

# Individuals | 10 ACTIONS

- 1 Learn as much as you can about Eating Disorders (EDs),** including how genetics and environment combine to trigger them, vs. a “lifestyle choice” where it is “your fault.”
- 2 Expand your idea of the “stereotypical ED;”** they affect individuals of all sizes, shapes, ages, races, genders, and socio-economic statuses, and your struggles are valid regardless.
- 3 Look beyond your physical appearance to measure the presence or seriousness of your ED.** Your thoughts and behaviors in relation to food, eating, exercise, compensatory behaviors, and quality of life, are much better determinants of how your ED is holding you back.
- 4 Know that, even if you “look healthy,” your ED is worthy of treatment,** so that you can get rid of, or greatly reduce, the related thoughts and behaviors, and recover your quality of life.
- 5 Seek treatment as soon as possible.** You are in a serious medical crisis which could threaten your life (like cancer or a traumatic brain injury), and you need serious, specialized treatment. .
- 6 Be on the lookout for medical complications, and/or suicidal ideation, and talk to your physician and/or therapist.** If they seem dismissive or unhelpful, seek a second opinion until you get the care that you deserve. Your life depends upon it.
- 7 Prioritize your recovery.** You may have to take a temporary break from work, school, friends, and/or exercise, and that’s OK; when you recover, you will have better focus for all of this!
- 8 Find your support network in recovery.** This can be from your biological family, and/or your “chosen family” of significant others, friends, and communities of others with EDs.
- 9 Adjust your expectations about recovery; it is not linear.** Don’t assume consistent progress. There will good days and bad days. Some things will feel better at first, and some won’t. Pace yourself; it is a marathon, not a sprint.
- 10 Maintain hope that full recovery is possible at any age, no matter how long you have had an ED.** There are many examples of individuals who have recovered after decades. Recovery looks different for each person, but the worst days in recovery are better than the best days with ED.