

Only five more pounds to lose to be dead

I had eaten too much — I knew that the moment the food hit my stomach. A mere five minutes after my meal, I was in the bathroom with my finger gouged down my throat trying to force a reaction. But that wasn't good enough. I had to do one hour of intense aerobics to get rid of the belly that had already begun

to form. Just five more pounds and I'd be satisfied. The sad reality was I would never be satisfied with those five pounds; they would turn into 10 and progress from there. I had a problem, and it wasn't until my boyfriend recognized it that I knew I had to stop myself. I was a bulimic.

Bulimia nervosa is described as an abnormal and excessive craving for food and recurrent episodes of binge eating. The sense of a lack of control over eating behavior causes self-induced vomiting, the use of laxatives or diuretics and/or strict dieting and fasting, according to "The Eating Disorder Site."

I was 12 years old when it began. I was a shy, reserved little girl who still had yet to find herself. That is when my mom approached me and said she'd signed me up for a beauty pageant. Now these are not, by any means, the sordid events people make them out to be, but that's another story entirely. I was in my very first pageant and my eyes were opened to new hopes, dreams and ideas that were all my own. I was then approached by a modeling agency and told that my 85 pounds was a good weight for my height of

five-foot-two, but in order to be successful in the business, I had to watch what I ate at all times and exercise, exercise, exercise. Well, I



Say It Loud
&
Proud!

Salena De La Cruz
Opinion Editor

wanted to be successful and it's not something you really plan on doing to yourself, but I found myself wanting to portray the image of a beautiful girl who everyone admired and I thought I wanted to be. The same image seen in magazines and on television or other various avenues of the media. And the only way to attain that goal was to stay thin.

I would get uncontrollable urges to just shove food in my mouth, and then I felt so ill from the guilt I started making myself puke. When that wasn't enough, I would exercise until I made myself pass out. Two years later, I was at a regular cleaning and my dentist made a remark about the enamel on my teeth. I looked at him and said nothing. That is when he said that is usually synonymous with bulimia because the acid in your vomit eats away at the enamel. I shrugged it off and said my teeth have always been like this and my last dentist found nothing wrong. So, it continued on through my next two pageants and my runner-up positions when I thought just five more pounds, and I can win the crown for first. It wasn't until I was a junior in high school and dat-

ing my then-boyfriend that things hit bottom. I was living with my grandmother and she was never there, so it was easy to hide from everyone, friends and family included. Then one day I was really dehydrated, pale, and nauseous. I thought it was just because I ate too much at dinner. My boyfriend was visiting with me, and my grandma was gone. I said I had to go to the bathroom. I was really dizzy at this point. So, in the bathroom I brought up what I had just eaten. I was so weak I didn't hear my boyfriend knock. He came in right when I was getting ready to empty my stomach for the final time. He couldn't talk. He pulled me up and walked me into my room. He put a washcloth on my head and took care of me. The next day he was adamant. He said if I didn't quit hurting myself, he'd leave because he couldn't watch me wither away. He said that he now understood all the signs: why I left to the bathroom right after every meal, the tell-tale bruises on my knuckles and sore throat complaints.

I can speak from experience when I say the end result is not a positive one. I didn't feel like five more pounds was enough. I was never satisfied with how I looked, and it's very hard for me still. My weight fluctuated from 85 to 100 pounds during that time. I was moody and never felt I was good enough, even though I had someone for support who told me just how great I was. Sometimes, I find the old feeling coming back after meals, but I remember what it did to me. I can not even be thinking about it or my body will react to too much food and want to



get rid of the hated meal. I have to stop myself because, yeah, everyone feels like they could be healthier and look better, but I'm here to say it's not worth what you can lose: who you are, your friends, family, but most importantly, your life.

worth a lifetime of your body and mind slowly deteriorating and being only a mass of skin on a skeleton. Because you, like me, are beautiful just the way you are.

To reach Salena De La Cruz e-mail wonderwoman41477@yahoo.com or drop by B-104.

Five more pounds taken off is not

Warning signs of an eating disorder

Warning signs of Anorexia

They are always trying to please others. Starving themselves is a way they feel "in charge" of themselves. Extreme and irrational fear of body fat and becoming fat.

Warning Signs of Bulimia

Here are some signals that you or someone you know has bulimia:

Frequent episodes of "binge-eating."

Frequent "purging," where the person tries to undo the effects of the binge by self-induced vomiting, dieting, excessive exercise, use of diet pills, laxatives and/or diuretics (drugs which speed the elimination of fluids from the body).

Medical Problems for Anorexia & Bulimia

Kidney and/or liver damage

Bloating or swelling

Constipation or diarrhea (Inability to have bowel movements or very frequent ones.)

Menstrual problems (Periods become irregular or stop altogether.)

Anemia - (low red blood cell count. Those are the blood cells that circulate oxygen around your body.)

Malnutrition

Pieces of You

She's an ugly girl,
Does it make you want to kill her?

She's an ugly girl,
Do you want to kick her in the face?

She's an ugly girl,
She doesn't pose a threat.

She's an ugly girl,
Does that make you feel safe?
Ugly girl, ugly girl. Do you hate her?

Cause she's pieces of you.
By Jewel (singer)
from the song, "Pieces of You"



How to help someone with an eating disorder

- Don't ignore the situation.
- Tell the person you care about them and that you are worried about their health.
- Tell them that you want them to get professional help for the problem.
- Tell people you trust about your concerns so they can also become part of the "help" effort.
- Realize that recovery is the person's own responsibility. No one can do this for anyone else.
- Provide information about the dangers of eating disorders.
- Encourage the person in every way to uncover his or her own strengths.
- Agree that recovery is hard, but that many people have done it successfully.
- Be patient.

SOME THINGS NOT TO DO

- Never criticize. The person will withdraw.
- Don't say, "You are too thin." That's what the person wants to hear.
- Don't say, "It's good you have gained weight." The person will lose it immediately.
- Avoid power struggles.

All information and pictures on this page compiled from http://www.talkcity.com/theinsite/me/me_somebody.html