



**A Talk on Eating Disorders
By Maria Lavelle**

The Organisation

NIWE Eating Distress service

An independent charity established in 1988.
We are based in Newcastle and have a regional reach.

“We provide **counselling, information** and **help** to **anyone** in the Northeast of England affected by **eating disorders** or **eating distress**”

Our Services



Aim of Training



To increase knowledge and understanding of ED and the strategies to be able to help sufferers.

What is an eating problem?

- Everyone has an eating pattern that is individual to them



- During times of stress our eating patterns **change**, which is completely normal.
- An eating problem is when your eating pattern become *unhealthy* such as you're eating **too much** or eating **too little**.
- Food becomes a problem when it is used to cope with **painful emotions, feelings and situations**.

**An eating problem can lead to an eating disorder. A doctor will look at your eating patterns/behaviour and make a diagnosis.*

Emotions and Control

An eating disorder is when someone is expressing **distress** or attempting to **cope** with **difficult emotions** through an unhealthy relationship with food.

People struggling with an eating disorder usually find it extremely difficult to **express, process, and cope** with their **emotions**.

EDI will use food to "**CONTROL**" their feelings.

Anorexic – **Starve** their feelings

Bulimia – **Purge** their feelings

Binge Eating Disorder – **Stuff down** their feelings

ED Quiz



Eating disorders are a modern problem

Eating disorders were first recorded in the late 17th century and have been known to exist throughout history. However, the pressures and pace of modern life and industrialisation have led to an increase in eating disorders.

Eating disorders are a faddy diet gone too far

Eating disorders are serious mental health illnesses which require prompt, appropriate treatment and support.

ED Quiz



Eating disorders only affect young women from high income families

Eating disorders can affect people of any age, race, sexuality, able bodied or disabled, social or economic background.

No one ever recovers from an eating disorder

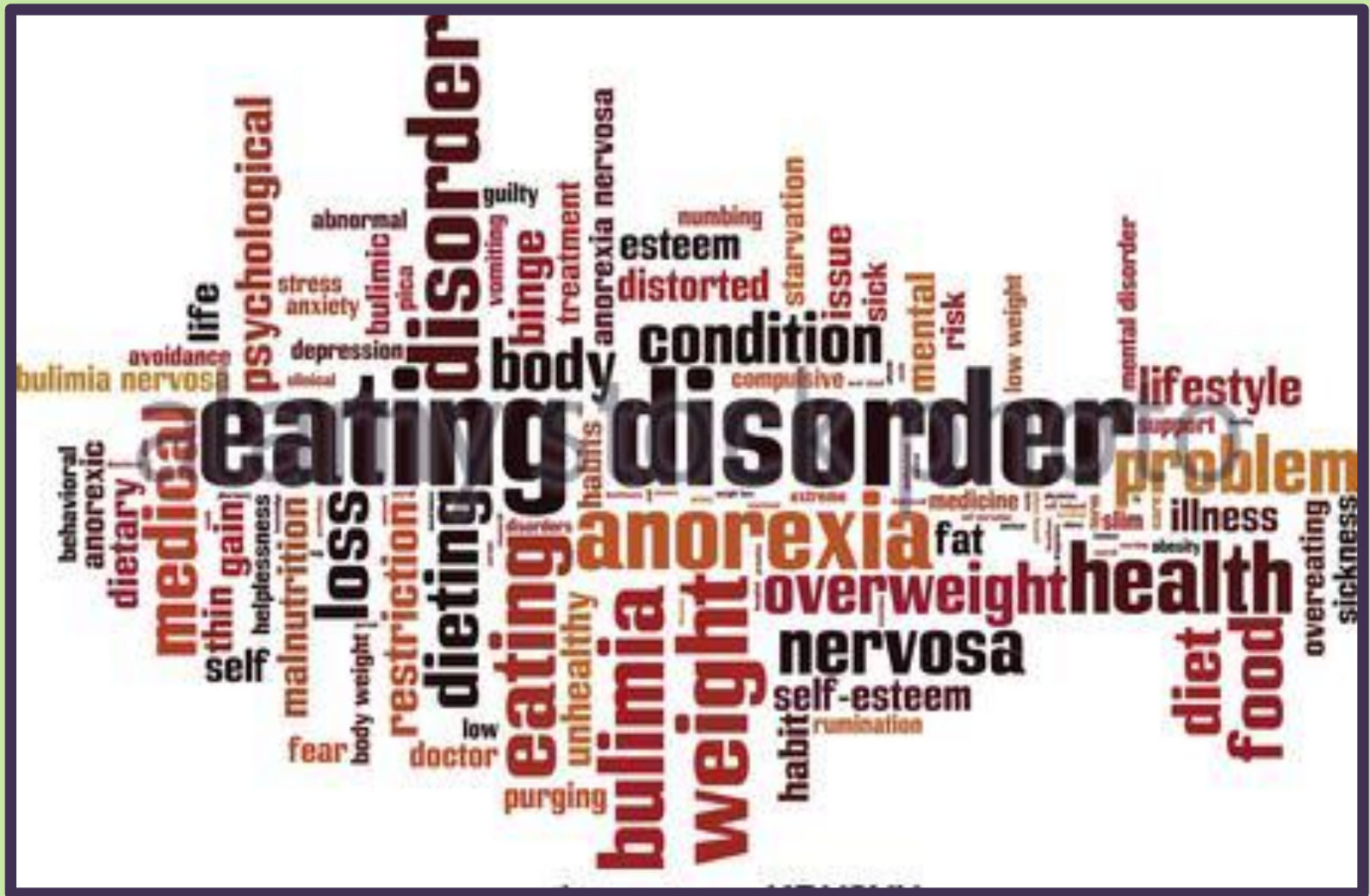
Eating disorders are treatable and full recovery is possible. There can be long term health consequences if appropriate treatment is not received. Some people can develop a long term or recurrent eating disorder.

