

Ten Phases of Eating Disorder Recovery... What Phase Fits Your Recovery Today?

In their book, *8 Keys to Recovery From an Eating Disorder*, Carolyn Costin and Gwen Grabb identify several phases people go through in their recovery from an eating disorder. *Knowing what the process looks like and what to expect can be very helpful.*

1. I DON'T THINK I HAVE A PROBLEM.

- It's my body so leave me alone.
- There are people who are a lot thinner (worse) than I am.

2. I MIGHT HAVE A PROBLEM BUT IT'S NOT THAT BAD.

- I only throw up once in a while.
- My physical didn't show anything wrong so I am OK.

3. I HAVE A PROBLEM BUT I DON'T CARE.

- I know throwing up isn't good for me, but it's working for me so I don't care.
- I could change if I wanted to, but I don't.

4. I WANT TO CHANGE BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW AND I'M SCARED.

- I want to eat normally, but I am afraid I will get fat (gain weight).
- I want to stop bingeing, but I can't figure out where to start.

5. I TRIED TO CHANGE BUT I COULDN'T.

- I told myself that I would not (fill in the blank) but I found myself doing it again.
- I don't feel like I can really ever (change) get well, so why keep trying?

6. I CAN STOP SOME OF THE BEHAVIORS BUT NOT ALL OF THEM.

- I could stop purging, but I will not be able to eat more.
- My eating has gotten better, but my exercise is out of control.

7. I CAN STOP THE BEHAVIORS, BUT NOT MY THOUGHTS.

- I can't stop thinking about food and bingeing all the time.
- I keep counting calories over and over in my head and still want to lose weight.

8. I AM OFTEN FREE FROM BEHAVIORS AND THOUGHTS, BUT NOT ALL THE TIME.

- I feel fine all day, but under stress I revert back to my unhealthy behaviors.
- I was fine, but wearing a bathing suit triggered my eating disorder thoughts, and with it some related behaviors.

9. I AM FREE FROM BEHAVIORS AND THOUGHTS.

- I feel mostly OK in my body and am able to eat things I want and not feel guilty or anxious afterwards.
- Once I had stopped the behaviors for a period of time, at some point I realized that I was no longer having the thoughts or urges.

10. I AM RECOVERED.

- For a long time now, I no longer have thoughts, feelings, or behaviors related to my eating disorder.
- I accept my body's natural size. My eating disorder is a thing of the past.

Remember: Try not to judge your process. Whatever phase you identify with, it is okay. There is Hope!

YOU. CAN. RECOVER.