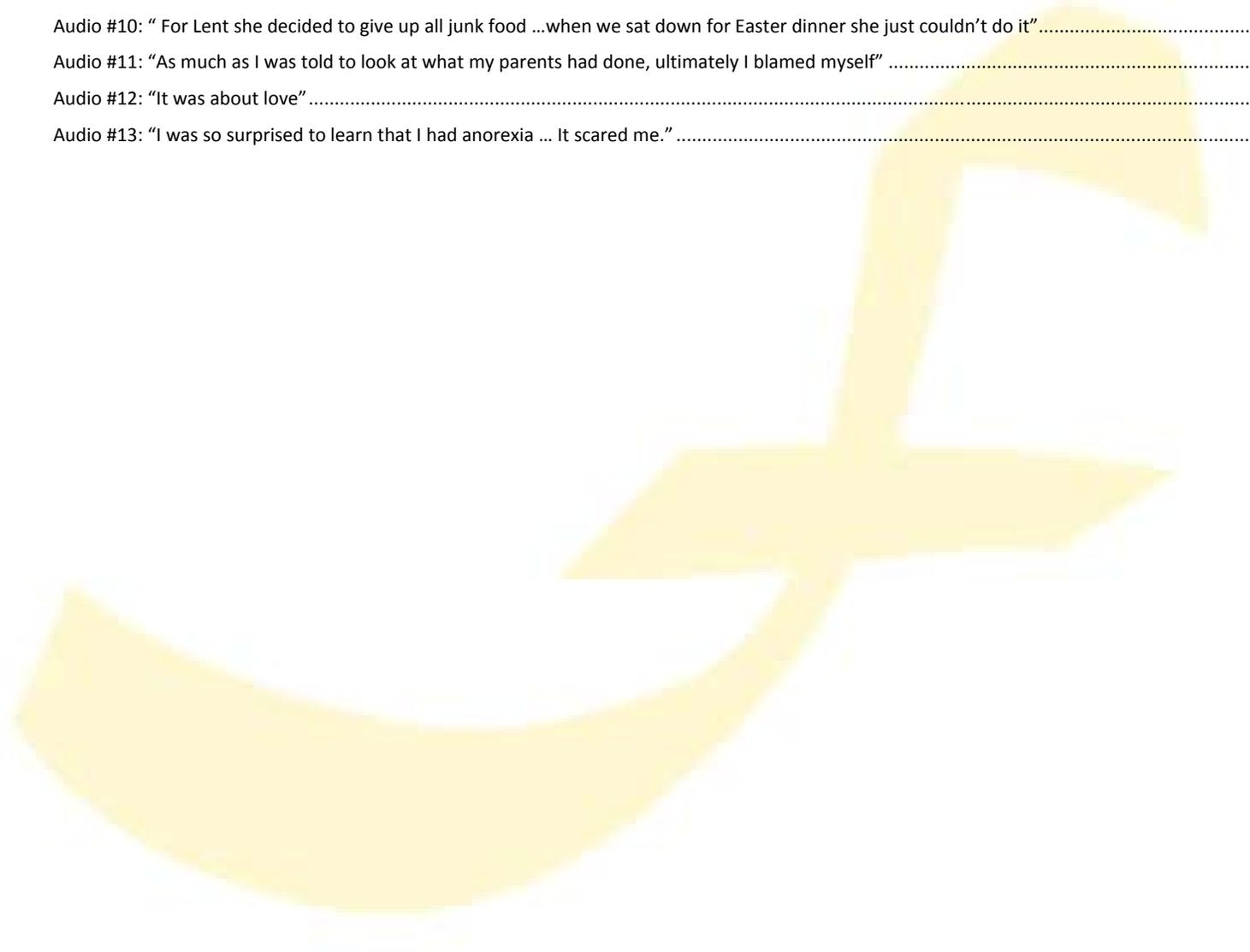


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Audio #2: “We worked as a team”.

Mother describes a daughter who as a college student developed depression, anorexia and bulimia going on to recovery after several years with help of family and nutrition and supportive therapist- US Midwest.

Interviewer- I want to thank you first for agreeing to tell this recovery story for the feast website. Where is your family located?

Mother- We are in the Midwest.

I- Could you describe your family?

M- The eating disordered patient is my daughter. She is presently almost 28 years old. In the family there is my husband and I. She has an older brother who is 32 and my daughter is currently living in another state also.

I- How long ago did she become ill?

M- It was approximately 8 years ago, latter half of her junior year of college. She was having some difficulties with depression it appeared at the time. It started to appear that that was the problem. By the end of the school year when I picked her up I was shocked to see quite a significant weight loss and so it started as anorexia and because she was going away for the summer for internship I didn't really have a chance to see exactly the full extent of what was happening, it became a full blown eating disorder by that summer.

I- And what measures did you initially take?

M- That because she had suffered from OCD (obsessive compulsive disorder) to some extent through the years the OCD became very severe. She went to a counsellor; they said that she was in dire need of medical attention by that time. She ended up in the hospital for several weeks then came home. She tried to go back to school in that fall, though things weren't looking good, she continued to lose weight and ended up in her first residential stay. That was within 6 months of actually even being diagnosed and that was for several months. Then we brought her home she tried to do it on an outpatient basis for several months, again did not work. She continued to relapse and ended up in another hospital stay and intensive outpatients and that was within about the first 9 months of being diagnosed. And after that really kind of a series of having some good periods and then relapsing so it was over the next couple of years it seemed to be a roller coaster of perhaps having some good times and then followed by more relapses. And actually it went from anorexia into some bulimia, laxative abuse, some self harm. During those first couple of years it was really going through many different types of eating disorder.

I- And what turned things around?

M- I think it took realizing that she was going through this vicious cycle of relapse, kind of a partial recovery and yet never really feeling good and she did have many health problems throughout those years including epilepsy, problems with broken bones, and many other physical problems with the eating disorder, and I think she was finally told that she needed to finally get a hold of the eating disorder and turn things around or this is the way her life was going to be. And I think she finally got tired of living like that. There is a point where we finally found a new treatment team that looked at things differently and their approach was full nutrition, to put that first ahead of looking at any possible issues, who to blame, finally focused on her refeeding. In fact had my daughter move back home with us, more or less because she was an older adult at that time. She was 26, going on 27. She eventually even quit her job and we made refeeding the main priority and it was collaboration between my daughter and I and we would figure out what was going to be her meal plan. Along with the dietician I was in charge. She was to cooperate and she did for the most part. We did have moments that things didn't go so smoothly, that she was again having trouble with the eating disorder and at that time we would go in and meet with the therapist and dietician and kind of work it out between us. We worked as a team. My daughter really did a lot of work; I have to give her so much credit for persevering. It was a lot of work. She did finally get back to her basically her target weight and has stayed there for approximately, well it's been a little over a year now. She is doing well, she just graduated from graduate school, it's been internship and looking for a permanent job, but it was really being able to get the full nutrition, to have that 24/7 support and to have a wonderful team behind her that really made the difference.

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I- If you could give advice to parents, facing a situation like yours early on, what advice would you give them?

M- Look for all the information you can, especially more current information. When we were starting out the books I ran into were some of the older books, this was 8 years ago. They didn't have some of the current thinking, so of course now you are going to get some of the newer theories, looking into setting up a treatment team, someone who is really knowledgeable with the current thinking in eating disorders, becoming totally involved in and totally focused on refeeding your child, and again looking for any kind of support, support groups are wonderful to have. To have other parents to speak to would have been great help especially in the beginning. So any of those, and all of those would be very helpful.

I- Thank you so much.

M- You're very welcome.



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Audio #4: “Mom, I’m not stupid. It’s not going to happen to me”.

A mother of a daughter with anorexia describes her then 13 year old daughter wanting to “eat healthy” and progressing to anorexia and compulsive exercise. Mother emphasises role of nutrition, early intervention, good clinicians, and hard work. - Michigan US

Interviewer- I want to thank you for agreeing to tell your recovery story for the F.E.A.S.T website first of all and ask you where is your family located?

Mother- We are located in Michigan.

I- And can you describe the people in your family, the ages of your children and which one is the eating disordered patient?

M- Sure. My husband and we have 3 daughters. My middle daughter was affected by the eating disorder so she has an older sister and a younger sister.

I- How old was your daughter when she became ill?

M- She had just turned 13.

I- And how long ago was that?

M- That was 3 years ago, she is now 16.

I- Can you describe briefly how you discovered the illness and what you did initially to address it?

M- Shortly after her 13th birthday, it was a hot July afternoon, I remember the day very well , she came and we were making lunch and she said “mom, I want to start eating healthy” and just by those 7 words, that one sentence, the eating disorder came into our lives.

I- How did you come to notice it?

M- Just because it was not the daughter that I knew. Eating was never a problem for her, so that was the first clue, that I told her we were eating healthy already and it was nothing to worry about at your age . That was kind of the red flag that hit me. We discussed how dieting at her age could trigger eating disorders and she said “mom, I’m not stupid, it won’t happen to me”.

I- What measures did you take?

M- First I just discussed nutrition with her and just that she wanted to cut out her evening snack and I said it ‘s really not a good idea and just kind of monitored her a little bit, but she kept wanting to cut out certain food groups, mainly fast foods, junk foods, sweets, stuff like that.

I- And then what did you do that worked well?

M- Well, just her changing eating patterns were a red flag to me. I guess I just began to monitor her and noticed that she was cutting out certain things. We went to our family physician who discussed nutrition and the importance of it, and that dieting at her age can trigger eating disorders. She began to, she was eating OK, but then she began to constantly need to ride her bike, roller blade or swim all the time, you know just constant moving all the time, exercising with anything that would burn calories. So that was another red flag to me. I of course didn’t think eating disorder at the time but it just was not my daughter so that was another red flag. I began to watch and limit her with the exercise.

I- And then how did it progress?

M- Then she had a little injury to her elbow, she had fallen and we went back to our family physician. She hadn’t lost any weight and we discussed that if she kept wanting to pursue this healthy part of it we would start some counselling, so in September we had decided to try some counselling, and that really didn’t seem to help, but I think the real key here was that she started school again, and of course at school you can’t monitor and I don’t think she was eating her lunch, and started cutting that meal out. She began to lose weight, I noticed that, so we started the counselling, and ED is very sneaky.

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I'm sure she was hiding some of her dinner and breakfast when I wasn't as vigilant as I became after home refeeding started, so her weight became an issue when she started losing weight. I took her, as the holidays were approaching, by November when the fear of food began to set in and that's when we took her back to our family physician and he referred us, luckily he had worked with an eating disorder specialist in our area, and we were able to get in with her pretty fast. And just before the holidays, it was at that first appointment that the physician said food is medicine and the Maudsley approach and that's how we heard about it, and that's how we started home refeeding our daughter.

I- How did it go?

M- Well, in the beginning I was pretty naïve going into home refeeding, did not understand the effects of starvation has on the human brain, but it was met with a lot of resistance as the home refeeding began more and more and the meal plan increased. It was a roller coaster ride, that's for sure.

I- How long did it take to kind of get things under control?

M- It was 6 to 8 months and we were approaching target weight range, but it took another good year to get into target range, and at that point eating was becoming more of a routine so that battles of refeeding weren't as intense, but I will tell you that it took the next 6 months were pretty intense time because I think her target weights were set too low and luckily I have worked with great clinicians and we had a great communication, and of course through your forum, and other parent stories, I realized that she just wasn't improving much, there were too many ED (eating disorder) behaviours yet, and that's when I talked to our clinicians about raising her target weight range, and that's when we really started to see some of the ED behaviours subside. I also decided at that time to try something different and took her to the Pfeiffer treatment centre and we tried some other means to help Emily with her anxiety and other issues that were some underlying co-morbidity.

I- And did that help?

M- I think the thing that really helped was the weight that she needed, being at full weight restoration. After we added another good 5-8lbs is when the ED behaviours really started to subside. Unfortunately I won't know because they were both added at the same point in time, plus we had her on some SSRI drugs too that I think were causing some aggression and some other complication with her and it really was the combination of all 3, getting her off the medication, adding some of these other supplements and adding more weight, and then she really began to turn around mentally.

I- Can you describe her now, and your relationship?

M- Yes I can. Now Emily is a happy healthy teenage daughter. She is involved with drama, she got involved with drama through her school, and she got the leading role her first try-out, and that was able to get her to socialise with her peers, feel accepted, and today she is just so happy and it is great to see her smile and laugh again with her friends and her sisters.

I- How is her relationship with her siblings and with you and your husband?

M- They have healed, of course there are scars and wounds, but for the most part everybody has healed and everybody gets along real well. She's probably closest with her younger sister; they are only 14 months apart. They are extremely close, closer than before. Emily and I get along real well. She always tells me if she has a problem and we can work through it together. She talks to me about her fears and her anxieties with school and tests and whatnot and things like that, so communication is definitely open and real good.

I- If you could give 1 or 2 sentences of advice to other parents hoping for a recovery and facing a situation like yours, what advice would you give them?

M- I think the best advice that I could give to anyone is to trust and listen to your own intuition. You know your child better than anyone and at the first sign of any inclination of any eating problems definitely seek advice, I think it is good to learn anything and everything you can on eating disorders so that you can be empowered to help fight for your child and also work with your team providers. You know, there is so much that I have learned through this experience and I think the biggest one is just learning everything you can so that you can help empower your child to stand up and fight against the eating disorder and to show no fear. I think that parents become panicked, overwhelmed and just so frightened that this has happened to their child, and I think that if we as parents can stand up and fight against the eating disorder for our child until we get them healthier and they can stand up on their own is a great first stepping stone to help heal the child. Recovery begins with full nutrition every day, and it takes full weight restoration, only then, that's the first step, only then

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can your child's mind, body and spirit begin the healing process. Another great thing is to remain calm in the storm. I didn't do very well in the beginning. If you can show no fear and stay calm it really helps to keep your child to keep their anxieties at a low level. By being very firm, consistent and yet very calm, loving and supportive, one bite at a time, you can heal and refeed your children. It is lifesaving, it gets better, and it just takes time, patience and perseverance. It is extremely hard, exhausting work but it is so worth all the effort to get your child back. With an illness like this there is no one to blame. This illness is so unfair, not only to you and your family, but especially to our smart and wonderful children who do not choose it. I don't believe that parents or families cause eating disorders but I do believe that we can be part of the solution.

