

# BHS ASSIST E-NEWS

## Get on Pace to Have a Healthier, Less Stressful Year

You have heard it before: exercise is the key to health and happiness. But how can you make it a daily commitment? Try these tips:

**Pick a fit partner.** Those who exercise with peers have a higher success rate. And the best buddy to choose is one who is already committed. You will work harder to keep up.

**Set improvement goals.** Don't just aim to walk a mile, set a reasonable goal for continually quickening your pace. Be sure to chart your progress.

**Shorten the duration.** Rather than trying to work in a single hour long session, aim for three 20-minute workouts or four 15-minute workouts. People who opt for shorter sessions actually tend to exercise more over the course of a week.

Adapted from *Fitness*

## Mint Patty Steamer

One favorite treat to enjoy between meals this time of year is the deliciously nutritious [Mint Patty Steamer](#). This fat-free steamer satisfies everyone's sweet tooth while delivering several essential nutrients. Stick a pitcher's worth of this quick and easy sipping snack in your refrigerator and warm one cup at a time.



**Get 3!** Here's to a healthy new year for you and your family

### Ingredients

- 1 1/2 tbsp (3/4 oz.) sugar-free chocolate syrup (29 g)
- 1 1/2 tbsp (3/4 oz.) sugar-free crème de menthe syrup (23 g)
- 1 cup fat free milk (245 g)



Pour syrups into 20-ounce chilled stainless steel pitcher. Add cold milk.

If using a stove-top, heat syrup and milk in saucepan over medium-low heat; do not boil. If using a microwave, heat milk and syrup in large, shallow bowl for 2 to 3 minutes. Whisk rapidly until milk is airy and frothed. Serve in mug.

[www.3aday.org](http://www.3aday.org)

Recipe courtesy of the Mid-Atlantic Dairy Association

*In the United States, as many as 10 million females and 1 million males are fighting a life and death battle with an eating disorder such as anorexia or bulimia. Millions more are struggling with binge eating disorder.<sup>1</sup>*

## NEDAwareness Week 2009: February 22-28

### Kristen's Story

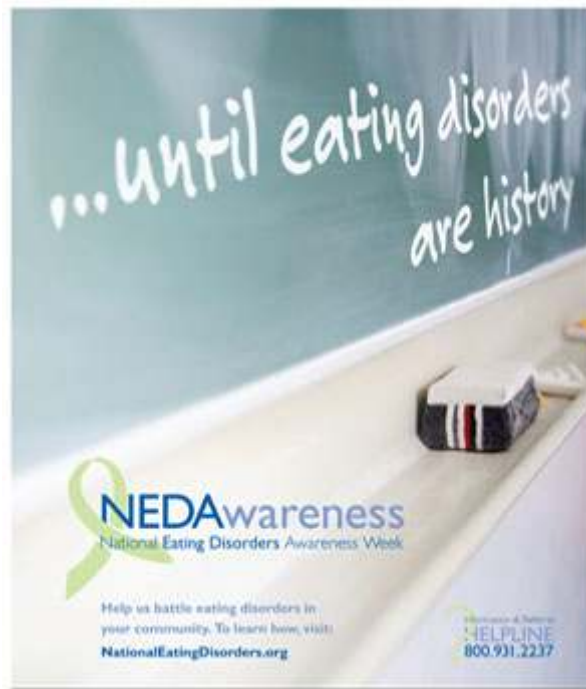
If you saw a picture of me in 1983, you would see a pretty, 5'6" tall, blond-haired, blue-eyed girl. That's not what I saw when I looked in the mirror. My thighs curved out where they should curve in. My nose was too big and lips too small. Standing sideways in the mirror I couldn't tell if my feet were too big or my legs too short, something I first noticed at age ten, but by seventeen, I was *sure* that something wasn't right. My mother was on the "Dolly Parton Diet" and that sounded good to me. I never managed to sustain this diet for long, but more importantly, people noticed. They noticed and commented. They said, "Have you lost weight?" but I heard, "You look great!" Ahh, attention. Just what I had been craving.

Two years later, standing in a pool of vomit in the girl's bathroom of my college dorm I wondered, "How did I get here? How did I go from the Dolly Parton Diet to *this*?" While some of my classmates were clear about their goals for college and were actually attending their courses and studying for exams, I was trying to find the safest places where I could throw up after bingeing. I was a lost little girl.

I continually promised myself, "Tomorrow, it will be different. Tomorrow I will start living my life. I will do all those things you are supposed to do in Colorado. I will live the outdoor lifestyle, hike, camp or just be outside. I will stop this disgusting habit. Tomorrow, because today is lost."

It turns out that I made many decisions along the way that formed who I had become. My parents divorced when I was young. The resulting moves back and forth between Dad in small-town New England and Mom in Fort Lauderdale brought the issues of adjusting to new schools and groups of friends. All I wanted to do was belong, but every time, my shyness would take over. And much to my dismay, I never seemed to wear the "right" clothes. I would try to prepare and anticipate what people would wear at each new school, but somehow each time I missed something – tight designer jeans when "they" were wearing preppy chinos, the *wrong* shoes ("tacky" they said). Then there was the tragic death of my aunt – who was killed on a motorcycle - my mom's alcoholism, my own discovery of alcohol and drugs and more divorce. Life seemed sad and out of control. I actually remember saying to my father, "I wish something was wrong with me so I could have some attention." Looking for that attention turned into an obsessive focus on how I looked and by my junior year in high school I was convinced that something was "wrong with me" and dieting seemed to be the only answer.

