
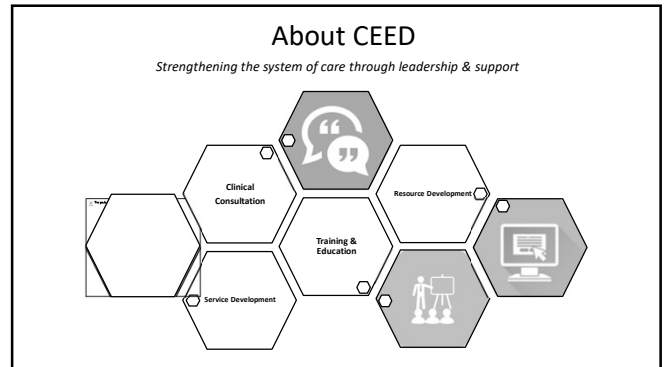


# Managing co-occurring Personality Disorders & Eating Disorders

Tanya Gilmartin




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Why think about EDs and PDs them together?



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**Sometimes an eating disorder is “just” an eating disorder**

(which is still a very serious and deadly mental illness)



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### Eating Disorders

A “persistent disturbance if eating or eating-related behaviour that results in the altered consumption or absorption of food and that specifically impairs physical health or Psychosocial functioning” (APA, 2013. pg. 329).

- Serious health consequences, significant functional impairment, delayed social and emotional development (Mitchell & Crow, 2006; Slicc et al., 2013; Treasure et al., 2010; White & Gianini, 2013)

**DSM-5 Eating Disorders:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anorexia Nervosa</li> <li>• Bulimia Nervosa</li> <li>• Binge Eating Disorder.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pica</li> <li>• Rumination Disorder</li> <li>• Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID)</li> </ul>
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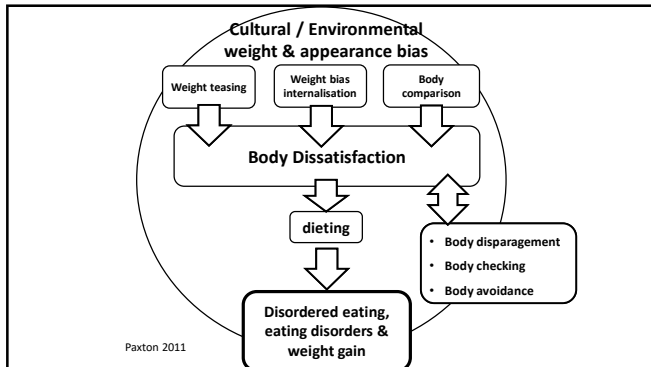
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### “The Eating Disorder”

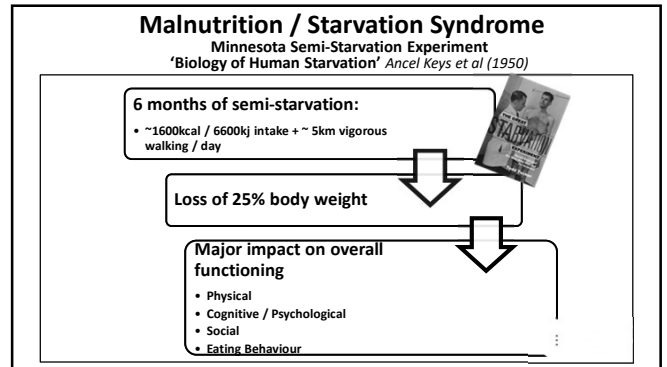
<p><b>Person’s sense of value and self dominated by control of weight and shape or eating</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-worth highly dependant upon evaluation of certain body characteristics (weight, shape etc)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disturbed eating habits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can include restricted food intake, strict dietary rules, preoccupation with food, and altered mealtime behaviours, binge eating</li> </ul>
<p><b>Disturbed weight control behaviours</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May involve excessive exercise, vomiting, or the misuse of laxatives, ipecac or diuretics (pills to reduce water retention)</li> </ul>

These behaviours are termed ‘disturbed’ when they become harmful through extreme use

