

When the Mirror Lies: How Beyond Hunger Can Rescue Victims of Eating Disorders with Peer-to-Peer Education

SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA, UNITED STATES, October 3, 2014

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Diseases are complicated, and so is the way we approach them. Some, like the Ebola outbreak in Africa, command our attention for several minutes each evening when we watch the news. Others, like breast cancer, almost achieve celebrity status, using marketing and merchandising to educate the public with events designed to raise awareness. One of the ways that we deal with deadly diseases is to make them approachable. So we wear pink to support cancer research, and we accept the ice bucket challenge to raise money for Lou Gehrig's disease.



But some diseases are too frightening for us to turn into videos gone viral. That's certainly the case with eating disorders, those mystifying and deadly conditions that [afflict young people](#), not with bacteria or genetics or simply random fate, but with their own image in a mirror. An estimated 20 million females and 10 million males in the United States suffer from eating disorders; 95 percent are between the ages of 12-25.

For females ages 14-24, the mortality rate for anorexia nervosa is 12 times greater than the death rate associated with all other causes of death. The incidence of bulimia in females ages 10-39 years old tripled from 1988-1993. This obsession with dieting and weight loss is robbing generations of young people of the health, self-esteem, and promising futures that they should enjoy.

The names are different, but the stories share many similar details. Alexis went on a diet to lose 10 pounds, became obsessed with her weight, and within four months, she had lost 75 pounds and nearly lost her life in the process. Beyond Hunger helped her stop listening to the obsessive inner voice that was driving her toward death by dieting. At Beyond Hunger, young women and men share their hope and recovery, their stories and their lives with junior high and high school students. By telling and retelling their own stories they heal themselves, share their wisdom and help other young people to find self love and put an end to the habit of thinking negative thoughts. It's called peer-to-peer education and it works to combat the ravages of bulimia, anorexia and the body hatred that too often hold sway over impressionable adolescent minds.

In order to continue this program, Beyond Hunger, the nonprofit organization that has been in the front lines of waging battle against eating disorders since 1988, has set a goal of raising \$100,000 by November 14. In order to meet their goal, and save more young lives, they're partnering with Indiegogo in a [crowdfunding campaign](#).

The statistics are frightening, but Beyond Hunger is fighting back. The organization's mission is to create a unique, effective, and interactive line of defense against eating disorders with prevention education, recovery tools, and help for teens all over the world. The \$100,000 they're seeking to raise in crowdfunding money will be used to launch a global peer-to-peer eating disorder prevention website, and to expand the organization's peer education and prevention program in the San Francisco Bay Area schools.

What can the peer-to-peer approach do to help victims of eating disorders that traditional forms of treatment can't do? Eating disorders strike young people. Therefore, doesn't it make sense to use the young people who are former victims of the disorders to help others who are at risk? The peer-to-peer approach enlists the help of young people who have been on the victim's side of the abyss.

Listen to what some of the peer-to-peer educators have to say about their experiences.

"I always had straight As, did what I had to do. But I was very lonely."

"I would binge eat and starve, and I was ashamed of cheating on my diet."

"When I walked into Beyond Hunger, I saw 5 people from my school."

"When people hear my story, they're like, wow, that could happen to me."

"I was able to have a place where I could say I'm struggling, and where I can empower other people."

"I don't think I would be here if it wasn't for Beyond Hunger."

"I have not struggled with any of those obsessions from my eating disorders in seven years; I'm starting to believe that Beyond Hunger really works."

Research has shown that prevention is more effective when the information is relayed by peers than by adults. Peer mentors are positive role models for other youth who struggle with body hatred, eating disorders, and the conflicts that arise when food becomes a lethal weapon in a deadly arsenal of appetites gone wrong.

Founded by Carol Normandi and Laurelee Roark, who waged and won their own battles against eating disorders, Beyond Hunger has spent over a quarter of a century providing education, support and prevention for individuals with eating disorders. In 1998, they published *It's Not about Food: End your Obsession with Food and Weight*, followed in 2001 by *Over It: A Teen's Guide to Ending the Obsession with Food and Weight*. Their latest publication, *Body Love: Cards: Meditation Cards to Inspire Body Love and Intuitive Wisdom* was issued in 2012.

Eating disorders are both [preventable and treatable](#). With treatment, approximately 60% of people who suffer from eating disorders recover from them. The sooner a person seeks treatment, the greater the likelihood of physical and emotional recovery. Join Beyond Hunger's Indiegogo campaign and rescue a generation.

About Beyond Hunger

Beyond Hunger (www.beyondbunger.org), is a non-profit organization with more than 26 years of success in providing prevention, education, and support for people suffering from eating disorders. Founded in 1988 by Carol Normandi and Laurelee Roark in San Francisco, the organization reflects the insights of the two women, themselves former victims of eating disorders, who recovered and committed themselves to providing low-fee support groups for others struggling in the grip of this national epidemic.

Laurelee Roark
Beyond Hunger
(415) 459-2270
email us here

This press release can be viewed online at: <http://www.einpresswire.com>

Disclaimer: If you have any questions regarding information in this press release please contact the company listed in the press release. Please do not contact EIN Presswire. We will be unable to assist you with your inquiry. EIN Presswire disclaims any content contained in these releases.

© 1995-2016 IPD Group, Inc. All Right Reserved.