Reading Ideas for Healing Your Relationship with Food

Essential Tools For Those Who Are Not Working With A Therapist Over the Summer

8 Keys To Recovery From An Eating Disorder, Effective Strategies From Therapeutic Practice and Personal Experience, Author: Carolyn Costin and Gwen Grabb
This self-help book offers the ins and outs of the recovery process. It addresses how to motivate self to seek support, what therapy entails, and provides a unique look at what it really means to struggle with an eating disorder.

The Anorexia Workbook: How To Accept Yourself, Heal Your Suffering, and Reclaim Your Life: ACT for Anorexia. Author: M Heffner and G Eifert.
This self-help book provides useful tools for a new model of treatment for anorexia nervosa – a model that uses self-compassion as a primary stepping stone towards change.

Telling Ed No!
Author, C Kerrigan
This personal journey offers practical recovery tools and real experiences to promote hope and inspire creative change.

Eating Disorder: Personal Stories About Recovery

Life Without ED: How One Woman Declared Independence from Her Eating Disorder and How You Can Too
Author: Jenni Schaefer & Tom Rutledge
This supportive lifesaving book combines a patient’s insights and experiences with a therapist’s prescriptions for success to help you live a happier, healthier life with ED.

Biting the Hand that Starves You: Inspiring Resistance to Anorexia/Bulimia
Authors: Richard Maisel, David Epston, and Ali Borden
This book provides you with personal accounts of individual struggles with disordered eating, and how they have worked to resist and defy their eating disorders. The book takes a postmodern approach and views eating disorders as external influences rather than a part of the person, and provides strategies for reclaiming one’s life.

Understanding Gender and Disordered Eating

Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters
Author: Courtney E. Martin
In Perfect Girls, Starving Daughters, Martin offers original research from the front lines of eating disorders. Drawn from more than a hundred interviews with sufferers, psychologists, nutritionists, and experts, her expose reveals a new generation of “perfect girls” who are overachieving, and self-sacrificing - striving to live up to the internal and external pressures of their generation.

100 Questions and Answers about Eating Disorders
Author: Carolyn Costin, MA
This book will give you information and guidance in helping others who are going through this challenging disorder.
Father Hunger
Author: Margo Maine
“Father Hunger” is the emptiness experienced by women whose fathers were emotionally absent, a void that leads to unrealistic body image, yo-yo dieting, food fears and disordered eating patterns. “Father Hunger” is a common phenomenon of Western culture, whose dictates and myths limit a father’s role, creating a loss for all family members. Dr. Maine also discusses practical solutions to help readers understand and improve their father/daughter relationships and help families reconnect.

For Loved Ones
Surviving and Eating Disorder, Strategies for Family and Friends
Authors: Siegel, Brisman, and Weinshel
This book is a must read for families and loved ones. Currently in its third edition, it has provided countless families with the tools and strength to support those whom they love.

Why She Feels Fat: Understanding Your Loved One’s Eating Disorder and How You Can Help
Author: Johanna McShane, Ph.D & Tony Paulson, Ph.D
Sprinkled with over 100 quotes from recovering individuals, Why She Feels Fat explores eating disorders from the inside out to convey the emotional experience and perspective of those who struggle. Decoding the deeper meaning of “I feel fat” is at the heart of the this simple and straightforward book.

The Connection Between Food and Feelings
Eating in the Light of the Moon: How women can transform their relationship with food through myths metaphors, and storytelling
Author: Anita Johnston, Ph.D.
Dr. Johnston teaches women to free themselves from disordered eating by finding the metaphors hidden in the richness of their own life stories.

Feeding the Hungry Heart: The Experience of Emotional Eating
Author: Geneen Roth
This book includes vignettes, poems, and stories about the emotional relationship many women have with food.

The Food and Feelings Workbook
Author: Karen Koenig
This workbook uses cognitive behavioral therapy concepts to help readers identify, experience, and learn from feelings rather than try to ignore or avoid them.

When Food Is Love: Exploring the Relationship Between Eating and Intimacy
Author: Geneen Roth
In this book, Roth explores the similarities between eating and loving, and shares five patterns that they have in common: excessive fantasizing, creating drama, the need to be in control, and the one-wrong-move syndrome.
Body Image

Love Your Body: Change the Way You Feel About the Body You Have
Authors: Tami Brannon-Quan and Lisa Licavoli
This is a workbook that includes self-assessments, activities, and step-by-step guidelines for a better relationship with your body and body image improvement.

