

# WHAT HELPED ME GET BETTER?

by  
Chris Cloutier, B.C. Eating Disorders Association

*Expressing my needs, desires and rights  
helped me change my life.*

1. **Speak positively to yourself.** I constantly challenge the voice and the fears inside me that undermine my needs, rights and desires.
2. **Create visual reminders.** I surrounded myself with books, pictures, and sayings that gave me permission to eat guilt-free, knowing it would result in stronger and clearer thoughts, decisions and feelings.
3. **Take responsibility for yourself.** I made a decision to no longer be a passive victim, but an active agent in my own life. That meant making decisions that worked for me.
4. **Take risks.** Instead of isolating myself, fearing failure and not reaching my potential, I became public about my eating disorder—I told people about my struggle. This diminished the power of silence, fear and loneliness.
5. **Accept and work with help.** At one time I thought I had to get better on my own so I resisted the support of friends, family, and professionals. While it is true that I needed to make the decision to get better on my own, I needed to feel others supported me even when I had to learn by making mistakes.
6. **Make planned changes.** I set small goals to reach major desires. Take one day at a time.
7. **Keep a journal.** Recording my thoughts and feelings over time helped me to see how I was changing.

**Enter into relationships.** I benefited from the healing friendship. Friends reflected an image of myself during our interactions. Relationships helped me to find out who I was, what I wanted to be, and with whom I would share my life.