Eating Disorder Statistics

- **1.6 million people** in the UK are affected by an ED
- **1 in 100** women aged between **15** and **30**, are affected by **anorexia**
- **25%** of the **1.6 million** are **male**
- **14 – 25-year-olds** are most affected by an ED
- **Hospital admissions** for eating disorders have soared by **37 per cent** in the last **two years**.

Research suggests that the **earlier treatment** is sought, the **better** the sufferer's chance of **recovery**.

Types of Eating Disorders



Anorexia: What is it?

Anorexia is an eating disorder where you **worry** about your **weight** (and body shape), want to **lose weight** and eat **less** and **less** food.

Symptoms include:

- **Extreme fear of gaining weight**
- **Excessive and compulsive exercising**
- **Becoming obsessed with diets and calories**
- **Restrictive over what foods are eaten**
- **Losing weight in a short period of time**
- **Avoiding food or denying hunger**
- **Believing they are fat when they are a healthy weight or underweight (BDD).**



Tommy's Story

TOMMY'S STORY

Bulimia: What is it?

Bulimia is an eating disorder where you get into a cycle of overeating and then **making yourself sick** or **using laxatives** to try to **get rid** of the food.

Symptoms include:

- **Eating a large amount of food in a short amount of time (binging)**
- **Experiencing feelings of guilt, shame or anxiety after eating**
- **Fixation with weight and body shape**
- **Purging food after eating (being sick)**
- **Using diet pills or laxatives to control weight**
- **Dental problems**



Kayla's story

A dark, abstract image with a vertical yellow stripe on the left side. The text "KAYLA'S STORY" is written in white, serif, all-caps font in the center of the dark area.

KAYLA'S STORY

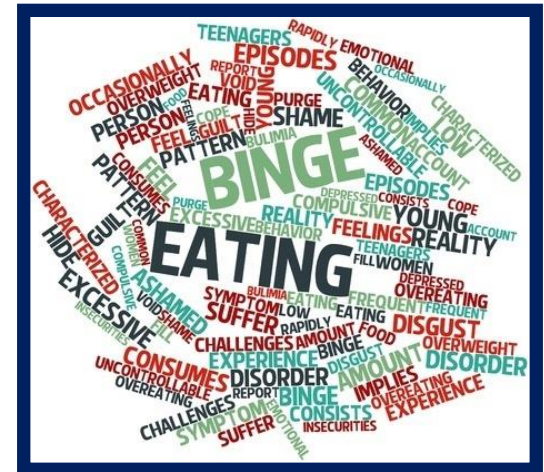
Kayla's Story - <https://vimeo.com/383501047>

Binge eating disorder: What is it?

