



LET'S TALK

Changing the Conversation. Changing Lives.

Eating Disorders Coalition of Tennessee



GREEN WITH ENVY?

Thinking about this word has been challenging for me, to say the least.

Looking back, I can now see that when I was in the throes of my eating disorder, I think I envied just about everyone. I might have envied this person for being skinnier than I, or that person for being healthy and confident. Unfortunately, that envy often times aided in my withdrawing further from the world around me. The envy turned to resentment and no one was safe. The green-eyed monster had a hold of me and relished its role in sucking joy from my life.

I must also admit that there have been many other times in my life, not related to an eating disorder, that I have been envious. I wasn't picky - I've been envious of someone for the talents they possess, they way in which they use those talents, the home they have, the car they drive, the physical body they inhabit, the job they have, and so on.

In "The Metaphysics of Morals", German philosopher Immanuel Kant defined envy as "a reluctance to see our own well-being overshadowed by another's because the standard we use to see how well off we are is not the intrinsic worth of our own well-being but how it compares with that of others"

In this powerful statement, Kant purports that envy is actually more about our own insecurities and lack of self-worth than anything having to do with the other person. When we do not recognize our own inherent value or recognize the abundance of life itself, envy is born.

Unfortunately, envy seems to be a natural human tendency. In my opinion, it seems that the important thing is to recognize and acknowledge our envy when it happens and then set it aside. Doing so will reduce its power in our lives and leave the space formerly filled by envy open to receive the fullness of life. So how do we set it aside and what then? There a number of beliefs and practices that addresses this question. I have identified a couple thoughts that are rooted in Eastern philosophy.

Ancient yogic philosophy encourages the

practitioner to adhere to a yama (code of conduct) called "Asteya". One of the main principles of Asteya is non-coveting; being content and happy with the life we create and not craving the belongings of another. Buddhism encourages followers to cultivate their innate quality of "mudita" or joy. According to Wikipedia, the term mudita is usually translated as "sympathetic" or "altruistic" joy, the pleasure that comes from delighting in other people's well-being rather than begrudging it. Many Buddhist teachers interpret mudita more broadly as referring to an inner spring of infinite joy that is available to everyone at all times, regardless of circumstances. The more deeply one drinks of this spring, the more secure one becomes in one's own abundant happiness, and the easier it then becomes to relish the joy of other people as well.

I recently read a quote by the Dalai Lama which sums it up, "It's only logical, if I am only happy for myself, many fewer chances for

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P.O. Box 121825
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Ph: (615) 831-9838
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Words Into Action

from the (new!) Executive Director

Four years ago, I joined the EDCT like many of us do – eager to jump in, and a first-time visitor to the Nashville office. My inaugural “job” was working with other volunteers to assemble student manuals for the YES! Team. We worked in concert, circling the large table packed with 3-ring binders, divider tabs and piles of paper until we finished every manual. Someone said, “It’s a good thing we have this table!” I’ve thought that many times since then.



As many of you know, the big table at the EDCT is often a place where people get things done. Share ideas. Connect. Ultimately, fulfill our mission. I am truly honored to take my place at the table, so to speak, as executive director. Please join me in thanking Shelli Yoder for her many, outstanding contributions. Due, in part, to her leadership, a bright future is ahead. Whether it’s around Nashville, across the state or across the table, I look forward to achieving our bright future with you.

Sincerely,
Liz Llewellyn

BOOK REVIEW

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left me as well as the one I may be leaving my own teenage daughter.

The inclusion of other stories from teens and adults alike help the reader to feel as if they are not alone in this ever so prevalent problem. Further, Chadwick’s willingness to include the personal stories of her own mother, her daughter, and those of herself added a human element that made her message easier to relate to. However, in the end, what made it easier to identify with also made the book rather repetitive. Chadwick included elements of her own weight loss journey in every chapter, so that by the middle of the book, I felt as if I had gotten the point of her story and no longer needed to keep reading about it. I would have preferred a more concise version. Despite the repetitiveness, the book is well worth reading and one I would certainly recommend to other mothers, as well as any female wanting to understand and improve her own body image.



GREEN WITH ENVY?

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happiness. If I am happy when good things happen to other people, billions more chances to be happy!” And so over the years, I began to realize that it was I, in fact, who was the green-eyed monster in my own life. I was filling up the space for joy in my spirit with envy, and it was only I who could open up that space. My yoga practice has helped me to not focus on what others have or can do, but rather to recognize the plentiful opportunities available in my life. Of course, I still find myself envying this or that, but in my recovery I have learned the value wanting what I have.



^{new} A President’s Point of View

by Mary Lee Bartlett



God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference.