I- Thank you so much.



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Audio #5: "All of a sudden she didn't want cheese on her hamburger."

A mother in Oregon (US) describes her teen daughter's recovery and preparation for college.

Interviewer- I'm grateful to you for agreeing to tell your recovery story for the F.E.A.S.T. website. Where is your family located?

Mother- We is in Oregon in the valley. The eating disordered patient is our oldest daughter. We have 2 children, a daughter who has just finished high school and a son who is 11. So there's 4 of us.

I- How long ago did your daughter become ill?

M- She became ill with real classic restrictive anorexia nervosa about 4 ½ years ago at the age of 13.

I- Tell us your family story.

M- Well, my daughter was a pretty typical kid. At birth she was about 9 lbs, she was a big healthy baby and always ate everything and grew like a weed, you know she was always 95th percentile for height and weight and just grew, and she was very precocious in terms of walking and developmental milestones and talking. She was always a happy, kind of driven kid. You know I never saw any signs of anxiety or anything at all in her until probably about middle school, that age when people's hormones start changing and their brains start changing and I noticed some anxiety. She was very active in sports, she's always been active socially and very active in sports, club soccer, being one of them. And it was during club soccer, it can be kind of high pressure. She chose to do that but it was kind of a high pressure sport and I know for a fact that the coaches in our particular club said things to the girls like "don't gain too much weight, it will affect your running time, it will affect your quickness out there on the soccer field" and I know that my daughter really took that to heart, because all of a sudden she launched this whole thing about, oh I am going to eat healthy. And I noticed, it was just a bit odd, and I will never forget the day my husband and I both looked at each other and said "is she on a diet?" because for the first time ever, our family has a tradition that Friday night is hamburger night, and we usually make cheeseburgers out on the grill and it's our favorite food and all of a sudden she didn't want cheese on her hamburger, and that was odd, the first time we had ever noticed that and little things like that. First it was the cheese off the hamburger and then the after school snack went from something like cookies and milk or a piece of toast and milk to a fruit smoothie and then pretty soon carrot sticks, and we just sort of watched this evolve over a few months and at first I thought what a healthy thing, my kid's going to skip the whole obesity epidemic. I hate the very word of that but I thought, gosh, look at her, she's so smart, she's eating healthy all on her own, I don't even have to say anything, but then it just ramped up, over the course of probably a year. I became really aware that she just wasn't eating enough. She started getting thinner, we would say things to her, we didn't ever engage in fights, we never saw that as productive but we would say you're in a pretty competitive sport and you're sometimes practicing 4 or 5 days a week for several hours at a time. Along with all the water that you need to drink, you need to eat enough food. Well pretty soon it was fairly apparent that that was falling on deaf ears, then her eating went from just not quite enough for her sport to really just not enough at all, and very small portions and I'll never forget the day that it really dawned on me that this is an eating disorder. This had gone beyond any little compulsion to eat healthy, this was a full blown, and at the same time I was alerting her teachers at school and saying could you watch her and make sure she's eating her lunch. A couple of the teachers mentioned too, yeah she seems to be getting thin. About the time I became really worried one of her teachers came to me and said, you know your daughter has always been one of my best students, and her writing has always been so clear and fluent, but today she sat down and wrote a piece that made absolutely no sense at all, and that was really scary to me. So we then set about and I thought ok I'll take her to the pediatrician and I alerted the pediatrician of my concerns ahead of time, and I thought well the pediatrician will know what to do because they always know what to do. If there's an ear ache they give them antibiotics or whatever, they'll recognize this and they'll know what to do. That wasn't the case, they didn't know what to do at all, and in fact they didn't call a diagnosis at all. So then I proceeded to go from health care provider to health care provider seeking a diagnosis for an eating disorder. I went to a child psychiatrist even, who also, oddly enough missed the eating disorder, and at this point it was getting frightening, really frightening cause you start seeing your kid really starving to death, bizarre behaviours and much more withdrawn than I had ever seen this very social kid. You know I remember I finally called the child psychiatrist and said that this has got to stop, you've really missed this diagnosis, and I'm going to come down there with a lawyer next. I'm about to get really

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crazy with you so you had better do something so that's when she did call the pediatric eating disorders clinic in Portland, Kartini Clinic, and she said OK you need to pack your bags today and go up there and she was admitted that day.

I- Wow.

M- Yeah, we went through... I don't know how much of this detail you want to have but we went through the intensive inpatient and then the step down unit, the intensive outpatient and actually my daughter was in remission for about a year, did very well with eating on her own, did very well, and then for some reason a relapse was triggered when she was about 16. We were still going up there periodically, like every 3 or 4 months, for weigh ins and check ins and her weight was staying good, she was playing junior varsity soccer. They had cleared her to do that, and she was really looking good so I was patting myself on the back and going hey we beat that one, we're out of the woods, that was awful and icky but we're done, I'm done with that. I'm really looking forward to never discussing anorexia nervosa again. Well, then she did relapse, but we caught it, you know, I could see that something was going on with her and I noticed, I felt like she was losing weight so I brought her right back up to Kartini and they weighed her they kind of, whoo she's dropped 10 lbs, so we went through the outpatient unit again. And then she really had kind of a bumpy road after that up until maybe 6 months ago and that's when I finally took matters into my own hands and I said we're going to do some refeeding in the home. You know, she felt like that was the only safe way to eat was on this very rigid food plan and it set up in her own mind some additional fears about food, that this is the only way I can eat. And I could see that happening too. So we started kind of retraining a treatment team closer to home, down here, and it really was training a treatment team at that point. We had been so lucky to have such a knowledgeable medically based team 100 miles away, and now all of a sudden we were going to have to sort of synthesise a team closer to home and I was using that as a model for having to synthesise a team wherever my daughter chose to go to college, which is the process that we are doing now. And it worked well, simply because we did have information from Around the Dinner Table and the book "Eating with your anorexic" as well as the book by Lock and LeGrange, so we had all those good resources plus several years under our belt with the knowledgeable team up in the Portland area. So I felt like, OK we can take this kind of step forward and start doing something closer to home which we did and my daughter did very well with that, not initially because it took work to kind of synthesise a team here and get them on the same page as us and let us also be included in the treatment, that was a different philosophy I think for some but eventually we all came to some agreement that that was going to work. And it has, she's done very well, we've had a few bumps but one sign of huge success was a couple of weeks ago she dropped a few lbs, 3 or 4 lbs, right after high school graduation and she was very busy going to lots of dances, you know eating at cookouts and going to lots of parties, you know not sticking to any particular food plan but just trying to eat intuitively and she dropped a few lbs. I can now say to her when that happens, she gets weighed once a week at the doctor's office here, and I can say something to her like, why do you think that happened? What's going on as far as your eating and activity level? What do you think you need to do now thinking about this to stop losing weight and actually putting that weight back on and we'll have a discussion about it and she'll come up with action step to address the weight loss and then lo and behold a week later she had put on 4 ½ lbs, completely on her own, choosing her own food, no weighing and measuring just kind of feeling it. She said well I did feel like I had to eat and I kind of said yes sometimes when you have to gain weight it almost feels maybe like you're overeating a little bit but that's OK because that's where you need to be, and she's OK with that. To me that's been a huge success that on her own she can now kind of recognize when she needs to gain weight and what she needs to do about that.

I- And how are your relationships now within the family?

M- They're good, they're very good. In fact, my daughter has said more than once, because we've gone through when the eating disorder is clearly present she's not easy to deal with, nobody is I don't think when they are restricting and they're actually hungry. One person on her treatment team said after she gained her weight back a few months ago, well you seem so different and my daughter actually said it's because I gained my weight back.

I- Wow.

M- Yeah, she said that. It was her introspection. I have seen since she's matured that she's been able to be introspective about the whole thing and the effects on her personality and sort of do something about it so she's starting to come into early adulthood. There clearly is a difference there too in her ability to kind of really think about and reflect on all of this and things that stress her out that might make her want to think about restricting she can arrest some of that now herself which is pretty neat to see.

I- And what is the plan for the future?

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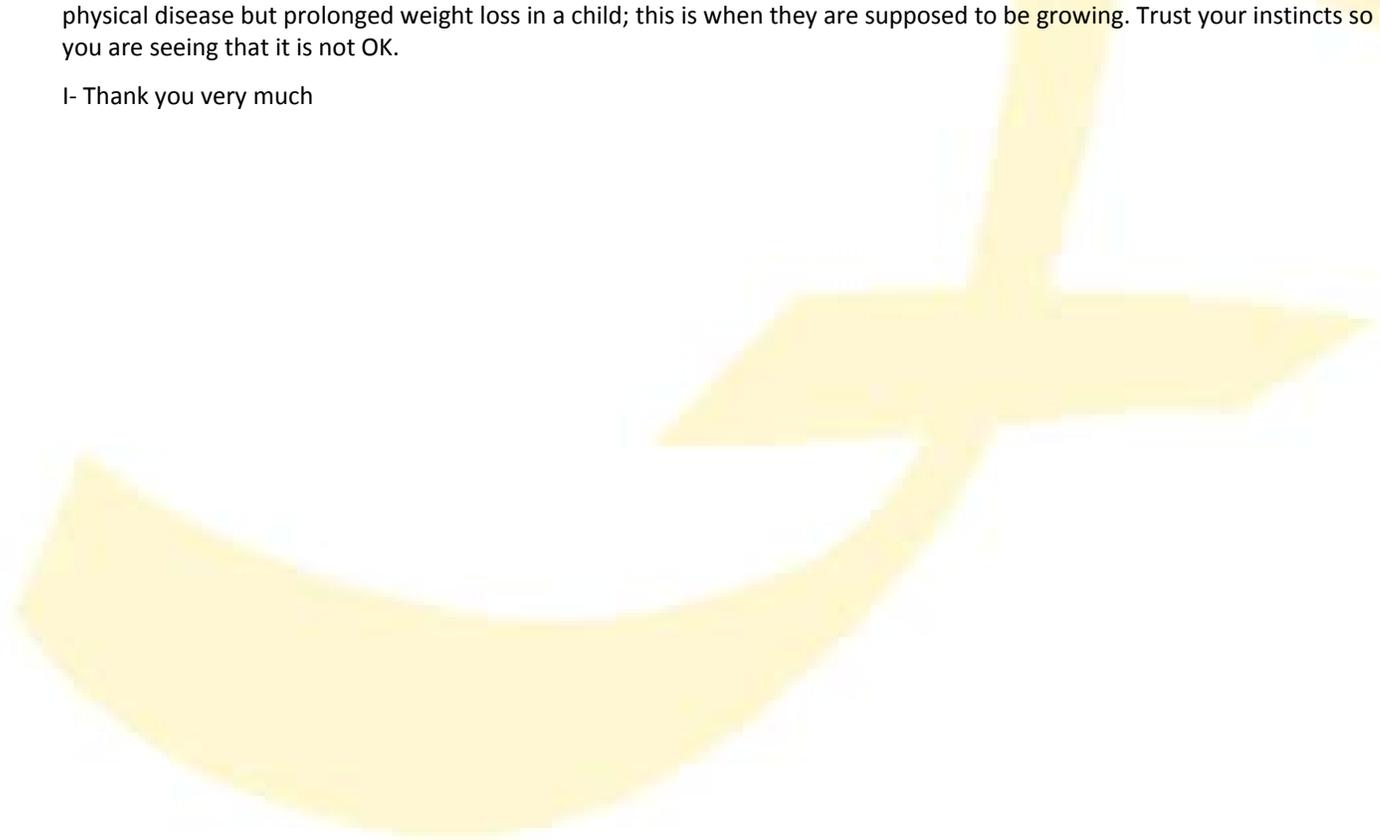
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M- She wants to go away to college, and pretty far away to college. Right now we are synthesising a treatment team at her college of choice, you know it will include somebody in nutrition and a therapist and a physician and she will have weekly weigh ins and she knows that she will sign waivers to let us get weekly information about how she's doing so we will still be involved in that, and we'll have a contract between the university health care team and her and us, about when, like if she starts to get into trouble where's the line in the sand where she may have to come home and where's the line in the sand where we might need to increase therapy or something, so we will all be in agreement. That's the kind of process that we're constructing right now.

I- What's your advice to other parents facing a situation like you did? If you could look back what would you tell people?

M- Really trust your instincts as a parent, know that you know your kid better than anybody else. Know that you didn't cause the eating disorder, but you can certainly be central to your child getting over the eating disorder. Don't be excluded from treatment, if you feel uneasy about what a care provider is telling you just ask a lot of questions or find somebody new and talk to people. Talk to other parents, go to sites like this and find any information you can, but don't wait too long. I know I've personally spoken to many, many parents. I mean they call me now, at least in this area, just with their concerns and I can at least point them in some directions, like go to this doctor or go to this therapist, they know what they are doing and get a further evaluation or yes, those behaviours are definitely worrying and just know that weight loss is never normal in childhood. It most definitely is a sign of something. So get a differential diagnosis. You hope it is not some horrible physical disease but prolonged weight loss in a child; this is when they are supposed to be growing. Trust your instincts so if you are seeing that it is not OK.

I- Thank you very much



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Audio #6: “We’re here for you whether you want us or not. We’re not giving up on you”

*A mother and father describe their daughter’s recovery from EDNOS.
Boston area US*

Interviewer- I want to thank you both for agreeing to tell your story for the F.E.A.S.T. website first of all, and ask you where is your family located?

Father- We are in Eastern Massachusetts outside Boston.

I- And can you describe who is in your family?

Mother- We have 3 adult children, a son and 2 daughters and it was our youngest daughter who is now 20 who had the eating disorder.

I- How old was she when she became ill?

M- She was 14, though she had difficulties with her body image for some time before that.

I- What kind of eating disorder did her have?

M- She probably would have been called EDNOS but she displayed mostly anorexic type symptoms though as she recovered she gained a lot of weight over and beyond her normal trajectory.

I- Tell us briefly your family’s story.