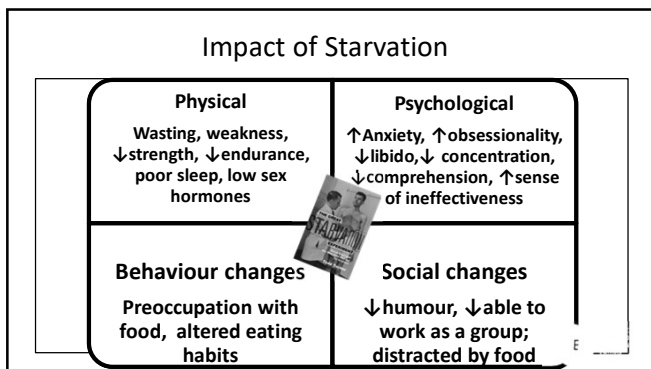
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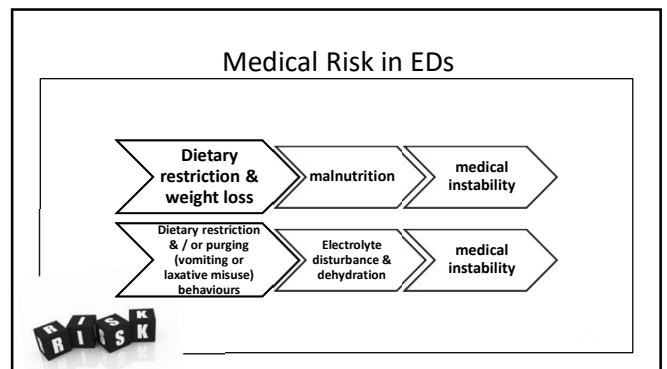
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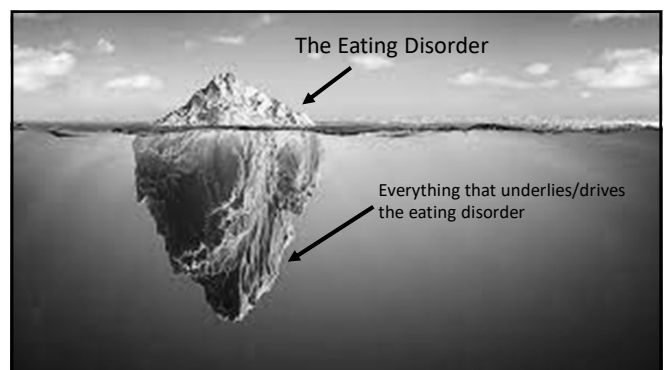
**Sometimes an eating disorder is "just" an eating disorder**

(which is still a very serious and deadly mental illness)

But sometimes...

**spectrum**  
Personality Disorder Service

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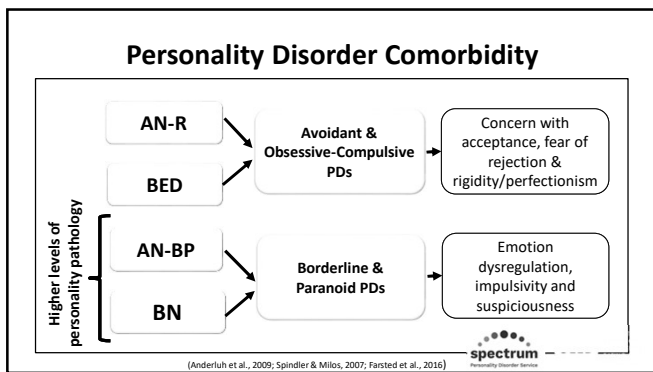
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### Long history of Comorbidity Research

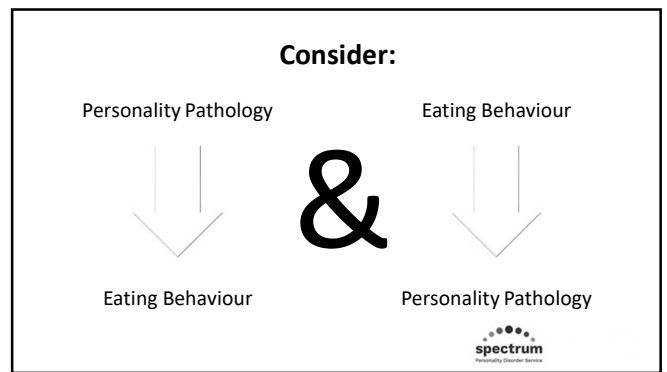
- In samples of eating disorder patients: Prevalence of personality disorder estimates from 30%-75% (De Bolle et al., 2011; Diaz-Marsá, Luis, & Sáiz, 2000; Kim et al., 2016; Wabel, Ro, Martinsen, Hoffart, & Rosenvinge, 2010)
- In a Personality Disorder Sample: Rates of anorexia and bulimia were 20 times higher than a general population (Zanarini, Reichman, Frankenburg, Reich, & Fitzmaurice, 2010).