Change. The word incites all sorts of feelings, both positive and negative: excitement, fear, renewal, anxiety, renewal, hope, sorrow.... Change is inevitable. And change has come again to the EDCT. We see change in our leaders as we bid a fond farewell to Board Chair, Nancy Beveridge. What an excellent job she has done leading our organization over the past year! We also thank Board members whose terms have ended: Cindi Dingler, Sharon Gentry, Steve Holzapfel, Beth Knott and Elliott Moore. We are grateful to them for their time and commitment to our mission. But perhaps our biggest change comes in the Executive Director position. Shelli Yoder has capably served the EDCT in that role for over four years. Her gentle strength and compassionate leadership will be deeply missed by us all. Often, as in the instances mentioned above, change is sad.

However, in our seven year history, the EDCT has embraced many positive changes. We welcome new Board members Misty Bays, Emme Baxter, Paul Burson, Todd Callahan, Sheri Switzer, and Karen Wetherall. They bring a wealth of expertise to our group. In addition, the EDCT has been instrumental in changing the conversation of our community concerning eating disorders through our YES teams and Speakers’ Bureaus. We have hosted trainings and seminars to better educate clinicians and the general public about eating disorders. We have changed families’ access to help and information through Families Supporting Families and the Junior League Resource Library. We have changed individual’s attitudes about themselves and the world around them through our “Weigh In Wednesdays”. We have even changed our tag line; and it includes the word “change”! The list goes on, but bottom line: we are making a difference...and it is a positive one!

In the midst of change, the EDCT will continue to progress towards our ultimate goal of offering hope and healing to those affected by disordered eating. Won’t you join us as we “change the conversation and change lives”? As the song says, “A change could do you good....”

Mary Lee Bartlett
Board Chair, 2009-2010

We must become the change we want to see.
~Mahatma Gandhi



Donate or become a Member @ edct.net

the BUZZ



Congratulations to our 2009 Award Recipients; (pictured from left to right) Karen Wetherall, Visionary Award, Mary and Dee Dee Wade (Dee Dee not pictured), President's Award, Rachel Anderson, Volunteer of the Year, Laura Newton, Founders Award.

Reba Sloan, RD and Ovidio Bermudez, MD receive recognition at the 2009 Annual Forum as co-founders of the EDCT.



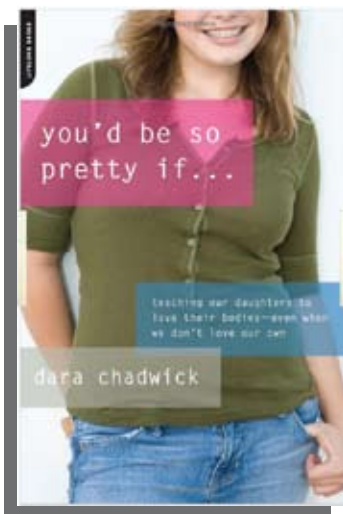
BOOK REVIEW

by Jill Baker

"How I treat my body today, what I choose to feed it, how I choose to make it work, how I dress it, and perhaps, most importantly, how I talk about it-has a profound effect on how my daughter will treat her own body tomorrow."

This quote summarizes the theme of Dara Chadwick's book, "You'd Be So Pretty If..." In it, Chadwick explains how body feelings travel down the generational chain and what a powerful effect a mother's self image may have on a daughter. She explains that as mothers, how we feel about and relate to our own bodies and the conscious and unconscious expression of that relationship creates a body image blueprint for our daughters. Chadwick contends that understanding our own blueprint is a key to developing strategies for changing and/or creating a healthy blueprint for our daughters.

Chadwick's experiences as the Weight-Loss Diary columnist for Shape, a women's fitness magazine, led to her participation in a year-long weight loss challenge that she



took to feel better and live a healthier and more confident life. The book details lessons learned from this experience, as well as insights from other teens and mothers. These included the importance of making peace with the messages and legacy received from our mothers and, possibly changing the legacy we leave our daughters. She offers parents tips and tools as to how they can break the cycle of "bad body image" during the teen years. Each chapter includes "Body Image Builders" related to the particular theme of the chapter.

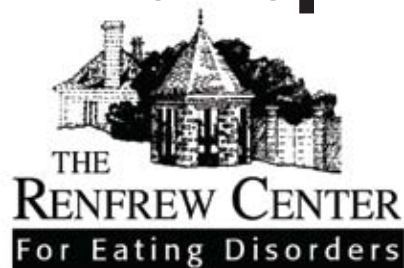
Chadwick's book provides a sensible and compassionate guide to understanding the intricate relationship between mothers and daughters and how a mother's struggles with body image can become her daughter's, however unintentional. Chadwick tries to convey this message without a tone of "blame mom for everything" and simply attempts to help the reader understand. She believes it is in the understanding that we can see and choose to let go of any negative body image lessons learned early on and teach our daughters something different. By taking this approach, it allows the reader to more easily consider the messages they are passing on to their children. It certainly made me rethink the legacy my own mother

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P.O. Box 121825
Nashville, TN 37212

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