F- That’s a pretty big question. I have conveniently blanked out a lot of this, for good or bad I don’t recall all the details.

M- She started having difficulty with her feelings about herself, her weight and her body image when she was in fifth grade, so I took her to a nutritionist who actually specialized in eating disorders, although I didn’t tell her that, just to talk to her about what she should be eating in terms of appropriateness for her age and stage of life. And she had probably 3 sessions with the woman who then recommended I get some counselling for self esteem issues with her. I could see that she was really anxious about a lot of things. Over the next 2 or 3 years we had her in and out of some counselling help with 2 or 3 different people to try and help her with that whole anxiety that she was experiencing, but she didn’t want to stay in counselling and she kept, I want to say quitting but I guess I sort of let her quit because she really was resistant to the idea of going and now when I think about that maybe that was a mistake at that time. In eighth grade she really started struggling and when I look back on it that was a period of time when her brother left home for college, her sister left home on a junior semester program, it was a high school semester and her grandfather also needed a lot more help from us, so I think there were just a lot of changes going on in our family. That was, I think, the beginning for her of a lot more difficulty and she also ended up going to high school that year, and that was the beginning of real difficulty for her. For about 6 months she was here at home and we were trying to deal with an increasingly difficult situation on our own, and it was partly because we really didn’t know what to do or where to go for help. We were seeing our local doctor and I was rather frantically trying to find what was the best route to take, who to go to, and I was also waiting for my higher level insurance to kick in. I had to wait 6 months to be in the best situation possible to get insurance coverage, which did in the long run pay off. We got everything up to 80% and would not have if I had not waited, but it was really difficult to have to wait that period of time. She was in ninth grade at that point.

I- So what did you end up doing?

M- In the interim I did a lot of research on the net trying to find out what best to do, and I found a woman locally here who started out being a counsellor for my husband and myself, just to help us through it, and she ended up working with my daughter and she really was very good I think. She had sort of an eclectic approach, she wasn’t Maudsley but she was delightful in the sense that she helped us keep our own anxiety levels down and helped us, and I really think she helped my daughter keep her anxiety level down about things too. She did direct us to a program that in the end I think would not have been my first choice had I’d known about Maudsley at the time but I didn’t and I think in the end the program my daughter went to, despite my having some misgivings about it, did manage to reefed her to the point that when she came

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home it did seem to start her on a slowly better track to health. Given the advantage of hindsight I think that that was the beginning of her turnaround.

I- And from then how did things progress?

M- Well, we kept her in the counselling because she seemed at that point to want it, and it was probably? A year or 2

F- Yeah probably.

M- It was a lot of doctor's appointments. She is back to; I would say 80-85%. I still see some behaviours at times that make me think that she is not 100% there but she is totally weight restored and has been for a long time. She went off on a trip to Nepal last year, in India, and I held my breath but she went (laughter) and she is in college.

I- Wow.

M- So she is doing quite well overall.

I- How are your relationships as a family now?

M- My husband and her relationship's really quite good. I still have a hard time with the whole experience and I've been trying to do really constructive things. As we speak today I have just finished a book which I am taking up to my pediatrician. I collected a number of books on your site that were recommended and also put together a book of my own of resources. I am going to do this for my library, for the high school where she went, a number of places. I think it's just part of my own healing process to feel that I am doing something proactive because it was such a difficult experience overall, but she has come out of it.

I- To what do you attribute her success?

F- I think she has a very strong core, and she is very in touch. She is a very gifted artist and she has had, before this whole thing, a rather deep sense of self confidence. I think our parenting and the love we gave her and we kind of kept plugging through really hellish times with her somehow spoke to that and in my mind it is 99 or 95 % over and I approach her in that way and I think that puts her more at ease because I have not been traumatised the way my wife was. So I am able to just say, OK that happened, it was terrible and I am going to approach her as if she were a pretty healthy person, a very healthy person, as much as I do recognise there are times when she gets pretty neurotic about food and her body image and she does suffer from a fair dose of self criticism a lot of the time, which I know because I did the same when I was her age. The program we took her to was very exclusive of parents and it really sent the message that we were a big part of the reason why she was ill, and I sort of believed that for a couple of weeks and ever since then I've said this is crazy, we're very good parents and we have a very good family and this is obviously not our doing so that's sort of the way I look at it.

I- What is your advice, the both of you, to other couples who are struggling with this issue?

F- One thing we didn't do which I would have heavily recommended is to get involved in a group, a parent's group that we could share. We were pretty... for a couple of different reasons we just never really got involved with other parents.

M- I think we did after time (laughter).

F- It was a matter of time and resources and for one reason or another. There are other people I've been talking to, notably someone I was seeing myself to get through this, did connect with the local group, but we were really out on a limb by ourselves with this, sort of second guessing what was the best approach most of the time. As I say it got to be so extreme that we had to hospitalise her. I could say I don't know the hell you're going through, I've never been there but I've had pieces of this, I know it's very difficult, you know just to be very empathetic even when she was god awful difficult. We'd say we're here for you whether or not you want us or not, and we're not giving up on you, and I think that message came across, you know kind of fought its way through all the mental illness that she was going through, so I think that really did, and her brother and sister were very not present a lot but very supportive when they were she knew they were behind her and we're a pretty close family so that made a very big difference to not having other fallings out between us, between me and my wife and between the other kids. She was the real spike in the side here and we were able to fight our way through it. So it helps to have an otherwise fairly mentally healthy family, not that that's an instant thing to give anybody (laughter).

M- I know, I guess I so know that that's a hard one.

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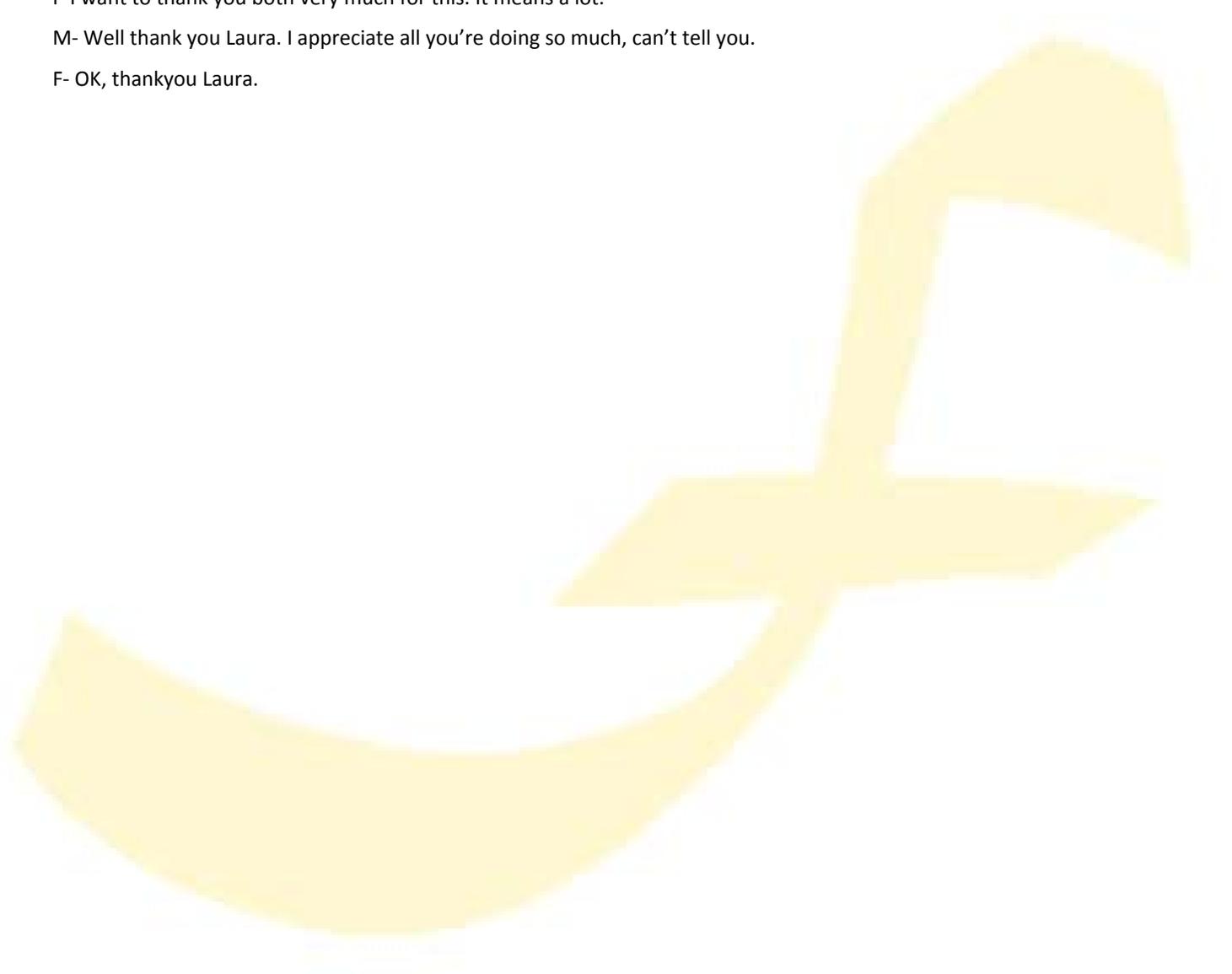
I- What would you say to yourself if you could go back?

M- I think I was just so frustrated by the lack of direction and the lack of concise help, knowing where to go, and I didn't go into all of this knowing that that was going to be the case. This was back in 2002- 2003 and I think there's even more out there now. I found that I had to really rely a lot on myself and that wasn't always good necessarily, I mean I really had to be proactive and stand up and do a lot of research, ask a lot of questions . You know I really had to get up to speed so fast, and I mean obviously I didn't learn everything I could of, every chance I had I was reading, calling . I didn't just take anybody else's word for anything. I was on the phone a lot, my husband will tell you. (laughter)

I- I want to thank you both very much for this. It means a lot.

M- Well thank you Laura. I appreciate all you're doing so much, can't tell you.

F- OK, thankyou Laura.



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Audio #8: "It was like she was standing on a rock in a rising river"

A father and mother describe a series of treatment approaches and strategies and eventual recovery of their college age daughter. Northern California US.

Interviewer – It's a pleasure to have your family success story on the F.E.A.S.T website. Where is your family located?

Mother- We live in Northern California.

Father- There are 5 of us in our family, my wife and me, and we have 3 kids. They are in the late teen years and early 20's. It was our middle child, one of our daughters, who developed anorexia nervosa, restricting type, about 3 years ago.

I- How old was she when she got ill?

F- The first indication that we had of any problem was during her sophomore year in high school when her cross country coach approached me and said that some of her friends and team mates were saying that she was skipping lunch or not eating very much at lunch and I have to say I didn't really take those reports all that seriously I suppose partly because I've personally been part of the long distance running community for most of my life and am aware of a lot of other runners who've gone on diets and have been trying to lose weight and I wasn't aware of any serious consequences so I think our coach was very well intentioned and I'm grateful that he brought that to my attention. I really did not appreciate the significance of it at the time.

Mother- Our daughter went on school field trip of some duration a few weeks in length after her junior year, and when she came back and we picked her up at the airport we were all shocked because she had lost maybe 10 lbs over the 2 weeks. One of the chaperones on the trip called us up and said we were quite concerned because we noticed that your daughter really wasn't eating much. Actually our daughter brought it up to us when she got home and we talked and she said when I was on the trip I kind of got a stomach bug and I was really homesick and I just didn't feel like eating much and I know that I have lost some weight. I'm going to work hard to get myself back in shape. Not only was she planning to run cross country her senior year but she also was a competitive rower and this was one thing later that we discovered that as part of the picture she was worried about being able to make light weight rowing class which I think was also partly informed her behaviour when she was away on this trip. She was worried about not exercising enough and she began to restrict, possibly because of being homesick and all of these things and anxious and also because she was aware of how close she was to the weight cut off for lightweight rowing. During that summer we took her to doctors and had that issue addressed and she went to 2 different doctors appointments during that summer and the first one was just to address the weight loss and the paediatrician checked her for diabetes and other things and just sent her back home and said well I don't see diabetes or anything else going on, just try to gain back the weight. And actually a little bit later in the summer then, because she was planning to continue with her exercise, she went back for a second physical and again, even though she was clearly at least 10 lbs underweight at that point, the doctor, he signed off again on her health certification. So during that summer we felt like we had had quite a bit of input from doctors. No one had alerted us to the possibility of an eating disorder.

I- What were you both feeling?

F- Well, I know I was getting increasingly concerned because it seemed that she was continuing to lose weight and also she was becoming very driven to exercise. She got a rowing machine at home and would go on the rowing machine sometimes several times a day was frequently going out for runs. I was becoming worried because she seemed to be becoming socially withdrawn from her friends and from those of us in the family and seemed to be extremely anxious.

M- I think depression was something that also began to become apparent during this time. I think the surprising thing was that we were pretty well informed about eating disorders and we thought we knew the warning signs. One of the things that I think surprised us and maybe fooled us is that our daughter really appeared to be eating, and we didn't see a lot of the kind of restrictive behaviours at least on the surface, and I know there are many ways that children who are developing anorexia can kind of hide the symptoms, but on the surface she appeared to be eating. She would eat meals with the family

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and it wasn't blatantly obvious that she was restricting so it seemed more that the exercising was the way that she was really losing weight, so it kind of came as a shock because we hadn't seen the eating behaviours, but obviously we became very very scared and worried as the summer wore on and she didn't put the weight back on.

I- Can you describe what approaches you took to try to help her?

F- We talked to the counsellor at her high school who gave us the name of a therapist in the area and also a nutritionist, and incidentally it was the school counsellor at the end of the summer who was the one who really told us that in her opinion that our daughter had developed an eating disorder. For the next month or so our daughter had regular appointments with a therapist who specializes in eating disorders and also regular appointments with a nutritionist. The therapist met with our daughter without our being present and on a few occasions met with us separately. The nutritionist developed a meal plan for our daughter and initially asked our daughter to carry out the meal plan on her own without involvement by us. After a little while it became clear that she was just not able to carry out that meal plan so at that point the nutritionist asked that we became involved in feeding our daughter on the meal plan.