Binge eating disorder involves eating when you're **not hungry** or when you **can't stop** when you've had enough food. Some sufferers describe it as an uncontrollable **addiction** to food.

Symptoms include:

- Eating **quicker** than usual
- Eating even when you're **full**
- Eating when you're **not hungry**
- Eating **alone** or in **secret**
- History of **dieting**
- Feeling **guilty, disgusted** or **upset** after **binging**



Liam's Story

LIAM'S STORY

OSFED (Other Specified Feeding or Eating Disorder)

Anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating disorder are diagnosed according to a list of expected behavioural, psychological, and physical symptoms. Sometimes a person's symptoms don't exactly fit the expected symptoms for any of these three specific eating disorders. In that case, they might be diagnosed with an "**other specified feeding or eating disorder**" (OSFED).

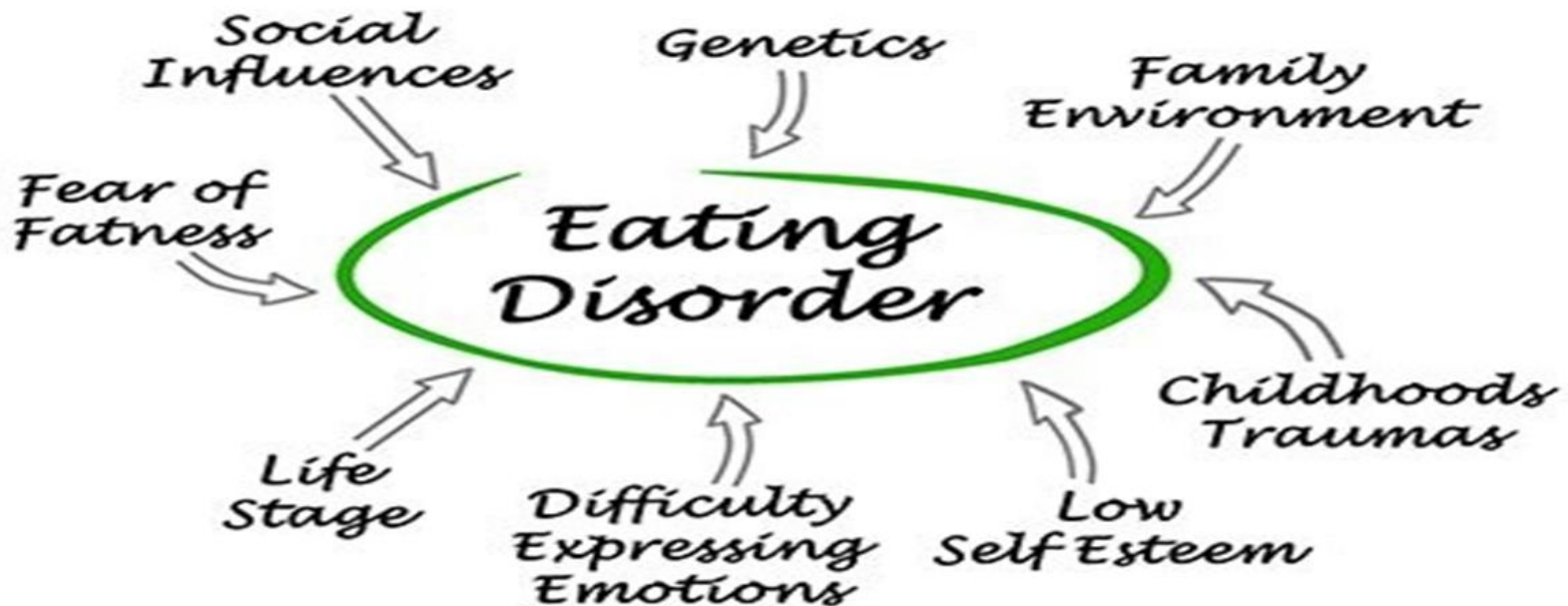
Avoidant / Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) – ARFID, beliefs about weight and shape do not contribute to the avoidance or restriction of food

PICA - You eat non-food objects such as chalk, paint, stones etc

Night Eating Syndrome - Recurrent episodes of night eating

What causes an Eating Disorder?

