



Smith, Grainne. Anorexia and Bulimia in the Family. West Sussex, England: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2004

Anorexia and Bulimia in the Family by Grainne Smith is written by a parent whose daughter struggled with anorexia and bulimia for several years. It is a personal story of the hardships her daughter endured as anorexia and bulimia consumed her life along with how Grainne coped with her daughter's illness. The tips and suggestions regarding meals, eating habits, bathroom issues, what to say, and the emotional and behavioral changes that occur provides carers with somewhat of guide in how to survive an eating disorder.

Part I

Chapter 1: Introductions

- Beginning signs and stages of anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa

Chapter 2: Arrivals

- Eating disorders as uninvited guests
- Further signs of anorexia and bulimia through words, behavior, and actions
- The impact these 'guests' can have on friends and family, especially the parents

Chapter 3: Prepare for a long road

- Common signs of anorexia and bulimia
- Tips for parents and/or loved ones on how to confront and cope with the problem

Chapter 4: Living with the volcano

- The unpredictability of anorexia and bulimia
- Tips to help heated arguments and confrontation with the eating disorder

Chapter 5: Horrible habits and ghastly games

- Medical and psychological risks due to lack of nourishment
- Habits that accompany anorexia and bulimia

Chapter 6: Family actions and reactions

- How siblings of all ages are affected by eating disorders
- Situations parents might deal with especially financially and legally

Chapter 7: Control issues

- The degree to which anorexia can control a person
- The false belief that an individual can control anorexia

Chapter 8: How bad can it get?

- Common problems and concerns voiced by carers of an individual with an eating disorder

Chapter 9: Can the family survive Anorexia?

- The importance of support and communication among family members

Chapter 10: You are not alone

- Realizing you are not alone in the situation and the importance of finding support in order to cope

Chapter 11: Read all about it!

- The negative opinions, especially in regard to parents, that can be found in books

Chapter 12: Research – past and present

- Various research studies and findings over the past century
- The change in today's research being based on evidence rather than conjecture
- Triggers of an eating disorder such as puberty, sexual abuse, moving, and bullying

Chapter 13: Anorexia, Bulimia, and self-esteem

- The voice of an eating disorder and how it destroys self-esteem
- The components of self esteem: self-competence and self-worth
- How parents' self-esteem can be affected by their child's eating disorder
- How eating disorders can affect persons of all backgrounds
- The influence of the media on (body) image

Part II

Chapter 14: Anxious Annie, Soft Sue or Hard-hearted Hannah – the parents' dilemma

- When to confront the problem(s) and anticipating possible reactions
- How to express your feelings as a carer or loved one

Chapter 15: Tips, Techniques, and Strategies

- Strategies for making mealtime go smoothly
- Ideas on how to avoid your child's self-starvation
- Tips on how to deal with binge-eating; the mess in the kitchen and

bathroom, what to say, how much food to buy, etc.

- Ways to help your child's battle with anorexia and/or bulimia
- Effective words and phrases to get through difficult situations

Chapter 16: Coming up for air – stress, distress, and survival for carers

- The importance of the carer's survival
- Stress signals and ways to manage or cope with the major stressors

Chapter 17: Pathway to Professionals: *A chapter for professionals and carers working together*

- How eating disorders can be overlooked by the GP
- Ways carers can work with the sufferer and professionals towards recovery
- How meetings with the family can be very useful and informative
- Understanding the high probability that relapse will occur and knowing the signs in order to properly intervene

Chapter 18: End of the story...or rather, a new beginning...

- A look back on the illness, the low points throughout and the road to recovery

Appendices

Definitions

- Definitions of common terms

Carers' conversations from the EDA helpline and meetings

- Conversations about actual events portraying issues, concerns, and behaviors of eating disorders

How to be a motivational carer

- Tips on what to do and what not to do when caring for a person with anorexia or bulimia