M- She gave our daughter a structured meal plan that involved not laying out exactly what she had to eat but servings of different types of foods and how many she should eat every day. My role was to check in with her after every meal and for a month, I think, our daughter tried really hard to comply and she was aware because her physician and her nutritionist and everyone was telling her that if you don't successfully gain weight what is looming out there is probably hospitalisation. She had reached the benchmark of 75% of the "ideal weight " which is often the dividing line and they agreed to give her a month to see, well can you do this on your own. For a brief time she gained some weight, and we subsequently found out that it is pretty common for once someone starts re-feeding their metabolism goes into overdrive . She was able to gain a little weight, not nearly enough, but then she really plateau after about a week or 2 of working at it and even though she continued to eat, she really just reached a steady state where she wasn't losing any more but she wasn't able to begin to gain the weight that they thought they really wanted her to do. So it kind of came out of the blue for us, she went to her weekly appointment and I was going with her but staying out in the waiting room, and the doctor called me in and said, it's been a month now and we've really given this a try for her to work out the weight gain on her own and she really hasn't been able to and so I really feel strongly that she needs to be hospitalised. So I called up my husband, and I really felt like I needed his support, I needed him to come down to the doctor's office and to be there to kind of provide a united front because our daughter was begging and pleading. It was "I'll do anything, I promise, I promise, please don't make me go" and it was like she was a cornered animal at that point. She was just beside herself with real fear. She vacillated between sobbing and being afraid and then lashing out at us in anger. There are many low points in our story and which fortunately have some high points and high points at the end but that was a low point because we really had to hold the line and it's very hard for you to tell your child who's begging you and pleading with you, give me one more chance, let me try for another few weeks, to say we have to do something else because what we are doing isn't working. She was just beside herself and that trip to the hospital was just excruciating for all of us, and unfortunately things got worse before they got better because when we got to the hospital they admitted her and they were monitoring her vital signs around the clock and for the people who were listening if your child is admitted to the hospital it is helpful to know that that is going to be part of the scenario and you may hear some very very scary news in those first few days of hospitalisation. In our daughter's case they wanted to have that IV line just in case she went into cardiac arrest and we were terrified. She was put on total bed rest and for the first several days actually was only allowed to drink liquid nutrition. Because a lot of parents don't take this seriously enough they really gave us a long and scary list of things that could happen to your child. I really think we felt like our daughter might die any day.

F- There were things that happened in the hospital that, I think, were very positive. One is, they helped us learn that anorexia is not a choice, it's an illness and the person suffering from it is not choosing to be ill. They also worked with us to help us separate our child from the illness and to help us learn how to love our child, while at the same time hating the illness. They also let us know I think which was a relief, that no one was to blame for our daughter being ill, even though we couldn't help but feel guilt ourselves. I think another thing the hospital did, was it gives us some skills to help to re-fed our daughter once she was discharged. We had some meals in the hospital with our daughter and the 2 of us at first with one of the nurses and then later just the 3 of us. So our daughter did make progress when she was in the hospital, she was returned after about 2 ½ weeks to medical stability and was discharged at the end of 2005.

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M- Given this may be something that people listening may be going through, the hospitalisation is really just a short term stop gap measure to return your child to medical stability. By no means, they stress this, your daughter has not returned to normal. She still has significant weight to gain, she still has the eating disorder so now the role of the family is to ensure that she maintains the gains she's made and she continues to gain weight. I think we were lucky to be really near a place that had some comprehensive care for eating disorders and they had a discharge plan that included seeing a therapist and a nutritionist on a weekly basis, and then in the beginning weekly checks with a clinic that specialised in eating disorders. Our role was to be the supervision for her continuing with the meal plan. That period of time after she was released from the hospital was just filled with so much conflict and upheaval in our family. It was just; we all began to dread meals. We had one child still living at home in addition to our daughter with anorexia and there was a huge impact on him. As much as we tried to defuse the emotional content, it was very emotional for our daughter. She was very frightened of gaining weight, and so what she was saying during that period was OK, I'll allow them to "make me" be this weight but I refuse to gain any more weight because her mind was still in the grip of anorexia. She created this kind of fantasy where she could walk this tightrope and stay just on the upper side of being hospitalised and because she was always trying to walk that line and because, as many people with anorexia, as I mentioned before, they become hypermetabolic so they need more calories than the typical person just to maintain their weight. For about a month after she was released from the hospital she did remain compliant. She continued to gain the weight, and despite the conflict we were really cheered that this was something that was going to work, and after about a month or so she said I am not going to allow you to monitor my meals anymore, I'm going to do this on my own. This was with her therapist and her nutritionist's support, so she went off supervised meals and began to spiral back down, losing weight just a little at a time, gradually.

F- And then after about 4 months she became medically unstable again and was readmitted to the hospital, and remained hospitalised for about another 2 ½ weeks.

M- I called around and finally found a wonderful internist that had a practice where about half of the people she saw were young women with eating disorders. She was a godsend I think, because our story turned out to be such a positive story in the end. I think a lot of it had to do with finding a doctor that we all felt comfortable with, but most importantly our daughter felt comfortable with, someone she would listen to and someone who was really knowledgeable about eating disorders. I guess I would encourage parents to keep looking, really look for someone who has specific knowledge of eating disorders, if they can. It's not always possible.

F- The new primary care doctor said something when we were in the office with her that just flipped a light switch in my mind. What she said was that the most important thing is nutrition right now and your daughter has to get good nutrition and she has to become weight restored because as long as she is chronically undernourished nothing can change, and so our top priority has to be making sure that she gets re-fed and nutritionally restored. Everything else in life has to become secondary to that and everything else in the treatment has to be aimed in that direction.

M- Actually another thing she did say was that anorexia changes your brain chemistry and until you are no longer severely malnourished your brain isn't in a place where you can do the hard work that is required in therapy to get beyond whatever the psychological components are, and we really noticed that to be the case. It was only after our daughter was restored to normal weight and kept that weight for a while that the depression and the anxiety began to lift gradually. It was definitely not an overnight process, but it was only then that she really had the emotional energy and the physical energy to be able to do the work that the therapy requires to look at the behavioural components of the illness. For any parent who is trying to help their child survive this, find a plan so that the nutrition can be restored and then make that your priority and then the other can follow on later. I guess we need to do the last chapter of the story quickly. After she was released from hospital she had talked with her internist about residential care- she really strongly did not want to do that, she wanted to stay at home. So she lobbied for it and we agreed to give her a shot at trying a day program and that just did not work for her and began to lose weight again and after about a week we all got together on the treatment team and said this is really not working. So we really didn't waste any time, we put her on the plane the next day, and that was another one of those really really low points because once again we were directly confronting the illness and saying as parents we are drawing the line here, you know we are not going to let your physical condition spiral back down. It's in no one's interest. I think that was the second time that we saw that extreme fear. Our daughter had always been very sweet tempered, kind of easy

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to live with, a non-defiant person. That night, when she knew we were going to get on the plane the next day, she actually ran away. Now she didn't run far away, but she got in the car and she drove and she called us up and it was not clear she was going to come back. She called a good friend and the friend convinced her to come back home. I guess another thing I would really like to say at this point is just the extent to which your son or daughter's friends can really be part of the healing process. Our daughter had a number of friends who were so supportive. Her friends were saying, you gotta stop this, we've got to draw a line and hearing that on many different fronts from people who weren't just her "overbearing parents" was really helpful, but she was so angry that the morning we left she was carrying a water bottle and it was 5.30 am and she turned around and threw the water in my face. It was just so atypical of her to be so defiant. I think in talking about it I have used this metaphor to my husband, it was like she was standing on a rock in a rising river, and if you can imagine being in that situation you are terrified, the river's rising, she knew that she couldn't continue doing to her body what she was doing. She was smart enough and accepting of what doctors were telling her and yeah I understand I am not going to have the life I want if I don't stop, but she was also terrified to jump off and swim and so it was a kind of a paralysis, and we definitely noticed that. She knew she had to go, but she also resisted and was terrified at the same time.

I- How did it go?

F- She spent the entire summer in a residential treatment center, first in one out of state and then immediately she transferred to another one closer to home. The one thing the residential treatment did do was go a long way towards restoring her weight so by September she started college and finished the fall quarter of her freshman year in college.

M- Another thing I would like to say about residential treatment too that might be helpful is that there is really a variety of approaches and the first place that our daughter went was one of probably the most structured kinds of places that you could go. It was a locked facility, there were a lot of patients there who had other behavioural issues, they all had eating disorders but it was a dual diagnosis program, it was very strict so when they came in they had almost no privileges, privileges to listen to music whenever they wanted, so it was very, to my mind it seemed harsh and maybe it's just that if people are really really sick this is the only approach that works. Our daughter was truly miserable there, she really felt like it was dehumanising. I could see her point. At the time we were so desperate. She stayed there for 2 months and it was really truly a miserable 2 months for her and she was very resentful of her treatment there and the way that the patients were treated, but on the positive side she made a huge amount of physical progress and really got herself to a really safe weight. They had a great nutritionist there and they were very successful at restoring her weight and for the most part she was compliant. During that time that she was there she turned 18 and she said legally I don't have to be here anymore and we of course were aware that we no longer legally had any understanding to keep her there and we kind of worked out a compromise that worked pretty well which was, well you want to go to college, we want you to go to college, we want you to have everything you want in your life but you just can't do it, if you want to be in college you have to be healthy, you can't go off to college severely underweight and without having this under control. She saw that and so we did transfer her to a second residential program that was a lot looser, it was not a locked facility and there was a lot more personal freedom and they stressed something called intuitive eating, which instead of having regimented meals that was having food put on your plate, the emphasis was paying attention to your body and I think it's probably a plan that works when someone has already made a substantial recovery. If there are people out there looking for a residential program, really look at where your son or daughter is because they will really vary in how appropriate they are for your child's point in recovery. She came home and went to college and she had a relapse and we actually had been told to expect it, not necessarily a relapse where she would have to go back into treatment or whatever but just that the process of recovery is one in which you make progress and relapse and progress and relapse and that when there are triggers in your daily life they can once again trigger eating disorder behaviour. The stresses of college, I think, contributed to her kind of resorting again to some eating disorder behaviour, primarily overexercising.

F- She finished her first quarter of her freshman year in college and then part way through the second quarter she began losing weight again and her doctor became very concerned and talked to us and recommended that she stop out of school. We backed that decision completely, she came out of school for a quarter and went back into the residential program. Her weight and vitals became restored and she was back in college in spring quarter.

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M- And since that time she has maintained a healthy weight. She continued to gain some weight after she was released from the residential program. I won't say that it has been all smooth sailing since then, there have definitely been bumps in the road. She's never relapsed significantly and she has maintained a healthy weight and she has continued to see an internist regularly just so that if her weight begins to drop she is aware of that. She sees a therapist every week, I think. As I say she is over 18, they no longer have a legal right to have access to medical records, so just kind of rolled with that punch (laughter). There are ways to get around it. I think it is important for your son or daughter to have privacy. You can definitely, for example if you are paying for college as we were, we said we are not going to intrude on your privacy but what we do insist on is that you have regular care, just to make sure that the eating disorder does not have a chance to get another toehold. To be honest there was a lot of recovery our whole family has had to do during this period of time. It wasn't like, bingo she's a safe weight and everything is great. We had a lot of wounds to heal, there were lots of conflict. As you can hear from our story there were many times where we just had to really be confrontational with her. I think there are still remnants of that still for us, but the fact that she is away from home, she is aware that this is her job to keep herself healthy because it is appropriate at her age in life to be in charge of her eating. I know that her therapist and her internist continually reinforce that to her that this is your job now. I think just gradually our family is healing from the conflicts and extreme emotional distress we all felt during the time when she was so incredibly ill. It was a year and a half /two year journey all told to this point were we are now.

I- And what's your advice, both of you, to other parents, to other couples?

M- Find an internist who has experience or a paediatrician or primary care giver who has experience with eating disorders. That may not be the paediatrician that your child feels comfortable with, so I'm not saying don't go to your paediatrician but definitely get medical advice from someone who really is knowledgeable, because we did find that her paediatrician did not pick up on this in a time when they might have and so if you are suspecting that this might be the case. I think encouraging your daughter or son to keep contacts with their friends. They will want to isolate themselves, they will probably be depressed and it's really hard for them to get the emotional wherewithal to spend time with friends, but we found that our daughter's friends were incredibly healing for her. Find motivators that will provide internal motivation for your child to want to continue to recover. I think a turning point for our daughter was when she actively decided to go back into residential care when she was in college, and that was just kind of an ah-ha moment where she is saying I am choosing, I want to get better. I just don't want to live with this disease for the rest of my life. If there are ways where you can use motivators like, if your child participates in sport, saying you can't participate in sport until you are healthy again, or in our case our daughter wanted to go to college. That can be, not doing it as like we're going to punish you by not letting you go to college, but it makes sure that it is a goal that will allow them to get the things that they want in their life.

F- I think that it's really important for the parents to have a united front against the eating disorder. There were many times where my wife and I did not initially agree on what should be done but we talked that out privately, not in front of our daughter and, I think, we always tried to have a united front as parents, and always have a plan, always be trying to make progress. I think it's also really important to treat the eating disorder as the most important thing. Getting the eating disorder treated is more important than college, more important than anything else. All those other things in life can wait but the longer the anorexia is allowed to persist the more it can get a grip on your child. Learn all you can about eating disorders. I think the importance of that is that it helps you as parents to pick a good treatment team. As parents I don't think we can be experts on treatment but I do think that we have a vital role in selecting who the doctors are going to be, who the therapists are going to be and we really need to know and we should know what their approach is and what the evidence is to support it. I think it's also crucial to make nutrition the number one priority. In our daughter's case I think she went from the spring all the way through to the fall, which was almost 6 months of getting daily nutritional support and that, I think, made all the difference in the world. She gained weight during that period of time and as she did her mood lifted, the depression seemed to dissolve away and I think without that constant daily vigilance for 6 months it would have been really hard to beat the eating disorder.