The Beauty Myth
Author: Naomi Wolf
The best-selling classic that redefined our view of the relationship between beauty and female identity.

The Body Project
Author: Joan Jacobs Brumberg
This book offers an insightful and entertaining history behind the destructive mantra of the 90s – “I hate my body”

When Women Stop Hating Their Bodies
Authors: Jane Hirschman, M.S.W. and Carol Munter
The authors explore the reasons why women cling to diets despite overwhelming evidence of their ineffectiveness. The book covers cultural norms and body thoughts, and helps you to identify real needs and take action.

Transforming Body Image: Learning to love the body you have
Author: Marcia Hutchinson, Ed.D
This book isn’t about changing your body, it is about learning to love and accept the body you already have.

Stress Management

The Relaxation and Stress Workbook
Author Martha Davis, Ph.D, Elizabeth Eshelen, MSW, & Matthew McKay, Ph.D
This book provides a concise survey of stress reduction methods, from hypnosis and meditation to biofeedback and assertiveness training.

The Women’s Comfort Book: A self-nurturing guide for restoring balance in your life
Author: Jennifer Louden
If the pace of your life or the depths of your depression leaves you lacking in body and soul, this book can help you feel whole again. Louden encourages you to draw on personal rituals and journaling to add comfort and breathing space into your life.

Anger and Assertiveness Skills

Self Assertion for Women
Author: Pamela Butler
Learn to communicate clearly and effectively; protect yourself from misread signals in public and in intimate relationships; express positive and negative feelings without anxiety.

Boundaries: Where You End and I Begin
Author: Anne Katherine, M.A, C.M.H.C, C.E.D.T.
This book explains what healthy boundaries are, how to recognize if your personal boundaries are being violated, and what you can do to protect yourself.
The Dance of Anger: A women’s guide to changing the patterns of intimate relationships
Author: Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.
This book is a helpful guide to understanding and reducing anger in close relationships. Dr. Lerner illustrates how anger, (fighting, blaming, silence) often protects rather than challenges existing relationship dynamics. She explains the difficulties women have not only in getting angry, but also in pursuing their anger to gain a stronger, more independent sense of self.

Letting Go of Anger: The 10 most common anger styles and what to do about them
Author: Ron Potter-Effron, M.S.W. and Pat Potter-Effron, M.S.W.
Through revealing self-tests and real-life examples, you will learn how to recognize your own style (or combination of styles) of anger and what you can do when you feel stuck in a particular style. The techniques are for anyone who wants to learn how to express anger in healthy productive ways.

Spirituality/ Mindfulness/Coping with Life
Calming the Anxious Mind, How Mindfulness and Compassion can free you from anxiety and panic.
Author: J Brantley, M.D.
This book offers a powerful approach to overcoming anxiety, fear, and panic. Learn the mechanisms of anxiety and the body’s fear system, develop a mindfulness practice, practice acceptance and self compassion.

The Mindful Path to Self-Compassion: Freeing Yourself from Destructive thoughts and Emotions
Author: Christopher Germer, Ph.D
This wise and eloquent book illuminates the power of self-compassion and offers creative, scientifically grounded strategies for putting it into action.

Beyond Religion: A Personal Program for Building a Spiritual Life Outside of the Walls of Traditional Religion
Author: David Elkins
This book offers alternative paths to authentic, soul-nurturing spirituality, such as psychotherapy, artistry, music, nature, and through relationships. It provides you with guidelines to develop your personal path to spirituality and healing.

When Things Fall Apart: Heart Advice for Difficult Times
Author: Pema Chodron
Chodron’s book is filled with useful advice about how Buddhism helps readers to cope with the grim realities of modern life, including fear, despair, rage and the feeling that we are not in control of our lives.

The Tao of Eating: Feeding your soul through everyday experiences with food
Author: Linda Harper, Ph.D.
This book teaches the soulful path to eating; a five-step guide using the ancient wisdom of Taoism to develop a more natural relationship with food. You will learn tools for un-dieting, what influences eating styles, and how to live with authenticity, acceptance, and appreciation in relation to food choices.
Relationship to Self

The Four Agreements
Author: Don Miguel Ruiz
Based on ancient Toltec wisdom, this book explores the source of personal suffering and self-doubt, and offers ways to transform our lives, experience more freedom, happiness, and love.