There is **NO** single cause of eating problems. Most specialists believe that eating disorders develop because of a combination of **psychological, environmental** and **genetic** factors.



What causes an Eating Disorder?

Psychological factors could be;

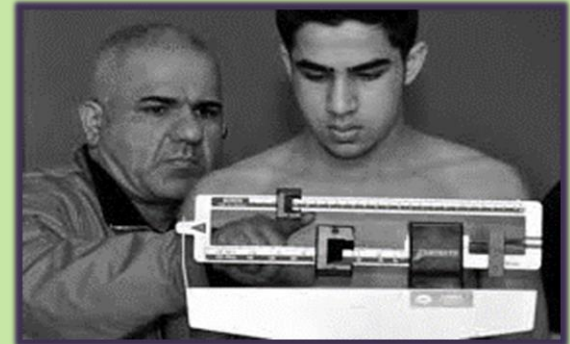
- Being vulnerable to depression and anxiety
- Finding stress hard to handle
- Worrying a lot about the future
- Being a perfectionist
- Controlling your emotions
- Having obsessive or compulsive feelings
- A fear of being fat



What causes an Eating Disorder?

Environmental factors could be:

- Pressure at school
- Bullying / Abuse
- Criticised for your body shape or eating habits
- Having difficult family relationships
- Having a job or hobby where being thin is seen as ideal e.g., dancing, swimming or athletics.



What causes an Eating Disorder?

Genetic factors could be:

- Changes in the brain or hormone levels
- Family history of eating disorders, depression or substance misuse.



COVID-19 and Eating Disorders

COVID-19 may have a negative impact on mental health among the general population. However, people with eating disorders face **specific risks** which include;

- **Changes** in treatment availability
- **Lack** of day-to-day **structure**
- **Increased** time spent in a **triggering** environment
- **Reduced** social support
- **Restricted** choice and availability of food
- **Increased** time to reflect on **problems.**
- Gyms closed (**Unable** to **compensate for food debt**)
- Eating disorders **thrive** on **isolation** (Easy to hide behaviours)



How to talk to someone about their eating disorder

Pick a good time. Choose a time when you can speak to the person in private without distractions or constraints.

Explain why you're concerned. Be careful to avoid lecturing or criticizing, as this will only make your loved one defensive.

Be prepared for denial and resistance. There's a good chance your loved one may deny having an eating disorder or become angry and defensive

Ask if the person has reasons for wanting to change. Even if your loved one lacks the desire to change for themselves, they may want to change for other reasons: to spend time with someone they love, to return to school or work etc

Be patient and supportive. Don't give up if the person shuts you down at first. It may take some time before they're willing to open up and admit to having a problem.

****Eating disorders often fill an important role in the person's life—a way to cope with unpleasant emotions—so the allure can be strong.***

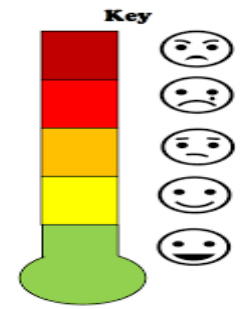
NICE Guidelines

Evidence-based recommendations for health and care in England.

Talking therapies are used to help treat ED and aim to;

- **Reduce** physical and psychological risks
- **Encourage** healthy eating
- **Develop** healthy ways of coping with the thoughts and feelings behind the ED.

Self Esteem, Self Soothing and Emotional Regulation



1. Self Esteem: Confidence in one's own worth or abilities

Increasing Self Esteem **reduces** the likelihood of an ED being maintained.