M- I guess I really want to tell parents that there is hope. You can go to websites and you can read statistics and you can become so disheartened, is our daughter going to survive and then will our daughter is for life struggle with this illness, will she ever be able to regulate her own eating or will her life be a series of going in and out of residential care. Sadly there are people who really maybe don't get the quality care that they need, that is the sad truth that it becomes a life long battle

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but if you address the issue early on before the disease has progressed for too long and you really keep looking for solutions. As you can tell from our story, we tried things, we discarded them, we tried something else and we discarded that, really just kept at it and said we're not gonna let this disease take our daughter and we kept telling her that too, we're not going to let the disease have you. There is hope, I guess I just really want to emphasise that, you will have really dark days where you really wonder whether things will ever get better and you can tell from our story that we had so many dark days like that. There is no quick fix and there will be relapses but that doesn't mean that things won't come out in the end. The reality is that we have our daughter back. She's happy, healthy, she's in college and excited about her life again. She's actually even gotten involved in peer advising and helping other students to recognize when they or their friends may be developing an eating disorder, so she's really taken this horrible thing that happened to her in what is often people's happiest time which is graduating from high school and going to college and that really put a cloud over that time of her life. I think we've all reached a point where rather than grieving for what we've lost we see what she has gained which is a kind of an awareness about herself and a resilience and a realisation that you can go through something so horrible as a family and bounce back.

I- I want to thank you both very much.

M- You're welcome. We hope our story helps other people.

F- Thank you.



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Audio #9: “ All these OCD rules that she lived by, that seemed to be absolutely set in concrete, just melted away”

A mother in Northern Australia describes the slow, and then rapid, recovery of her recently graduated daughter.

Interviewer- Hello.

Mother- Hello.

Interviewer- Thank you for agreeing to include your family’s story on the F.E.A.S.T. website. Can you tell us, where is your family located?

M- We live in a small regional city in Australia.

I- And can you describe your family?

M- Our family is a mum and a dad and 2 daughters. Our elder daughter who developed anorexia nervosa around her 14th birthday and our younger daughter who was about 12 at that time.

I- How long ago was that?

M- It was in early 2004.

I- When did you know that your daughter was ill?

M- We first became concerned when we were on a family holiday in Borneo, and we just thought that our daughter was not eating as much as we expected her to be doing. Then when we returned home she went back to school and started in with all her sports. She was very athletic and she was doing cross country running and also playing netball, and we just got the feeling that she wasn’t eating enough to be supporting the amount of sport she was doing and she also started to grow and she started to look thin. We started to get a little worried.

I- Can you describe what you did initially to respond?

M- We took her to a dietician and a GP, neither of who suggested that we had anything to be concerned about even though she had lost weight between appointments. We worried, so we ended up taking her to a sports physician and he identified that she had an eating disorder, and he suggested that she was also depressed.

I- And what did he advise you should do?

M- He said that he would treat her for depression, he referred us to a therapist who we actually met and didn’t like. We thought she was defeated before she started, and he referred us to a dietician so we started treatment with him and a dietician. We progressed with that for a while. The dietician would give my daughter diets but she found it very difficult to stick with any of the diets, and she seemed to be just getting worse, so we then called in the services of a paediatrician who looked at her, and he worked with the GP and the dietician together for a time, but she just continued to deteriorate. She wasn’t able to eat what she was required to eat, she was losing weight, she was becoming more upset and depressed, and it ended up that her weight dropped to quite a life threatening level and the doctor suggested that we either put her in hospital and refeed her or we could re-feed her with a nasogastric tube at home. We thought we would like to try that so we opted for the nasogastric re-feeding at home and for 5 months we gave her supplementary feeds at night with the tube and we weaned her onto eating more food and gradually reduced the amount of food in the tube over that time. When she had been on the tube for about 5 months she was back to the weight that she had been when she was first diagnosed and they removed the tube and we just kept on feeding her on the diet that was set by the dietician, but she was extremely ill

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still and we didn't know then, but we know now, that she was actually really only halfway through the re-feeding process. We actually only got half the weight gain that she needed, but we really felt very stuck then. The doctor felt that he really didn't have too many more answers. The therapist that we had been to, we had actually been having therapy 4 days a week through most of that process with a different therapist. She felt that she really wasn't getting anywhere so the doctor referred us to a new therapist so we started working with her and we changed doctors and the new doctor tried her on a new drug regime and we travelled to see a psychiatrist who was supposed to be an expert in eating disorders but none of the things they suggested helped. We were stuck in a situation where she was maintaining her weight with resistance but she wasn't gaining and she wasn't improving and she was in a terrible terrible state. She was very ill

I- How were you feeling at that point, you and your husband?

M- Oh we were desperate. We knew that we had to be able to find something better than this, that this wasn't going to be how her life was going to be but we just didn't know quite where to turn. We had been reading all the way through this, and I actually read your book and I read the Lock and Le Grange book, and my husband's instincts were always to eat more and she needed to gain more weight but we just didn't have the clinical support for that view, so we were stuck basically. Then we heard of a new psychiatrist, a new child psychiatrist in town, so we took our daughter to see him, and coincidentally he was just starting up a program of Maudsley treatment so that's how we started on the new treatment regime.

I- And how did that go?

M- Well it was difficult but this doctor was terrific. I just remember this amazing feeling of relief when he looked us in the eye and said I think I can help your daughter. This is what you need to do, and we started on a Maudsley re-feeding program. We didn't actually increase the variety of her meals very much, she was on quite a set eating plan from the dietician and by the time we started Maudsley she was so locked into OCD rigid behaviours and she was terrified of change, that was almost more frightening for her than the fear of eating, so with his blessing we really didn't change her plan very much but we increased the calories significantly by additives, a drink with each meal, quite a calorie rich drink and she ended up putting on weight quite steadily. About 6 months after we started with him she reached the goal weight and she was still very ill. We were quite scared as we didn't see any sign of improvement as she gained weight. She was still very ill, very locked into her OCD behaviour, but he just said keep the weight up and just give it time and 6 weeks after she regained her goal weight she started to smile which was unbelievable. We hadn't seen her smile for a very long time and from that point on she started to have steady improvement. She started to become more social, we could hardly get her out of the house up until this time. She started to wear ordinary clothes, she had been only wearing a very restricted range of baggy clothes for 18 months, and she just started coming back to us. It was staggering to watch actually.

I- How did you and your husband feel, watching that process?

M- We were absolutely amazed. We couldn't believe the difference that just maintaining her weight and eating balanced meals was making on her. She improved socially and she improved in her general demeanour but she still stayed quite restricted with her eating, quite concerned about her eating until probably 3 months after she had been at her healthy weight, and then quite suddenly we had this amazing 2 week period. She just started to eat more freely, all these OCD rules that she lived by, that absolutely seemed to be almost set in concrete just melted away one by one through this 2 week period. She just came to us one night and she said she didn't want to eat her meal plan, she wanted to sit down and eat dinner with us. We were having a roast dinner and from that point on she never looked back.

I- Wow! What were your relationships over this period?

M- She was very very angry with us throughout the entire re-feeding process. She was angry with herself and she hated us. She was very miserable, sometimes quite aggressive with us, quite abusive, verbally abusive, throughout the entire re-feeding process but when she started to come good those periods didn't disappear completely straight away, she still had melt down periods from about 5 months from when she regained her weight but they became less and less frequent and they finally disappeared altogether. When she first started to re-feed herself she was still touchy with us if we would talk to

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her about food and what she was eating, and that gradually diminished over time and she got more relaxed and easy going about it. But after she had been re-feeding herself quite well for a year and seemingly quite well recovered she actually had a relapse during the last few weeks of her final year at school, but this was very different. She actually came to us and explained that she was having a return of the feelings and that she was having problems and she asked for our help. With a little bit of help from us she was able to turn it around very quickly herself that time.

I- Can you describe her now?

M- Yes, now she is just full of life. It was 8 months ago that she had that period of relapse and I feel like her recovery is much stronger now since that time. She looks after her own diet completely and she's actually having a gap year between school and university and she's waitressing so she's working odd hours, but she's still managing to maintain a great weight. She makes sure that she comes home and eats her meals after she comes home from work. She's looking great and full of beans and happiness and really looking forward to going away to university next year.

I- What is your advice to other parents?

M- I think the most important thing is to be really persistent and to find the right professional help. The bare minimum for that is to find someone who has a treatment approach that makes nutrition and weight gain the first priority and encourages the family to stay involved. They would be my first 2 criteria. It's also very important for parents to understand that this is a brain illness, that it's not the child's fault, it's not their fault, it's just bad luck basically that this has happened to them, and there is enormous hope that they can improve their child's condition. One of the things that helped us understand our daughter's illness was to try to understand the child's inability to see that they are sick and the fact that they are resisting treatment are just symptoms of the disease, it's not a flaw in their character or anything that will have to be dealt with later on. These are just symptoms of the illness and once you understand that it makes dealing with the illness much easier.

I- Thank you very very much.

M- No worries.

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Audio #10: “ For Lent she decided to give up all junk food ...when we sat down for Easter dinner she just couldn’t do it”

A mother in the Midwest US describes a 16 year old’s recovery from restrictive anorexia using a partial hospitalization program and home-based re-feeding .

Interviewer- Good morning.

Mother- Good morning. How are you?

I- I’m very well. Thank you for agreeing to this interview.

M- Sure, it’s my pleasure.

I- Tell us a little bit about your family.

M- We are a family of 5, we have a mom and a dad, we have an 18 year old daughter who is currently at college, a 16 year old daughter who is currently in recovery from anorexia and a 10 year old daughter.

I- Can you tell us something about how you discovered the illness?

M- In hindsight, of course we always wish we could have seen signs earlier. She’s currently 16 years old and as she was 14 and entering her freshmen year at high school she did announce to us that she would like to become vegetarian and we really didn’t think a whole lot of it. We had just been at a church camp where there were other practising vegetarians and we just assumed she kind of picked that up there and thought it would be something different to try so we didn’t really see it as a problem. We kind of went along with it for a while and then as time went by we noticed that she started to restrict some other food groups and just decided that she was eating healthy which even at that time we didn’t think was such a bad idea, but over xmas break we noticed that she was eating less and less and had lost weight. At that time she was currently playing 2 sports at the same time so we attributed the weight loss to that, and you know, that she just basically needed to eat more. We talked to her about it and she told us there wasn’t a problem and it would be OK and she would try her best and that sort of thing, so as time went by we noticed a little bit of an improvement but then when we really started to notice that something was not right was Lent season was coming up and for Lent she had decided to give up all junk food and she stuck to it, more than all of friends and anybody else who quickly fell off the wagon on the junk food. Then we noticed that something was wrong and we took her to the paediatrician .The paediatrician thought it really wasn’t a problem – they ran some tests and everything came back OK, but when it really came down to knowing an eating disorder was with her, living in our home, was Easter Sunday when it came time that the Lent season was over and it was time to eat whatever you wanted, we sat down for dinner and she just couldn’t do it, and then we knew we had a serious problem and things just .. On Monday morning we started making phone calls to our paediatrician again who really told us she didn’t have an experience in eating disorders and referred us to a behavioural health center. She went in for an evaluation, 2 days later, and they told us it was probably just an adolescent in her strive to become independent because she wasn’t medically compromised at that time. All of the tests they had run had come back normal.

I- Um.

M- So then, but yet we had a daughter who day by day was losing weight and we didn’t realise at this point of time that things were really out of her control, and she was quickly spiralling downward until eventually in May we put her in a partial hospitalisation program at an eating disorder clinic .

I- Um-hum.

M- And then from there we knew nothing of any type of family based therapy, we knew nothing of the Maudsley method. In frantic internet searches on how to help my daughter we stumbled across the Laura Collins website, the Maudsley

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parents website and the Around the Table forum where we gained a lot of knowledge on how we could help our daughter. Once she was released from the program, she was there for three months, and she came home in August, where then we continued to re-feed at home and then to get back to a healthy weight.

I- And how did it go? How hard was it?

M- It was extremely hard; it was the hardest thing that I hope I ever have to do in my life and our family. I hope it is the hardest thing we ever have to come across in our lives, but just because we all loved her so much and wanted to see her get healthy so badly, that even after she had been brought to a medically stable weight, she was still unable to see the severity of her illness.

I- Uh-hum.

M- It was just extremely hard to get her to the point of sheer health again.

I- What were the things that helped the most?

M- For us the things that helped the most was, first I became educated. I read the Lock and Le grange book – How to help your teenage beat an eating disorder, again I read Laura Collins – your book Eating with your Anorexic and I will have to say the thing that helped me as a parent to be able to help my daughter was Around the Dinner Table forum where I could really learn from other families who had been through the exact same thing that we were going through, how they got through day to day, how they got through meal after meal after meal and it was just getting through each meal that I needed support in, that I knew that I was doing the right thing in continuing to feed my daughter, and continued to gain weight and to be healthy again. I would say that was the hardest.

I- What kind of help professionally did you get that was useful?

M- We were very fortunate to have a clinic who actually, although they weren't advertised as family based, they did incorporate the family in treatment. I think by me learning how I could help my daughter and me reading up on things, I was able to go into the clinic and say this is what I would like to do and I would like to sit in on my daughter's nutritionist appointments and that sort of thing, although I really don't think it was common practice there they welcomed it and we are very fortunate to be able to have that. We had a wonderful nutritionist who did not engage in eating disorder discussion with my daughter. It was full nutrition, fulltime, not compromising a bit on entering full fat foods into her diet, you know not compromising on what she needed but going full force in full nutrition. You know we had a lot of help that way, though I had to really bring it out and ask for it and asked to be involved more. The clinicians, once we got her into the clinic, were very helpful in that sort and then she did have an individual therapist that she worked with also, so that did help her.. Now that she's been medically stable or I guess her target weight and beyond for so many months, she's a lot better able to rationalize and I think now is when the therapy is actually helping her the most.

I- Tell us about her now.

M- Now she is my daughter again. She is weight restored, she is active, she's social. She's back in school. She's playing her sports again which we had taken her out of, her athletics, for an entire school year which was extremely hard because she had begun to excessively exercise. On top of her restricting her food intake and her calories she was exercising extreme amounts. That was very hard for her because she identified herself as an athlete and taking that away was very hard on all of us but she knew that this was a serious illness. She's back to playing the sports that she loves, she's going out with her friends, she's able to eat out in restaurants. She is a normal teenager right now (laughter).