College consisted of a lot of alcohol and drugs, bingeing almost daily, starving myself when I was "doing well," over-exercising and crazy relationships. Therapy throughout college kept me alive. My



first experience with treatment was in 1987 where I learned, much to my surprise, that fat was not a feeling, but actually that “feeling” fat was an indicator of unexpressed emotions. I saw my first glimmer of hope, but upon returning to the same environment at college I sunk back into the morass.

During the final months of college, in 1989, I became more and more desperate. There was a buzz of excitement among my friends and classmates, but I was terrified. “Now what?” I thought. “I don’t know how to do *anything*.” As graduation approached, I saw it as a black hole coming to swallow me up. Then my parents stepped in for the second time. When they proposed treatment again, I was ready. I saw a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. The night before treatment was one of the longest of my life. I knew that I was at the end and that something had to change. On the second day there, they told me I would have to give up alcohol and drugs as well. I called my father and begged him to come get me. He said, “I think you should stay.” That was September 25th, 1989 and I *stayed*. And I continue to “stay” everyday. My life changed forever and I began the journey back to myself. As Anna Freud wrote, “I was always looking outside myself for strength and confidence, but it comes from within. It is there all the time.”



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My message is that solid, long-term recovery is not only possible - as in someday you will get there - but it opens up a whole new world of *anything* is possible. Imagine what the world could be if we turned our focus from destroying ourselves to creating miracles in our lives and the lives of others. This is not to be used to beat yourself up if you are in the grips of the struggle, but as a glimpse into what recovery can look like.

<sup>1</sup>Crowther et al., 1992; Fairburn et al., 1993; Gordon, 1990; Hoek, 1995; Shisslak et al., 1995)

## Relationships: Real vs. Online

Sure, social networking sites are fun. It is cool to see how many online friends you can accumulate. But social networking is no substitute for actual socializing. Online friends will never replace offline friends, because face-to-face contact is imperative in forming close friendships. After all, you have to see for yourself that your friends are trustworthy. And that they have your best interests at heart. That is hard to do over the Internet. The value of close friendships cannot be overstated. Friends can help you live a longer, healthier life. And when you have even one close friend, your attitude and ability to deal with stress is greatly improved.

Researchers have not figured out exactly how, but friends boost your immune system. The connection you feel when you are with your friends also boosts your feelings of hope. Friends provide comfort and companionship, laughter and honesty. And a strong support network can keep you motivated and energized. So, as it turns out, having a healthy social life can actually be healthy.

Aired on Lifetime Television  
January 25 and March 29, 2009  
Show 604

## More Than a Title

With the recent increase in home foreclosures, defaults on credit cards, and job loss, it is no wonder financial stress is one of the leading causes of stress in Americans. In December 2008, the number of unemployed persons increased by 632,000 to 11.1 million and the unemployment rate rose to 7.2 percent. Since the start of the recession in December 2007, the number of unemployed persons has grown by 3.6 million, and the unemployment rate has risen by 2.3 percentage points.<sup>1</sup> The 2008



*Getting Paid in America* survey reported 71% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck, a 4% increase from 2007. In the survey, 49.7% indicated it would be difficult to meet current financial obligations if their paycheck were delayed by one week.

An already stretched family budget lends itself to increased feelings of anxiety amidst company lay offs. The stress of downsizing impacts not only those directly impacted by job loss, but the community as a whole. Those impacted by job loss may experienced increased levels of stress resulting from little to no financial reserves, decreasing home values, and perhaps a mortgage that was not a good fit even with a job.

### Coping in a Down Sizing Nation

There is much that employees can do with the feelings that come from hearing of yet another layoff, company closing, or

acquisition. Using those feelings as a motivator for positive change, rather than a catalyst to increased worry and anxiety, benefits everyone. Begin by assessing your current situation. Consider if you identify too closely with your job. Individuals that identify themselves by the job they hold may have difficulty coping with job loss. If your identity is wrapped in your position, begin to change your self-view by incorporating other activities into your life. Build relationships by regular visits or phone calls, join a sports league, or take time to read.

Assess your finances and your financial goals. Consider the changes that can be made to make life less stressful. Use the 10-year rule: in ten years, will it matter that you had all of the cable channels or will you wish you had spent more time with your children? In 10 years will you be glad you had the chance to drive (insert automobile name) or will you wish you had chosen a less expensive car and visited family and friends more?

Putting circumstances into proper perspective can help in reducing stress. If you find that you are experiencing stress that is affecting your work or relationships, contact your BHS Care Coordinator to schedule an appointment.



Green tea contains more healthful compounds than its black counterpart. Taking time out for a mug of hot tea can help you be more relaxed and thoughtful.

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Division of Labor Force Statistics, Employment Situation Summary, Friday, January 9, 2009.