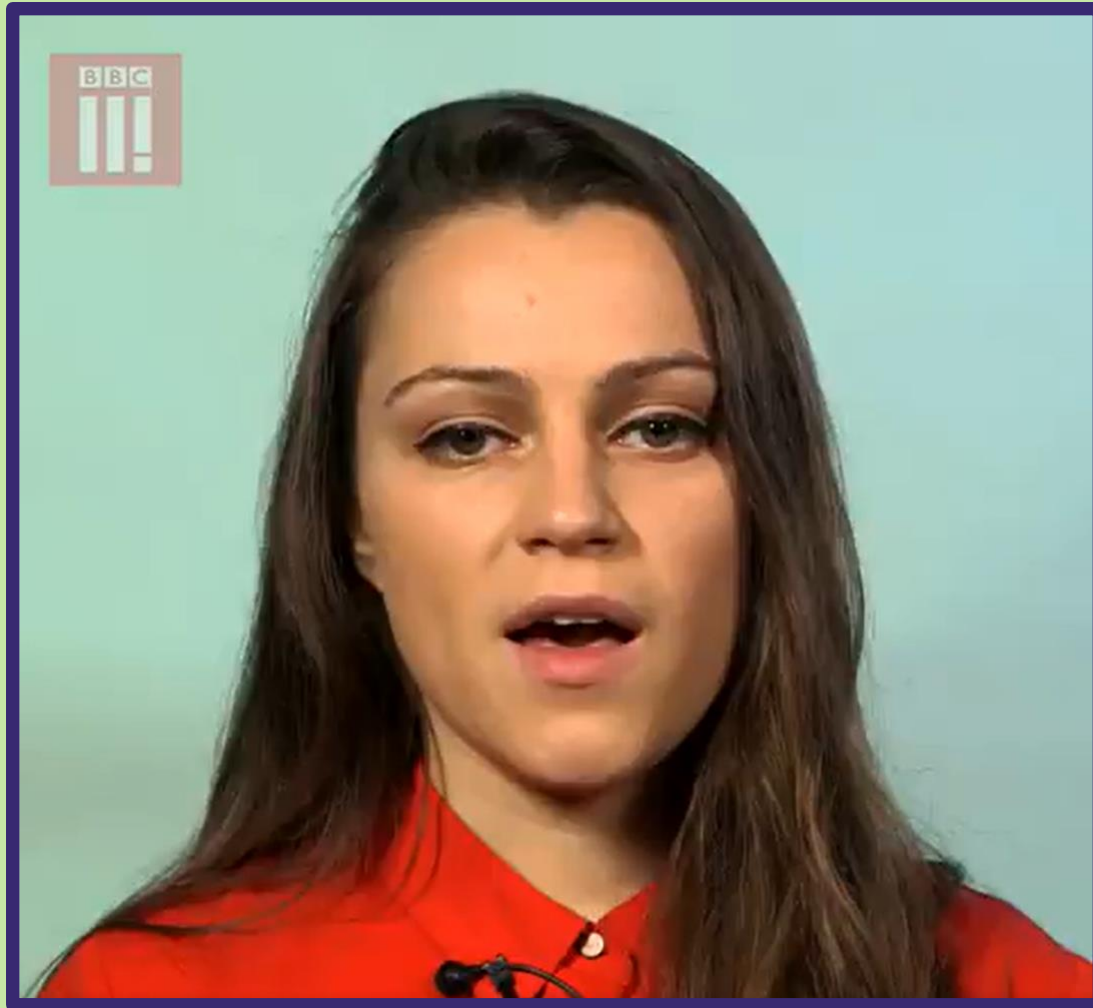
2. Self Soothing: Ability to comfort oneself when we are unhappy and or distressed

Self soothing techniques help the EDI **to feel calm** when they are feeling overwhelmed physically and emotionally.

3. Emotional Regulation: Ability to cope with and manage emotions

Emotional regulation techniques provides the EDI with the tools to **cope effectively** with their **emotions**.

Recovery is possible



Eva O'Connor's Recovery Story

<https://twitter.com/bbcthree/status/924607766974447618?lang=en>

Recovery is possible

#firststeps