I- How are your relationships inside the family now?

M- Inside the family we have normal teenage friction now. During the time when my daughter was very ill things were extremely tense in our household. Once she was out of the PHP program where they fed her and it was time to come home

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to where we were in charge of her eating things were, in the least to say, extremely tense. You know, with having 2 other daughters at home at that time they did not understand fully what was going on. Relationships did deteriorate at that time but we kept pushing forward in hopes that once that her mental status became rational again and she was able to think clearly again that we would repair any damage that was done at that time later, and miraculously we have normal teenage arguments now, about curfew and about things like that, where for a long time everything revolved around food as far as any disagreements or anything like that. What really helped was for us to tell our other 2 daughters that our daughter was ill with a disease that she did not choose to have this eating disorder, that it was an illness, a brain disease, something that she had no control over, rather than it be her choice to, you know, appear to be disrupting the family. Once we gave our daughters that insight, our other 2, they were better able to help their sister recover, rather than blame her for any disruption in the family.

I- Is she still in treatment?

M- She is out of all treatment around the eating disorder specifically. She does see a therapist who is not involved with the eating disorder clinic at all, and this is just trying to help her with coping mechanisms just for daily stressors or things that aren't going well for her that don't revolve around the eating disorder, managing her emotions and that sort of thing. We have not seen a nutritionist for several months now and the therapy for her is helping a lot, we go about once a month. The main thing though too is we are still very cautious, my daughter does not eat consecutive meals outside the home. She does eat on her own, maybe several times a week, but not consistently. We still keep an eye that way. She just starting back eating lunch at school on her own and we're very proud and have been able to handle that this year. The entire school year last year she ate supervised so she's taking several steps in the right direction.

I- What's your advice for other parents?

M- My advice is to act as quickly as you can. I think there was a certain amount of denial on our part. We were a normal family in the Midwest. We never dreamed that this could happen to our child. Act quickly when you first notice that things aren't right and you find that it revolves around their eating. Find, if possible, clinicians that are very educated in the newest treatments of eating disorders that don't cling to the outdated information that it's a choice; you know that it came from controlling parents and those sort of things. Stay up to date, get somewhere where they have up to date information. Separate your daughter or your son from their eating disorder once the eating disorder is diagnosed because it is out of their control. And when you can do that and you can learn to remain calm in the face of eating disorder discussion or arguments, try to remember that your son or daughter is not the eating disorder and they need to be saved from this very serious condition and to just keep full nutrition 100% of the time and this is for restricting anorexia which is what my daughter had. You know, once we figured out what we needed to do, not give in to the eating disorder and to keep pushing forward through each meal we were best able to help my daughter.

I- Thank you very much for doing this interview.

M- Thank you very much Laura.

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Audio #11: “As much as I was told to look at what my parents had done, ultimately I blamed myself”

A patient in her mid-20’s describes years of treatment and the use of the Family –based Maudsley approach. DC area US.

Interviewer- Tell me a little bit about yourself before you became ill.

Woman- I was the youngest child. I had an older brother who was about 4 1/2 years older than I was. We both lived with my parents in a basic suburban town in the Midwest. Things were very normal, I mean there weren’t any parents dieting. Our family certainly had its court, but there wasn’t dysfunctional, there wasn’t the traditional controlling mother or anything like that. It was just a fairly normal, fairly happy family.

I- What age were you when you think you became ill?

W- The restrictions and exercising sessions really took off when I was a junior in college, but I also like to look back even a few years previous to when I was about 13 or 14 when I developed obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and that kind of anxiety, the obsessions and compulsions really, I believe, set the stage for the eating disorder as much as any sort of stereotypical desire to lose 5 pounds.

I- Can you describe the different types of treatment that you have had?

W- When I first got ill I basically crashed and burned pretty quickly. I lost a large amount of weight in a very short amount of time. Within the first I’d say 9 or so months I had been hospitalised twice for several weeks at a time and then had done a residential treatment program for about 2 months and all of it was based on kind of the assumption that these restrictions and purging and what have you were serving some sort of function in my life, that I was trying to control things and I just needed to make the choice to eat and if I looked at my family and I looked at, you know found enough things to basically blame and look at, then I would suddenly be able to magically eat again. That’s really not how things work. After the first year I did manage to stabilize enough, I did manage to graduate from college. I took a year off, I went onto graduate school and all in that time I had developed a bunch of medical problems and started on medications that caused weight gains which really kind of freaked me out and I slid into a kind of bizarre pattern of bingeing, purging and restricting, overexercising and I was kind of holding onto recovery by the skin of my teeth. Eventually I started a new stressful job and at the same time a developed a relapse of mono so I just got so tired that I really stopped eating again. I didn’t intend to try and lose weight, I had been fearing a relapse for a long time so I was still under the impression that you know I just wasn’t working hard enough in therapy, wasn’t really choosing to get better, didn’t want to get better therefore I was still relapsing. Ultimately about a month after I was diagnosed with mono I found myself in a pretty desperate situation again. I went into residential treatment, this time for about 7 months.

I- At the time, what did you believe caused your illness, or was driving your illness?

W- Its kind of hard to remember exactly what I thought. I think I was as confused as my parents as to what was really going on. I didn’t have any answers. To me, when I first started therapy, I thought it kind of odd the fact that my mother who loved me so much would cause me to stop eating but I didn’t have any answers either, so when the therapist told me that and it sounded reasonable enough, I mean my mom and I were really close, I guess I just sort of went along with it because it was an answer even if it wasn’t the greatest one, and so I thought that I wasn’t trying hard enough, making the choice to get better, that I just didn’t want it. I didn’t want to leave the eating disorder behind. There are any number of reasons, there are strange gaps in my memory, where being so malnourished for so long that there are gaps in my thinking so it’s kind of hard to remember exactly what I was thinking. . As much as I was told to look at what my parents might have done I ultimately blamed myself for being so short sighted that I wouldn’t see that I would get hooked into the eating disorder, that I was putting my parents through all this torment because I just couldn’t choose to eat. It was when I finally got out of residential treatment I actually started to relapse very shortly after the 7 month residential treatment stay that had basically bankrupted my family because it wasn’t covered at all by insurance and it was about \$1000 a day. The math is

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pretty easy to do, it was a lot of money. So literally within 2 or 3 days of getting home I didn't really gain the weight that I needed to. I thought this was great that they wanted me to look at what were the psychological reasons that I was choosing not to eat and once I addressed those I would of course be totally happy to eat and dig in and be "where's the cheesecake?" and that's kind of how the events would play out. Well of course I was fine with that because I was afraid of eating. Anything that would put that off was absolutely fantastic to me. I wouldn't object, and didn't object actually, and so I really didn't gain much weight. I was discharged at a low but marginal safe weight which translated that I probably wouldn't drop dead from being underweight but I was certainly not at a safe weight for optimal health. So after I got back from residential treatment I saw the same dietician that I had been seeing for years who really is a wonderful wonderful woman. She got my discharge weight, she saw what the scales said and she grew very very scared. At the next session she basically presented me with an option, she said you know unless we do something to get your weight back to a level where you can be free of these obsessive thoughts about food and weight, this is what your life is probably going to look like. It's just a never ending cycle of treatment and relapse, treatment and relapse. She said I'm going to recommend hospitalisation at this point because I know your pattern so you can either eat in the hospital or I will talk to your mom and you can eat at home. I had just turned 26. I was planning on moving out and getting a new job and everything. Ultimately I decided to go home and eat with my family and basically have my mom take charge of the amounts of food that I would be eating and for me the decision was fairly simple. I knew I was really kind of running out of options. If I was going to have to eat and gain weight I would rather eat my mom's cooking which was pretty good than the hospital's cafeteria food. (laughter). That really made up my mind, and so my dietician called my mom and the three of us sat down and kind of hammered out a basic plan.

I- How did it go?

W- It was rough. My mom was not used to being thought of as competent in dealing with her ill child she was kind of astounded at the sudden transition from the person who is causing this disease and the person who is now going to help fix it, and I don't think she quite knew what to do. It was hard on me as because on the one hand I did want to escape the misery of the eating disorder, I just didn't want to have to gain any weight. (Laughter). Which of course would have been absolutely wonderful in my mind, and I had slowly kind of gotten to the point where I was just willing to throw in the towel and surrender to the process. I also had the support of an amazing therapist who I had just started seeing. I had started seeing her because she practised a form of therapy called dialectical behavioural therapy which is a very skill based approach and it turns out ironically that she was the only Maudsley trained therapist in our state, and so she was actually in a perfect position to help our family. Her approach was basically to treat the fact that I was underweight and obsessed about food and very very phobic and rigid in my eating patterns, she just treated it simply as a problem to be solved, not who caused it, not what might have happened 20 years ago that maybe started things in motion but what are we going to do to help you eat. In this case it was how are we going to help you deal with the anxiety that's caused by the fact that you are eating again, how are we going to help your mom feel competent to actually take charge of these things, you know how are we going to help your family not go batty from all of the changes that are going on and the fact that no one knows quite what is happening and it was all very very quick. I mean within the matter of probably 4 or 5 days we went from floundering to actually having a plan, and it wasn't a perfect plan, it wasn't perfectly executed, Things were eventually moving in the right direction.

I- How long did you all do that?

W- It was interesting because about 2 or 3 weeks after I had started eating again I had gotten somewhat more stable, somewhat more used to regular eating and I had determined that I wanted to go start this job. So I decided that it was about ½ an hour from home so certainly I was going home every week seeing my therapist, we would see the dietician and my mom would oftentimes cook a bunch of food for me to take home. I did that for a while and I managed to maintain my weight even if I didn't gain, even though I definitely still needed to gain, but the problem was I really wasn't able at that time to make the choice to eat what I needed to every day and to really commit to recovery. I was still far too anxious around food and eating to be able to make that choice on a consistent level. I started feeling really depressed again. Certainly my low weight didn't help with any of that. It was also getting into the winter months, I didn't realise that I had long history of seasonal depression. I certainly suffered some depression throughout the year but during winter it would get really intense and really really bad. So I stopped sleeping, I finally was just feeling despair at the fact that things would ever

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get better. My parents were really slowly trying to learn not to blame themselves, but I still blamed me for everything that was going on, so all the money that had been spent on treatment I still thought that despite everything that I was hearing and learning in therapy that it was still ultimately my fault. I knew that things weren't working the way I had hoped that they would, I wasn't getting better, I was spinning my wheels and I just felt such despair that ultimately I took a massive overdose one night. I was just at the end of my rope, I hadn't been sleeping. I really don't remember a whole lot of what went on and I ended up in a psychiatric unit for 2 weeks after I got out of the critical care unit, cause I certainly meant what I was doing. When I got out of there it was then that, they speak in therapy a lot of hitting rock bottom. I wish I hadn't had to hit rock bottom, I wish the system hadn't been around to expect me to hit rock bottom before things started changing, but at that point that was pretty much as rock bottom as you could get. I was so depressed I wasn't talking, it was just really bad, and my treatment team at that point kind of said you need to gain weight. This is not going to go on any longer. I did start eating again, I went back to work part time after about 6 weeks and it was shortly after new years and everyone had started on a massive weight loss contest. Everyone in the office was trying to lose weight.

I- Wow.

W- I got back to posters saying nothing tastes as good as thin seals and eventually I quit my job and moved back home fulltime. I was almost 27 at this point. In about 4 months I had gained all the weight that I needed to to return to the weight I had been before the eating disorder plus a couple of pounds of what was called relapse insurance. It wasn't like all of a sudden my vision became clear and I was requesting that proverbial cheesecake that I had been told I would do when I had worked through all of these psychological issues, but I was able to deal with the eating disorder thoughts and deal with the body image. I was able to see it was in fact distorted even if I didn't understand that I was in fact not a fat blob. I understood that the fact that I looked in the mirror and saw that was probably incorrect even if I couldn't see the actual accurate picture. I was able to more willingly get the food that I needed to and accept the fact that I would need to stay at this weight which again I was able to understand that it was probably right for me and my health and my frame and my history even though I thought it was grotesquely overweight and it was also because I knew if I started slipping again then my parents would step right back in and I would ultimately be required to gain the weight back so in that sense I was able to quiet the inner voice that was telling me all the time to hide your food, to lie about what you're eating, to exercise when no one is looking. I was able to really talk back to the eating disorder voice and say yes I can do that now but in a couple of weeks when the weight loss starts to show up I'm just going to go back to having to eat more again and I really didn't want that. I hated the process of re-feeding. I wasn't really able to look at rejoicing in the joys of fried chicken. It was torture. It was terrible. I guess the best analogy I had was, when I was in high school I burnt my hand really bad. After the blisters and everything healed you had to kind of rub of the dead skin called debridement so the wound could heal, it really hurts. It really hurts, excruciatingly physically painful, except your wound won't heal unless you do it. It's kind of re-feeding is the same process. It really hurts but there is no other way to heal.

I-May I ask how you felt about your parents being in such a parental role at that age?