Authentic Happiness
Author: Martin Seligman
This bestseller uses scientific research to provide you with tools to explore your strengths, utilize these in all areas of your life, and work toward acceptance, gratitude, and a sense of meaning and purpose.

Circle of Stones
Author: Judith Duerk
This book is a guide for women seeking to find a path to their own inner wisdom. It is a journey into the essence of the Feminine that enables a woman to recognize and validate her own truth and feelings that define her personhood.

Embracing Your Inner Critic: Turning Self-Criticism into a Creative Asset
Author: Hal Stone, Ph.D. & Sidra Winkelman, Ph.D.
Through examples and exercises, the Stones show us how to recognize the critic, how to avoid or minimize “critic attacks” and most important, how the inner critic can become an intelligent, perceptive, and supportive partner in life.

Women Who Run with the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype
by Clarissa Pinkola Estes, PhD
According to Estes, wolves and women share a psychic bond in their fierceness, grace and devotion to mate and community. This comparison defines the archetype of the Wild Woman, a female in touch with her primitive side and able to rely on gut feelings to make choices. The tales here, from various cultures, are not necessarily about wolves; instead, they illuminate fresh perspectives on relationships, self-image, even addiction.

Relationship to Others (Intimacy)

If the Buddha Dated: A Handbook for Finding Love on a Spiritual Path
Author: Charlotte Kasl, Ph.D
Kasl does a beautiful job at weaving Eastern philosophy into modern-day relationships.

The Mastery of Love
Author: Don Miguel Ruiz
This book uses insightful stories to illuminate ways to improve our relationship to ourselves and restore connection and acceptance in our relationships with others.

Women and Desire: Beyond Wanting to Be Wanted
by Polly Young-Eisendrath
Instead of being able to know what they really want or who they really are, women have been conditioned to accept images – the good daughter, the nice friend, the ideal boss, the perfect mother – to define themselves through reflections of others. As a result, self-direction, self-determination, and self-confidence are undermined.
The Dance of Intimacy: A Woman’s Guide to Courageous Acts or Change in Key Relationships
Author: Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.
Dr. Lerner takes a careful look at relationships where intimacy is most challenged (distance, intensity or pain).

The Dance of Connection: How to talk to someone when you are mad, hurt, scared, frustrated, insulted, betrayed, or desperate
Author: Harriet Lerner, Ph.D.
Dr. Lerner teaches us how to restore love and connection with the people who matter the most. You will learn how to speak and honor personal integrity so that you are able to navigate your most important personal relationships.

Brief Encounters
Authors: Emily Coleman & Betty Edwards
This book explains the complex issues involved in short-term relationships; how to identify yourself as an individual; and how to enter new relationships or friendships with confidence and feelings of self worth.

The Betrayal Bond
Author: Patrick Carnes, P.h.D
If you or your friend has been victimized in a relationship, this book will guide you towards freedom and well-being in order to restore your true sense of power and trust in life.

Nutrition and Health

Intuitive Eating
Author: Evelyn Tribole, Rd and Elsye Resch, RD
This book will teach you how to reject diet mentality forever; how our three Eating Personalities define our eating difficulties; how to feel your feelings without using food; how to honor hunger and feel fullness; how to follow the ten principles of Intuitive Eating, step-by-step, and how to achieve a new and safe relationship with food and, ultimately, your body.

Diets Don’t Work
Author: Bob Swartz, Ph.D.
This book teaches you how to dismantle the dysfunctional diet mentality and develop natural ways of eating.

The Only Diet There Is
Author: Sandra Ray
If you are tired of fad diets and worrying constantly about your weight, read this book. It changes the way we look at ourselves and provides helpful feedback on what we eat, and why we eat.

8 Weeks To Optimal Health & Spontaneous Healing
Author: Andrew Weil, Ph.D
Dr. Weil of Harvard Medical School provides suggestions on physical exercise, diet, and mental/spiritual health in order to support a person’s ability to connect with their bodies “natural healing” methods.
Fight Fat After Forty
Author: Pamela Peeke, Ph.D.
Dr. Peeke goes beyond diet and exercise with a lifestyle program that shows women how to eliminate stress-induced “toxic-weight” and evolve into physically and mentally stress-resilient individuals.

Nancy Clark’s Sports Nutrition Guidebook
Author: Nancy Clark
Although her book is focused on the serious athlete, Clark’s nutrition tips can be helpful for anyone desiring a healthy lifestyle. Discussion of carbohydrates, foods to eat before and after exercising, fluids, and supplements are presented.