 336
When her obsession with numbers lifted and she became mindful of her inherent worth, she was inspired to help others...and became a clinical psychologist.
- 6 FREEDOM THROUGH WORKING THE STEPS 346
The Steps transformed her life, and now she feels beauty not as something to be found in a mirror, but from the light she sees in and shares with others.
- 7 A LIFE WORTH LIVING 350
Once her eating disorder had taken its toll, this accomplished veteran's unhappiness finally drove her to find a solution. Today, she finds joy through living authentically—comfortable in her own skin.
- 8 HE USED TO WORK FOR HIS ED; NOW HE WORKS FOR JOY 357
His biggest blessing was being ready to change. He worked the Steps and learned self-compassion and understanding.
- 9 I AM JOIE DE VIVRE 363
When she chose EDA, she found a source of strength that brought the light back to her eyes.
- 10 IN GOD'S HANDS 368
As a result of surrendering to the program, she became the woman that she believes God intended her to be, gaining peace, freedom, and an ability to connect with others.

- 11 LIFE SENTENCE LIFTED 378
She earned her freedom when she stopped trying to be perfect and accepted life on life's terms.
- 12 RECOVERY AFTER FORTY-TWO YEARS OF BULIMIA 380
Willingness, commitment, and perseverance transformed a tennis pro's resignation—that she would always have an eating disorder—into a durable recovery.
- 13 RECOVERY OPENED A WHOLE NEW WORLD 388
When she began to trust people, she discovered her voice and experienced the joy of sharing with others on a deep and meaningful level.
- 14 WELCOMING LIFE WITH OPEN ARMS 396
She graduated college with high honors and helped with multiple social justice campaigns, yet it wasn't until she let go of rigidity that she found her own kind and compassionate heart. Surrender—humility—turned out to be the gateway to freedom.
- 15 WHAT DOESN'T KILL YOU... 401
Through perseverance and research, she discovered a residential program where she learned priceless lessons. She is now aware of her worth and mindful of her many blessings.

PART III

They Lost Nearly All

- 1 A MAN FINDS HOPE AND MEANING IN RECOVERY FROM ANOREXIA 407
He once believed his purpose in life was to have an eating disorder; now, his purpose is to recover so he can reach out and help others.

- 2 BREAK THE RULES AND ENJOY THE PROMISES 414
- Living with an eating disorder is not truly living. Moving from self-loathing to self-love, she is at peace through her sustaining relationship with her Higher Power.*
- 3 DANCING FROM DARKNESS TO DAYLIGHT 418
- Recovery is about honesty and willingness to grow—and experiencing that growth. Her life today wouldn't be possible if she hadn't stepped onto the road of recovery.*
- 4 DUAL DIAGNOSIS 422
- By learning to be comfortable with change, she allows herself to be guided by her Higher Power and the principles of EDA. And life is just amazing!*
- 5 FOLLOWING THE LIGHT OF RECOVERY 434
- After twenty-six years with an eating disorder, she wanted to lead a normal life. Recovery was about faith, hope, and a willingness to accept and love herself—inside and out.*
- 6 MAKING THE MOST OF EVERY MOMENT 445
- Her dedication to therapy, determination to stop bingeing, and EDA support have given her a life of love today. No longer dependent on an eating disorder, she shares her “Steps to Happiness I Now Know.”*
- 7 OFF TO THE RACES 449
- She thought the mirror, scale, and measuring tape were her Holy Grail to becoming happy, joyous, and free. But when she got to EDA, she learned that she had it all wrong—and started living in the solution.*
- 8 OWNING MY STORY 458
- Instead of letting an eating disorder speak for her, she now uses her voice to carry the message of recovery.*

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Now a sponsor, she accepted that perfection doesn't equal happiness and she regained her purpose and spirit through EDA.

10 WICKED, HOT MESS TO ALIVE AND FREE	472
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She was in a halfway house when she finally found the help she needed to put her life back together. Her love for God now allows her to make use of her experiences to help others in similar circumstances.

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