W- The age didn't make things any easier especially since a lot of my friends were getting married, they were in medical school, they were touring the country, and you know Broadway musicals, all these number of things, going on to have these amazing lives and here I was almost 27, living at home and not able to feed myself, heck I hadn't had a boyfriend. I was dating Mr. Coffee. It was basically the only kind of long term relationship that I'd had. (laughter) What really helped is knowing that my parents didn't resent me for it, for making them all of a sudden have to feed this attentive child that they had sent off to college almost 10 years ago. That really helped and also I got mad because I liked it. I really didn't like that I felt relieved that my parents were taking charge. That really, really ticked me off a lot (laughter). I didn't want to like it. I still had all those beliefs from all those years of therapy that my parents were still the problem. I never fully accepted it until on the one hand it was nice not to have to kind of evaluate them and kind of go into therapy with what did mom do this week, but at the same time I still had that kind of unconscious belief that I should really be hating my parents for this and I certainly hated having to eat, but ultimately I realised that if I was going to have to eat I would rather have my parents help me eat than some care technician in the hospital. They were very talented caring people in the hospital, they were very amazing people, very supportive, but doing it at home made it seem more normal. I wasn't getting served food on trays, you know I was getting food served on the plate that chipped when I was 7 years old, and there were kind of 2 other advantages that I really think. One was kind of paradoxically made the anxiety worse was that I knew there was no getting out of

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eating these foods that I had previously forbidden myself .In treatment in the hospital and things like that I would grudgingly eat butter,you know I would grudgingly eat the Oreo cookies or I would eat the brownies .I would make it ok,I would not freak out about it because I told myself that the second you get out of this program you're not eating any of that other stuff. This is very temporary,you're only going to have to go through this for the, you know 2 weeks that the stupid doctors are going to think that they can tell you what to eat and how to eat and make you fat,but eating in a home environment it was kind of,I had to face those fears .I had to ultimately make peace with butter .I had to make peace that butter was going to be in my fridge and I was going to use it .It wasn't going to be that strange tub of yellow stuff that sat in the back until it turned green. It really sucked and it made me a lot more fearful than when I was in treatment and I could kind of rationalise that this was going to be a very very temporary thing. The other benefit of just kind of being presented with food even though I did have some input into was to be served, my mom had ultimate veto power over how much I got and certainly what was served so now even though eating in some situations still causes me a lot of anxiety I'm actually able to go out of restaurants and able to go eat with other people.

I-How are things now?

W-Things are really really good. They're not perfect. I had been sick for about 8years.There are still kind of rituals, habits and anxieties that have just been ingrained over the years which I am still working on but it is much much better .I eat pretty freely .I eat pretty much everything and what I don't eat are almost entirely things I don't like .My parents and I get along really well. We still talk on the phone basically every day if not more often .In the past year I have moved from home to the Washington DC area to go to graduate school . I have been able to maintain my weight during that time. I met some people who were in my classes and we hung out and I'm even seeing a nice guy for the first time. At 27, almost 28 things are very very different .They're much much better.

I-What's your advice to parents?

W-If you see something going wrong with your child trust your instincts, there is probably something going on. Maybe it's an eating disorder,maybe it isn't but you know your child best and get it checked out .Also really I think it's important to address an eating disorder as soon as possible .Don't be dissuaded by a therapy system that really thinks your child is fully rational about food. Don't be dissuaded by therapists who tell you that you need to wait for your child to choose to get better,that they need to hit rock bottom,that they need to really feel the consequences of their choosing not to eat because it really isn't a choice and they certainly are not going to be able to make it,and it's very hard to understand when somebody like me who's in college,was second in their class, had proceeded to internship,was on a Fulbright scholarship,all of a sudden could not be able to feed herself .A very instinctive thing to do is you get hungry and you eat and to suddenly face the fact that something is going on with your child that is really preventing him or her from doing that, it's kind of a shock to the system .Also understand that it's a biological illness . Your child is ill, they are ill and they are afraid. They are not trying to do this to get revenge at you,they are not trying to do this just to get attention,or just look a little better .It certainly might seem that way on the outside but an eating disorder is a real disease, it is not something that your child can feel their way out,they can think their way out of, that if they do all the right things in therapy,think about it hard enough, all of a sudden they get an answer and the angel will come down and the curtains will part and there will be light and trumpets and harps,but no it won't happen like that,that won't come until they start eating right. The very illness that they have makes them unable to choose and they need someone to make that choice for them. If you had some test results back from the doctor that said your child had 10 cancer cells in their body you wouldn't wait around to see if it got into an actual 1 cm size tumour that could be easily cut out, you would start treating that cancer right away.

I-Thank you very very much.

W- You're welcome.

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Audio #12: “It was about love”

A patient in her early 20's describes family relationships, the Family – Based Maudsley approach, and what it feels like to be recovered. Utah, US

Interviewer- Thank you for agreeing to this interview.

Woman- You're very welcome .I think Maudsley gave me a real relationship with my parents ,to help me see them as people and loving parents, to see them as who they are. I had never really seen them that way before, so I think if there is anyone out there with either a family member with an eating disorder or a person who has an eating disorder who wishes they could have relationships with their family members again or wishes they could have a relationship with their eating disordered sibling or child who they're afraid they've lost,don't lose hope because once that person becomes healthy again not only is there a chance to have a relationship with that person,that sibling,that daughter, that brother, that son,that sister, not only is there a chance for a relationship but a chance for a relationship that is beyond anything that you could hope or wish for, that is full of love and everything that comes when a relationship is a good one that you could hope for. Yeah there's friction definitely, I mean I'm not talking about skipping in the sunlight and rainbows and butterflies,I mean it's not going to be all the time happy but it's going to be real and it's going to be good . I think the only way to get to that point though,to have that real relationship, is to get that person healthy and one successful method to get someone healthy is with family therapy, so what do you have to lose. I do think that a kid can get, or an adult as well, can decide they want to be healthy and let their parents in to help them then not only are they going to get better and have a whole new relationship with their parents, even better than what it was before they got sick because you start to have a lot of insight into just how much your parents truly love you and want you around and how much they need you and how much you need them. It can bring a whole new level of love and trust into a relationship, more so than just a normal healthy parent child relationship might evolve. I had already been in rehab twice and when I signed on to do Maudsley my mind was in a good place and I was really committed to not half living but whole living which is why I thought Maudsley would be my ticket to do instead of just another rehab where I would gain weight again and then just lose it again, whatever, so I mean I guess every family is different in it's experience. I was just fortunate to know that I really wanted to get well and that my parents they only wanted that for me too. I mean it's not easy I think for any child or parent to do this and I think there are a lot of risks.

I- Can you describe the therapists role with the family and with you during that process?

W- A therapist's role especially in our family therapy, it seemed that we would go to Chicago and sit in the therapist's office just to talk. She would ask me questions about school and life and everything like that, but ours was very congenial. We didn't have a lot of big blow up fights and there wasn't a whole lot of dispute over what I should weigh or what I should eat. It wasn't really anything of that so much, it was more just working on putting the relationship back together and asking questions like you would ask a friend or a co-worker or a relative. I guess that's what the therapist at the time thought that that's what she needed to do and so that's what she did because I wasn't resistant really when they told me what I needed to do or what I needed to be or what my goals were .I just accepted it because I realised it was my only way back into real life which, you know, at first I wasn't exactly thrilled with. You know the eating disorder inside of me was kind of like argggh, but a part of me just said shut up and go with it and see where it gets you, I mean your ideals in the past didn't get you very far,see how their's go and that was really successful. It turned out that what they thought would be best for me was right. In the end I had to swallow and blindly trust the therapist and my parents that they would put me in the right place and they did.

I-Tell me something about your relationship with your siblings when you were sick and then when you were better.

W- When I was sick it was always very strained. They wanted to help. Sometimes they would ignore me or, because they just didn't know what to do or what to say or how to deal, I mean how does a person reconcile with their loved one when they are intentionally hurting themselves and refuse to stop or don't see anything wrong with it . I mean how can you just sit there are pretend like everything's ok when you're literally watching the person, your brother or your sister, who you care and love for so much just dying and tinkering with death and you know nothing you could say would help so what's the

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point of saying anything at all .There was often a lot of separation and stress and strain. I can remember for example I was with my sister in Chicago,hanging out with her a lot, that was all great but I could always just tell that she just never really felt completely comfortable around me but now when I go to visit her,you know,things are wonderful. We get along smashingly well, there's no tension or stress, there's just laughing and talking about boys and whatever, life and each other because I'm no longer constantly thinking about food or how I'm going to burn it off or anything like that . I can be normal around her, she can sense that,and we can just live like normal healthy people and not have some sort of barrier or wall that separates us, and she wants to spend more time with me as well now because it was really hard for me,the person with an eating disorder and having a twin, and I could no longer be myself around her, I wasn't me and I could feel that she pulled away as a result because you don't want to hang out with an eating disorder,you want to hang out with your sister. It's a whole new lease on our relationship, we've come much closer as a result .I consider my sister now to be my best friend above all other people on this planet who I would do anything for and cannot imagine my life without and I never felt that way, not even before I was sick did I understand how much she really meant to me.

I- You have another sibling too, yes?

W- I do, I have an older brother .We're close. I never have been as close to him as my twin sister obviously and I could always tell that he was very caring and he tried to help me in any way he could, you know, but I could tell it was always very frustrating . He was also always,I wouldn't call it talking down to me,but always walking on eggshells with me , never ever willing to make a joke,because my brother can be kind of a sarcastic playful individual, common in my family and he stopped joking with me and was very very afraid and was always just very like, like I said, tiptoeing around always afraid to say the wrong thing that would set me off emotionally because he was so afraid of my mental state,and now we joke around,we tease each other,we poke at each other and it's a much more relaxed,casual,funny banter kind of relationship that we have . I love him very very much and think the world of him and I'm utterly grateful for all of his love and support as well as all of my family. I could not have gotten to where I am today, and my relationship with my parents is tremendous. I can't even begin to talk about it,I mean before even I got sick, I always especially viewed my mom as someone who was just overprotective,obsessive yet not there simultaneously because she worked a lot when I was a kid and she denies this up and down and she might even tell me now if I said this to her now,well that's the disease talking that's not you talking which is the most frustrating thing that I have ever heard was said tome in my entire life. Whenever she says that's not you talking,that's the disease it makes me want to grrr hit something .Getting back to my relationship with my parents now,especially my mom is so much better because like I said before I got sick I resented them .It's normal for a child to resent their parents though everyone hopes that doesn't happen with the best intentions but it's almost like a rite of passage .You have to, at least for maybe a week you have to resent your parents about something (laughter) . For me though it was a little more extended than a week, you know, years. As a kid too I was overweight and I clearly remember my mom making comments to me about my weight,being overweight ,and this is just my memory so there was always a lot of tension there,but now that I am healthy and assured in my health and myself and in the way I am as a woman,I see my mom and dad for who they are, loving,incredible,spectacular, funny,gracious, giving, generous, intelligent,witty,sometimes argumentative, sometimes frustrating but all around just wonderful wonderful people who I am blessed to know,not just as my parents,but as friends,and I never truly counted them as my friends before . They were always objects kind of in the way of what I wanted to do or getting what I wanted to get and I don't see them as that anymore. Perhaps that's part of maturing from child to adult or maturing from sick to healthy.

I-How did you feel about them during the re-feeding, when they took over control?

W- That was always different throughout the day .You know, first thing in the day it was like oh god I have to eat breakfast, especially in the beginning. You know my parents were vehicles of food yes and food that was sometimes very challenging to eat,you know like I told you I was still pretty eating disordered in my head so I couldn't really view them as people more so they were objects giving me food and were in the way of my freedom but as I began to get healthier and my focus stepped away from food and what they were going to give me and more into what we were talking about or maybe if we were watching TV I began to talk to them more,open up to them more and see them as people and not as things and I began to learn more about them and myself .In the beginning it wasn't good,it wasn't fun, it was almost like trying to eat the food with a large piece of tape over my mouth, no prongs or anything on my utensils, just like sticks and trying to work at it .It almost felt too sometimes,like here I am in this position and my parents were telling me to eat and I just saw

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them,they weren't necessarily the enemy but it almost seemed like they were asking me to do something that was insurmountable .

I-In what ways was it different to have your parents doing it than the people in a clinic?

W- Well that brings up another interesting thing. Both times,because I'm a people pleaser, especially the first treatment I have to tell you,I was so f***** hungry when I went in for the first treatment because I hadn't really eaten anything solid for maybe over 6 months,you know eaten a real plate of food,so I was happy to eat when I first got there because I was so hungry but then after a while I started to breakdown and I was eating because people were telling me to and it made them happy and I wanted them to be happy with me and I wanted to get the hell out of there so they would stop making me gain weight so if I eat and smile then they'll let me out and you know that was my mentality on the first treatment .On the second treatment center I really wanted to get healthy again . I really wanted to stop cause I had been eating disordered, either overeating or undereating for so much of my life that I just wanted to get to a normal way of living and so I went to this holistic nutritional place and that was wonderful. That really helped me reconnect with my worth as a human being, but I still hadn't reached a healthy weight while I was there so my mind was still pretty messed up. I didn't get into the healthy BMI weight range yet before they let me out because I was so underweight when I went in,I was like 75 pounds when I went in and I left there at like 102 so I was still nowhere near for my height you know a healthy weight. So I wanted to be healthy and I wanted to live healthily but my mind couldn't get there caused it was still warped from being skinny and it wasn't until Maudsley where I could get to and maintain a healthy weight and feel comfortable and happy in myself and realise that healthy living is... again when I was with my parents at first it was like just shut up and eat,it'll make them happy and ultimately of all the people that I want to please most in the world it's obviously my parents no matter how much they frustrate me and aggravate me,I want to make them happy,it's my f***** duty right,I'm their daughter (pardon my language) so I really want,I mean especially too once I got sick,because I never really cared about my grades before or sports before or anything, my whole mind warping to this needing to be perfect thing I started to get all straight A's because I started actually trying and I started to work really hard in sports and killed myself in sports to be like this alternate daughter and I started to pick up chores and pick up all the slack whenever I was at home and always had jobs and do whatever I could to impress them so at first when I started the whole Maudsley thing too,even though they were seemingly asking me to doing something impossible which was to eat, like tape over my mouth and hooves for hands, like it was almost impossible to get it in . I did it however way I could make my mind let me do it, I did it first you know to please them, and I would eat whatever they would serve in front of me . Some of it I tell you,my mom has a really odd palate, she made something for me that for most normal people, even my own siblings gag, she actually pushed me to eat huge volumes of food that were incredibly painful you know to swallow and then excrete all , I mean in its disgusting glory because I needed my mother to love me and be happy with me but after,especially after I moved out , towards the end of living in the house and getting in charge of all my own food again, I don't remember exactly how it stopped being about making my parents happy and helping me live the life I wanted to live and I saw food as the tool to do that and to have the mental and physical ability to go to school ,and go to grad school, and live my life and accomplish my dreams. Somewhere along the way you know I realised food was going to be the tool to do that and it was probably when I first started to take classes again .First off I was living at home, always eating everything at home, but when I started class again I had to eat lunch out .Of course, of course, I don't care what any kid out there says after they've recovered, there is always a little bit of you that thinks I could skip it. Yeah they have all the measures in the world to make sure you don't skip,they're going to weigh you , they're going to know that you've been skipping lunch because you're going to lose weight, hahaha, but all of us,though hopefully most of us don't,all of us have that little we could skip it,that kind of little uhuh because we are really at that point hopefully still very young in the recovery process, but I never did,even though there was a temptation there of course. I realised that skipping lunch would just mean I'd lose weight which means I would continue to do Maudsley longer which means that I would have to spend time in that car with my mom going on and on and on about whatever else design wise was going on in her head on the drive to Chicago and I realised that not eating was going to keep me in a perpetual cycle of not living. Not eating meant not living,not going on to do the things I wanted to do,to make friends and to go to school, to get a job and to live my life where I'm not always being dependent on my parents because that's what being sick I realised really meant. Being sick meant I had to always have to rely on my parents because I was not confident enough in myself to do anything else, so oddly enough family therapy helped me become independent within my own family, not til obviously I had fully recovered and several months after,but that's really what it was.

