A Deeper Sense of Worth

Although we have been instructed by the Prophet (peace be upon him) about the importance of maintaining a good physical appearance, we are encouraged to focus more on our inner selves rather than merely our looks. That is why he said in a hadith, "Verily Allah does not look to your faces and your wealth, but He looks to your heart and to your deeds."

The Power of Fasting

There is no doubt that talking about controlling one’s eating is much easier than actually doing it. However, Islam provides us with ways of gradually strengthening our self-control. Take fasting, for example. In addition to improving one’s overall health through cleansing the body and allowing the digestive system to rest, it actually increases a person’s self-control. When someone fasts, the act of avoiding food and drink becomes a form of training for the person, as her soul is forced to suppress her desires. Thus, if a woman feels overwhelmed by her desire for food, she can tame these feelings by choosing to fast regularly (e.g., twice a week or a few days each month) in order to increase her self-control. As with any difficulty, asking Allah for help while making an effort to change it will make the challenge less difficult to overcome.

Offering Help

If you know someone who you believe is suffering from an eating disorder, it is important that she gets professional help as soon as possible. In a caring manner, let her know that you are concerned about her and would like to offer help. Be ready for all possible reactions such as anger, denial, and shame. On the other hand, she may be relieved that someone has offered to help. Be sensitive to the person and keep things confidential because the issue may be embarrassing to her. If she refuses to get help, then wait. It may be that she has not yet realized how serious her disorder has gotten. Continue to monitor her and step in to help when you feel the time is right. She will need to receive both medical and psychological help, so try to contact her doctor immediately. This brochure also provides you with resources to assist you. The sooner you lend a hand, the more you will be able to alleviate her suffering.

Eating Disorders: Their Dangers

An eating disorder is a dangerous disease that can not be ignored. Its effects on an individual can be devastating, both psychologically and physically, not to mention the negative effects it has on the person’s family and loved ones. Although eating disorders are rarely talked about in our community, they do exist, and they require immediate medical attention. It is important to learn the signs and effects of this disorder so that the sufferers can receive adequate help before it is too late.

Sources:


www.mentalhelp.net/ibd/ami/anorexia.htm

Www.aaiainc.org/mental/anorexia.html

Sahih Muslim

Sahih Ahmed, Al-Musnad

• Take-Off Pounds Sensibly (TOPS) (800) 932-8677

With special thanks to the UMMA Clinic and Hewlett Foundation for their generous contributions.
Types of Eating Disorders

Although eating disorders are not limited to these three categories, the most common types of eating disorders are anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder.

**Anorexia Nervosa**

Anorexia nervosa is defined as an inaccurate perception of one's body image, a fear of gaining weight, and eating disorders that one can use to avoid weight gain. This behavior often begins before the age of 20, when the person begins a deliberate restriction of food intake. Girls with this disorder usually have normal body weight, though they may appear unhealthy and have difficulty maintaining body weight. They may also have a distorted body image, induced vomiting, and one or irregular menstrual periods. It is believed that environmental as well as biological factors may trigger this disease. Anorexics greatly emphasize physical appearance and have difficulty losing weight. They often lose weight rapidly and have a distorted body image. Anorexia nervosa is a serious disorder and cannot be reversed without treatment.

Besides causing harm to the heart and organs, anorexic behavior can be deadly. Up to ten percent of anorexic patients die, usually by losing at least half of their body weight. Anorexics often have eating disorders that are severe enough to cause malnutrition, malaise, and death. They may also have eating disorders that are not severe enough to cause malnutrition, malaise, and death. Anorexics often have eating disorders that are severe enough to cause malnutrition, malaise, and death. Anorexics often have eating disorders that are severe enough to cause malnutrition, malaise, and death.

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In the Quran, Allah mentions that He has provided a wide variety of food and drink for mankind to enjoy. He also provided us with guidelines on how to eat, "Oh you who believe, do not hold as unlawful the good things which Allah has made lawful to you, and do not exceed the bounds of what is right. Allah does not love those who transgress the bounds of right." (Quran 5:87-88)

While being instructed to enjoy the foods provided by Allah, we are expected to show our gratitude to Allah by eating in moderation. We must avoid overeating, as it is a sign of ingratitude and disrespect to Allah. Overeating can lead to a variety of health problems, including obesity, heart disease, and diabetes. It is important to eat in moderation and to be mindful of our food choices.

The Quran also mentions the importance of cleanliness in eating: "Eat of the things which Allah has provided for you, lawful and good, and show our gratitude to Allah for the things which Allah has provided for you." (Quran 5:87-88)

- **The Reality**

- **Bulimia Nervosa**

Bulimia nervosa is related to anorexia nervosa. It is characterized by recurrent incidences of binge eating (over-eating highly fattening foods) followed by purging (induced vomiting, or excessive exercise to avoid weight gain). The behavior of an individual with bulimia nervosa is similar to that of anorexics. Girls with this disorder usually have normal body weight, though many of them are actually underweight and have a distorted body image. They may also have one or irregular menstrual periods.

Bulimia nervosa is a serious disorder and cannot be reversed without treatment. Girls with this disorder often lose weight rapidly and have a distorted body image. Anorexia nervosa is a serious disorder and cannot be reversed without treatment.

**Binge Eating Disorder**

This disorder is more commonly found among older girls and young women and involves binge eating. It is usually not followed by purging but may involve overeating, as well as overeating. People with this disorder may find themselves eating an entire box of candy in one sitting, or eating until they feel sick.

Avoiding binge eating involves weight loss programs as well as psychotherapy. People with this disorder may find themselves eating an entire box of candy in one sitting, or eating until they feel sick. The disorder is more commonly found among older girls and young women and involves binge eating. It is usually not followed by purging but may involve overeating, as well as overeating.

- **Obsession With Body Image**

In a society in which dating is encouraged and females are sexualized, women and girls tend to feel a pressing need to appear attractive to the opposite sex. Through magazines, movies, TV, and billboards, women and girls are surrounded by images of models who are thin and beautiful. Women and girls may feel that being thin and beautiful is the norm and anything else is unattractive. Thus begins the obsession with losing weight.

The truth is that not only is technology utilized to make models appear smaller than they really are, but most of these women have anorexia nervosa. Furthermore, models spend much of their lives exercising rigorously every day for several hours. As a result, they become very unhealthy and may be close to reaching the point of starvation. The disorder is more commonly found among older girls and young women and involves binge eating. It is usually not followed by purging but may involve overeating, as well as overeating.

- **The Reality**

- **Types of Eating Disorders**

- **What is an Eating Disorder?**

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