

Jessica, a young woman on the *HEAL* Journey, shares her story of how she tried to hide:

“My eating disorder started off innocently. I began to work out a couple times a week and eat a healthier diet in order to look fit for my wedding. Then I lost weight and liked it. A secret obsession began to grow. I developed a fear of gaining weight, so I did everything in my power to prevent that.

“I had always suffered from stomach pain after eating, but I never went to the doctor so I just lived with the pain. I finally saw a doctor and was diagnosed with celiac disease, a food allergy to gluten, and was told I couldn’t eat bread, pasta, cookies, pizza, processed foods, salad dressings, cakes, or many of the foods that were a regular part of my diet.

“I drastically lost weight, and secretly, I liked it. I began to intentionally starve myself and work out obsessively. I’d wake up at 6 a.m. and make it back before my husband woke up. I’d go again before or after lunch and once more after dinner. Everyone in my life began to notice my unhappiness and drastic weight loss but attributed it to my food allergy. It was a secret curtain I could hide behind. No one would ever know. But I knew and God knew.”



Jessica's Story

It’s in the light that our sin and shame is cleansed and wiped away. We must have bare-naked hearts that can be completely open and honest before God first, ourselves second, and others third.

Take some time with God to lay down the truth and bring to light anything you’ve been hiding or struggling with on your own. Reflect on the areas you’ve kept in the dark, and humbly ask God to meet you in those secret places. Write those thoughts here.

Meghan, another sister on the *HEAL* Journey, shares her experience about stepping out of the darkness and into the light:

“During the time I struggled with anorexia, I was a part of a home group. This one night I was in total despair—worn and tired from trying to control everything. I knew I was going to cry and realized I could either cry alone and keep on hiding my struggle or I could go to home group and be with others in prayer. I fought the desire to keep my struggle hidden and decided to go.

“As I walked into the house, one of the leaders asked me how I was doing. The depth of my sorrow came forth and erupted in uncontrollable tears. Everything in me wanted to flee to my safe place of secrecy, where I could live alone, but in utter despair. I fought the temptation with all my strength, because deep down I knew God wanted me there. After worship my friend and another woman who had also struggled with an eating disorder prayed for me. As soon as I stepped into the light, I felt the bondage break. I saw that God had placed people in my life who wanted to walk with me out of the darkness, and I knew that as I stepped into the light, my journey toward healing had begun.”



Mezhan's Story

- What struggles with food, your body, or just life are you sharing with those close to you?

Accountability Moment



Remember, now's the time to call a girlfriend and share with her how things are going—and hear how she's doing, too.

Made in Intimacy With God

We often don't recognize that there's a connection between what's drawing us to food, the pursuit of perfection (which doesn't exist!), or whatever we're filling ourselves with, and our inherent need for intimacy with God. We live in a world that threatens our relationship with

my reflections

14. How often do you eat foods you really enjoy?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Never Always

15. Your weight as a child (under 12 years old) was:

Underweight Natural Weight Somewhat Overweight Very Overweight

16. While you were growing up, your mom's weight was:

Underweight Natural Weight Somewhat Overweight Very Overweight

17. While you were growing up, your dad's weight was:

Underweight Natural Weight Somewhat Overweight Very Overweight

18. You most often feel as though you are currently:

Underweight Natural Weight Somewhat Overweight Very Overweight

19. How often do you feel confident about your body?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Never Always

20. How often do you weigh yourself?

2+ times a day Once a day 2-5 times a week Rarely

21. How often do you speak negatively about your body (to yourself and others)?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Never Always

22. How often do you think of yourself as a thin person?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Never Always

23. What are some of the things you might be struggling with? Please rate the following items:

a. Depression

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Problem Serious Problem

b. Alcohol abuse

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Problem Serious Problem

c. Unhealthy relationships

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Problem Serious Problem

d. Promiscuity

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Problem Serious Problem

e. Drug use

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Problem Serious Problem

f. Smoking

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Problem Serious Problem

g. Starving myself

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Problem Serious Problem

h. Disliking my body

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Problem Serious Problem

i. Bingeing and purging

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Problem Serious Problem

Free Space

Welcome to your personal creative space. Reflect on Lesson 1 by journaling, making a collage, or doing whatever you'd like to do!