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I- When you, I don't know if you have looked forward to your future, if you think of having children, but if you have and your child develops an eating disorder, what would you do?

W- Well, and I might be really arrogant for saying this, but a person who has had an eating disorder I can tell now, I can see now what a person does, even if I don't know them from around, I can tell, it's just like a sixth sense or an eighth or a ninth, I'm not really sure depends on the person. If I were sensing that my daughter or son had an eating disorder, I mean a part of me thinks well I should talk to them about it, but then I know as a person who has recovered from an eating disorder that sometimes sitting down and talking to them about it can sometimes be the worst, absolute worst, thing you could do. I would hope, and I would do my best to lead by a healthy example and encourage self acceptance. If for some reason or another I had a child with a full blown eating disorder, they were really in peril; I would definitely do my hand at Maudsley because it was very successful with me. I owe my life to it now and to my parents now and I couldn't be more grateful. Does that mean I have a perfect relationship with them, no, but it is quite spectacular and I wouldn't change a thing about our relationship at all, in any way, shape or form. I love my parents, you know I'm not happy about everything, but I mean I'm very very content. I don't necessarily think that Maudsley is a cure all by any means, I think everyone's different and I think all 3 attempts at recovery were what I needed. I needed the first treatment centre and the second treatment center and family therapy to put me where I am today. That was my journey and for other people that would be different. I know in some cases Maudsley cannot be successful in a family by so far as a parent just doesn't care. I've been to therapy and in treatment centers where their parents don't give a damn. They sign the cheque and that's all there is, but they still manage to get healthy regardless. I mean I know this for a fact that without family therapy it's a lot harder. I think the ultimate cure-all for an eating disorder is love whether not it comes from a parent or you finally recognise it within yourself that that's what you need to beat it, or you decide you want to love a child and you can't do that unless you are healthy. There is a whole number of reasons, but family therapy I think is so successful because it's rooted in love. As long as I can get my child to love again and love themselves again then I think they'll have a fighting chance, whether that be through family therapy which would be my first option or some other way. If the parents start to help a kid get healthy and they incur a lot of resistance, and then a part of them I'm sure will be afraid my child is going to hate me forever, I mean here they are throwing mashed potatoes at me, this is day one, what the hell is going to happen to my family reminding the parent that the kid's brain isn't really working right and it's warped, and it will take time for that to get better will help, but in the case of my family, and my relationship with my parents, it all comes from a place of love and that's finally what helped me through. It even helped me see at times with my mom in the past, back from when I was overweight and she would make comments about that, and realise even now that that came from a place of love, not contempt or scorn or ridicule. That came from a place where I want my daughter to be happy, and clearly she's not happy right now, so maybe if she changed this, maybe if she changed that, then my daughter would be happy. I realise now everything in my entire life has all, all been the root of it for our relationship, for her and me and our relationship. It's not always been successful, but fortunately for us with Maudsley it was. It did get me to a place where I was healthy and happy and put me where I am now which I could not be more grateful for because I feel f***** fabulous now, living in my apartment and going to grad school and you know if you had said back when I weighed 80lbs or something that this is where I was going to end up and that I would weigh what I weigh and I would be happy I would have thought you were crazy but you know what back then I was crazy so what kind of a judge of character is that really?

I- Thank you so much.

W- You're welcome.

I- Have a fantastic, fantastic day.

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Audio #13: “I was so surprised to learn that I had anorexia ... It scared me.”

An 18 year old on her way to college describes her recovery. Oregon US.

Interviewer- Good evening.

Woman- Hello.

I-It’s wonderful to add your story to the F.E.A.S.T. website. May I ask what area of the world you live in?

W- I live in Oregon right now.

I- How old are you?

W- I just turned 18.

I- Congratulations .How many people are there in your family?

W-There are 4 including myself.

I- And what age were you when you became ill?

W - I was in eighth grade.

I- I would love to hear about your recovery.

W- I was first diagnosed with anorexia in eighth grade but it probably started a good year or so before that so even when I was 12, so somewhere in the middle of middle school, so I wasn’t diagnosed with it until I was pretty ill, and as soon as I was diagnosed with it I was sent to hospital for two weeks so that my vitals could get closer to normal. After 2 weeks of the hospital stay I was put into an inpatient treatment center facility a couple of hours from where I lived normally, so that was a Monday through Friday thing .We would stay there all during the day then at night we were allowed to go home, although I couldn’t cause I lived a couple of hours away. Well during the whole hospital stay and then inpatient I was so surprised to learn that I had anorexia that I was just completely compliant with everything, I mean it scared me when they first diagnosed me because I honestly had no idea what was going on. I knew I didn’t feel very good as I do usually, I never had a lot of energy, I really couldn’t think very well but I had no idea what the problem was, so when I was diagnosed it just scared me because the first thing that came into my mind was gosh people die from this and so I just wanted to get better. I actually went through everything fairly fast, mentally I got better pretty quickly considering it was the physical part that kept me inpatient the longest because there was a target weight for everyone to get to before you graduate from inpatient to outpatient and I had trouble getting up to that weight .It ended up being very very silly little reason, I was carrying my bags too far or something but as soon as I stopped that I got to the right place and then managed to go to outpatients which was nice because that meant I could actually go home .I only had to come up for appointments multiple days during the week but I could actually sleep in my own bed again,and I got to go back to school and graduate from eighth grade with my class but just almost a month after leaving inpatient I started feeling a lot better on my own,not even needing as many outpatient appointments and the plan the treatment centre that I went to had a very specific meal plan,and for the first month I stuck by that really religiously but after that I started going off it and I was completely fine, and so for my freshman year high school I was completely stable. I was doing perfectly well, I really had almost no eating disorder thoughts, like it seemed that everything went back to normal,but then the second semester of my sophomore year- well most of my sophomore year actually I relapsed and ended up having to get back to the inpatient center which was kind of frustrating .

I- Do you remember what your thoughts were about the eating disorder then?

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W- I knew I was relapsing but I felt that since I knew what it was I was less afraid of it, so I had more control over it .It was kind of an illusion, it was not exactly true. So as it came back I didn't feel it was a problem yet,I just kept on thinking if it went on a little further I would be able to get a hold of it,but I never did . The first time I was just so afraid of it that I just wanted to get rid of it but the second time I knew what it was and I wasn't afraid of it so I almost want to say I didn't have as much of a drive to get rid of it . So I went through the inpatient treatment in about the same time that I did the first time and when I graduated from that I was doing well physically but I was not better mentally at all,and ever since then I've struggled with it mentally. Just very recently I have started becoming more stable .I would be stable off and on but there would be times when I would flip and flip and it really freaked out the doctors, it freaked out my parents . I never got sent back to inpatient after sophomore year but they threatened me with it a lot because I would flip so much because I was just not completely mentally stable.

I- What do you think is making the difference?

W- Well, it's interesting .Whenever I have had something that motivates me enough, some really really strong motivation then I can usually push myself to overcome the thoughts or to overcome the eating disorder . It's hard because it's like a fight with you but if I have enough drive I can do it. It takes a lot.

I- What kind of things are that, meaningful to you?

W- For me right now it's college. I'm going to the East Coast for college so I'm going all the way across the country .I mean it scares my parents,but they're allowing me to do it on the basis that I am stable so I have to be. College is so much more important to me than eating, than my eating disorder, than how I look.

I- Can you just describe your relationship with your parents, and you have a sibling as well?

W- My relationship with my parents now is pretty good. While I was sick it wasn't very good at all. When I was younger I mean I had a very good relationship with my parents, like most younger kids love their parents,look up to their parents and that was how it was with me,and even when I was sick the first time, in eighth grade, another thing the two times I got really sick were completely different . Both times I became quieter but the first time I became even more ...I'm not quite sure of the right word but I would hang onto people more. I looked for caring and love from people more the first time, so the first time my relationship with my parents was still pretty good, but then as I entered high school I got into the teenager thing more so the freshman year my relationship with them was fine .I was a little more distant as I was becoming more independent but then when I relapsed after that my relationship with my parents became really rocky. There were so many fights at the dinner table. Most of our fights were around food, or around something somehow relating to my eating disorder, because sometimes my parents wouldn't want me to go somewhere because it was around a meal time, there were so many different things. Plus my eating disorder was basically telling me that my parents were the enemy and they were to me at that point and there were a couple times that were really bad and not fun at all but then as I got better even just simply getting my weight back helped my relationship with everyone.

I- Do you sense that things are different for you psychologically and emotionally?

W- Yeah.

I- Can you describe the difference that you feel when you are physically in one place and physically in another place?

W- When I'm not feeling so well when I'm underweight cause emotionally my patience gets so short, I get really snappy at people and at the same time I can't think as well which is really frustrating because I get really frustrated with people quicker but I can't really think of a fast response to say to them which makes me even more frustrated. Well, I don't have the energy to socialise as much so I get quieter, kind of more withdrawn. I don't find things as humorous or fun or funny,I mean mostly what I want to do is kind of be by myself or be around a couple of people but even little things annoy me and I can't laugh them off and find them harder to deal with,more stressful,but then when... I mean it's so funny but even just even a little bit getting my weight back it makes such a difference because I have so much more patience with people and I

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can laugh at things, things are more fun, I've got energy to go do things and I feel like I don't worry as much or stress as much about anything and I mean my parents aren't as stressed either. At lot of times stress can level off onto different people so when they're less stressed, I'm less stressed. It's so much better.

I- Can you describe what kind of treatment you got in terms of therapy and medical treatment and kind of who was in charge of food?

W- The treatment center that I went to, they had a very strict food plan .They never wanted the patients to having anything to do with the food plan other than we could choose between a couple of different options at each meal but other than that they wanted all the food to be weighed and measured by the parents and they wanted the parents to sit down with the patient, eat with them, make sure that nothing was being hidden, nothing else was going on,make sure that all the food had to be eaten and in a certain time period as well, and then starting when I was an inpatient it was every day I got weighed by a doctor and also when our vitals were unstable we would do orthostatic, which you know you lie down and stand up and they measure your blood pressure and heart rate and the differences and then meet with the family therapist, individual therapist, a physical therapist,an occupational therapist, a psychologist if we were on medication, so that was pretty intensive even in outpatients they had us meet with all those different therapists and with the doctor usually every other week or once a month . Then actually more recently, about a year ago, our insurance never really worked very well with this center that I went to and this center they just completely separated like our insurance said they would no longer cover for me to go here, so that was kind of problem, so we just decided, OK, we're not going to go there anymore because we just can't without insurance so we decided that just as a family we would set up a team down in the city where I lived. Down here we set up a team of a doctor, an individual therapist, who also sort of worked as a family therapist and a psychologist. Unfortunately there is not a lot of eating disorder care where I live. There's not a lot of knowledge about eating disorders so we actually had to teach everyone who we chose a lot, like the doctor who basically in the beginning we had to tell him in the beginning, ok, basically this is what we want you to do and he did know a little bit about eating disorders but not very much so basically we just told him what we wanted him to do and really it was more my parents were in charge of it more than anything. That was anything thing, at the place I went they never told us our weight and I haven't known my weight for 5 years now maybe.

I- And how do you feel about that?

W- Well actually I didn't know my weight for 5 years but then my mom told me about a month ago and at this point I'm completely fine with it .It was exactly what I thought it was,and where I had always thought I was and needed to be so but before I was completely fine not knowing it,I just didn't want to know it .So we told the doctor weigh her, don't tell her the weight and he would just go out and tell my parents and they knew where I was supposed to be at and so if it was down one week they would just tell me that they were going to add a certain amount to my meal plan so that week I could get it up,and yeah my parents were mostly in charge of everything at that point and even the personal counsellor who I was going to,she said she knew some things about eating disorders but I think she may have been fairly misinformed .I stopped going to her a couple of months ago because she really wasn't all that helpful. She made a couple of comments like you don't really know about eating disorders do you. We worked with her and sometimes I would meet with her with my parents to talk about things if we were having issues and then the psychologist I guess we met with just to get my medication.

I- What is your advice to parents whose children were ill and they were just starting to seek care?

W- Well don't settle for just anyone first of all and do a lot of research into the people that you are looking at for care because some people are wildly misinformed so definitely make sure you meet with the people who you are considering a lot before you make a commitment to them and never be afraid to change .If you start going to them for a couple of months and it doesn't work then don't be afraid, so like if this isn't working we need to find someone else. Unless there is a really good treatment nearby, a lot of people will have some misconceptions and so be ready to teach them. Most people will be like willing to learn, it's when they're not willing to learn that it becomes a problem. That's kind of how my personal counsellor was,she was just sort of stuck in her ideas so... also just make sure that, as a parent, make sure that you know what these people are saying to your child because I know there could definitely have been some

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problems sometimes if my parents hadn't known like what my counsellor was saying to me .You don't want a counsellor advising your child to try and take things on by themselves too soon and that's really what my counsellor did .It just did not work at all. It really sent me backwards quite a bit. To the patient it might feel like the counsellor is really helping because that's what the patient wants to hear, like oh you can do it by yourself but you might not be ready and they might think they are but they probably won't be unless they're in a really stable place.

I- Well thank you so much for this interview.

W- Yeah, no problem.

