

Goodbye Ed, Hello Me

EXCERPT, FOREWORD BY CAROLYN COSTIN, LMFT, MA, M.ED.

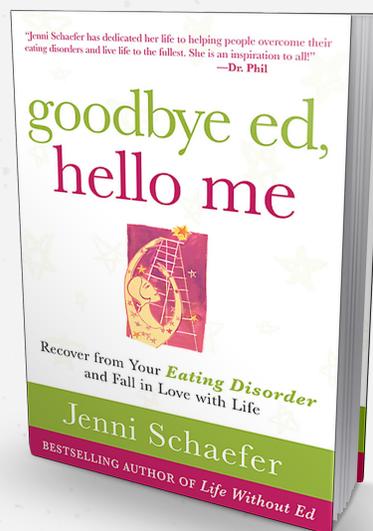
I recovered from my own eating disorder long before Jenni Schaefer was born. But now she and I are on the same team, helping others overcome this devastating illness.

Jenni has truly won her battle with her eating disorder, and she carries the wisdom, grace, energy, and enthusiasm necessary to inspire others to do the same. As hard as it is to believe, when I first recovered there were still no books available on the topic. I was a lone figure not just because I had suffered from an illness most people did not know existed, but even more so because I had recovered and become a therapist treating others to make a full recovery too.

Over the years I would continue to hear—not only from my patients but from sufferers out in the world—that seeing someone who had recovered was important, even crucial, to their belief in their own ability to leave their eating disorders behind and get well. Some professionals told me to be careful about identifying myself too much with being recovered. One leader in the field asked, “Do you want to be known as being a recovered anorexic or as being a good therapist?” I went away worried. But soon after I made a decision that I could be both. And I am.

Being a source of hope and a role model of recovery has been part of my mission over the years. Jenni has taken that mission to new depths and heights. Through her writing, her singing, her workshops, and her example of a life fully lived, she is a source of healing in a still-crazy world.

Since you are holding this book, you too must be interested in a better life, free from the trappings of an eating disorder. This book is about being really free. What you will find on these pages is a guide to recovering fully, but even more, to finding joy and peace in your life. This book is a journey through Jenni’s process of connecting back to herself and to living a complete life. Sharing her process will help many of you do the same. You will also benefit from the pearls of wisdom Jenni has received from many of her mentors and leaders in the field of eating disorders, such as Craig Johnson, Cynthia Bulik, Ovidio Bermudez, and Evelyn Tribole, as well as from feminist soul sisters such as Anita Johnston and Margo Maine. Jenni has done her work and her homework and passes it on with every page. When I first met Jenni, she was



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still identifying herself as being “in recovery.” I asked her why, explaining that the term is so broad I wonder exactly what it means to each person who uses it. I also was worried about her message regarding “Ed” in that I had seen clients use the metaphor as an excuse for their behavior—“Ed made me do it.” True to the person she is, Jenni has looked at both of these issues over the last few years and gone far beyond them in *Good-Bye Ed, Hello Me*.

In this book, Jenni discusses how appropriate it is for her to call herself “recovered” and what that means to her, but in her non-judgmental way, she leaves room for you to find what term best suits your situation. Instead of telling you how to deal with Ed, this book explains how to let go of the past, deal with the present, love your body, and live your authentic life. Passing on learned wisdom, Jenni says, “We can’t give away what we don’t have,” and you will find that she “has it.” From sharing how she handles her perfectionism to dealing with a jar of thigh cream, she not only takes you through her personal experiences but helps direct you in how to make it your own. She makes recovery and full living seem possible for everyone, although she is clear that it is not easy: “Fully recovering from my eating disorder felt just like someone had asked me to become left-handed.” She is right. I always ask my clients to share with me and their loved ones the answer to the question, “Why does getting better feel so bad?” Their replies not only help others understand how hard it is to get better but lead to a better understanding of what might be keeping someone stuck.

This book is about getting out of the stuck places. I suspect you will laugh and cry. You will find yourself somewhere on these pages, and you will also

find hope that things can be better. Toward the end of the book, Jenni says, “Real hope combined with real action has always pulled me through difficult times. Real hope combined with doing nothing has never pulled me through.” I find it a matter of great synchronicity that I read these words right after President Obama’s incredibly hopeful inauguration speech. Jenni has timed it just right. People of all persuasions in all situations and circumstances need hope, but they also need help in combining that hope with action. *Good-Bye Ed, Hello Me* is a book to help those with eating disorders do just that.

- **Carolyn Costin, LMFT, MA, M.Ed.**

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Author of *The Eating Disorder Sourcebook, Your Dieting Daughter, 100 Questions and Answers About Eating Disorders*, and *8 Keys to Recovery from an Eating Disorder*

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