**Personality pathology is evident before the development of an eating disorder and can be present after remission** (Bruce & Steiger, 2005)

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Personality Pathology

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Eating Behaviour

- Most likely, disordered eating behaviour is an expression of underlying personality disturbance
  - Consequences of inadequate nutrition also exacerbate personality disturbance
- Therefore, it is important that the conditions are considered and managed together, where possible

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Personality Pathology

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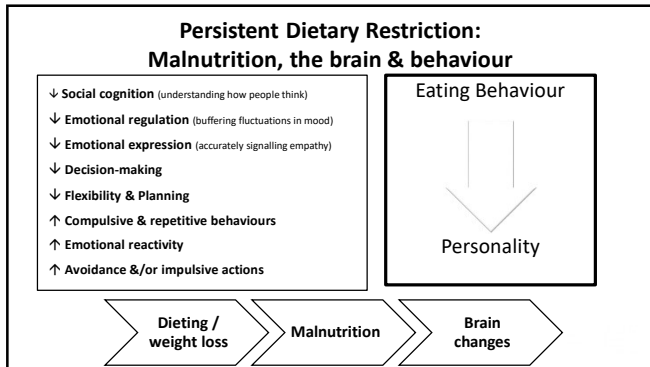
Eating Behaviour

### Formulation: The client, not the disorder

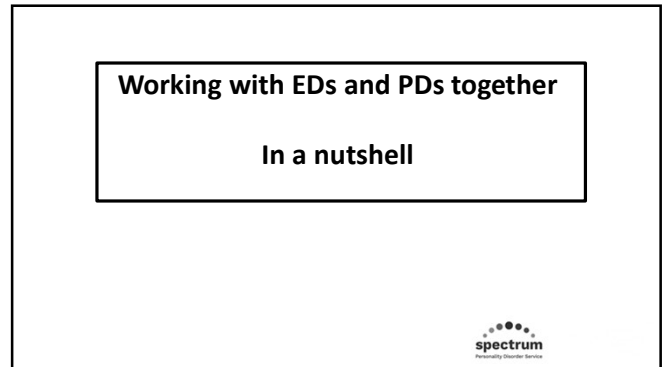
**Understand the function:**

- Managing distress- as a reaction to mood or to decrease temperamental anxiety
- As a function of rigidity
- Impulsivity or compulsivity
- As a replacement for self-harm, or as a precipitator for self-harm
- Sense of control
- Form of communication
- Sense of self-esteem
- Sense of identity

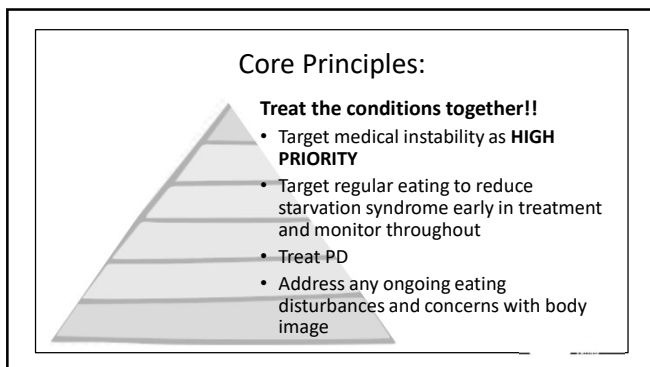
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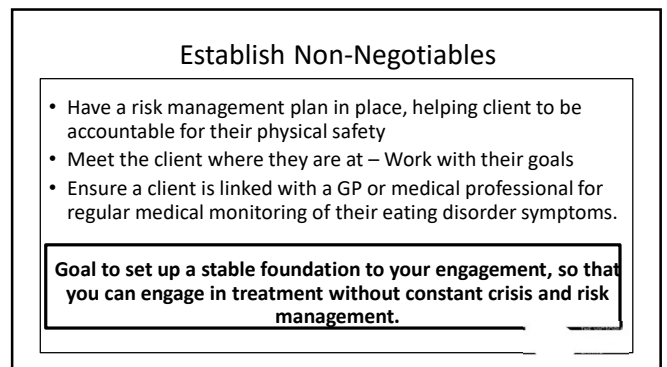
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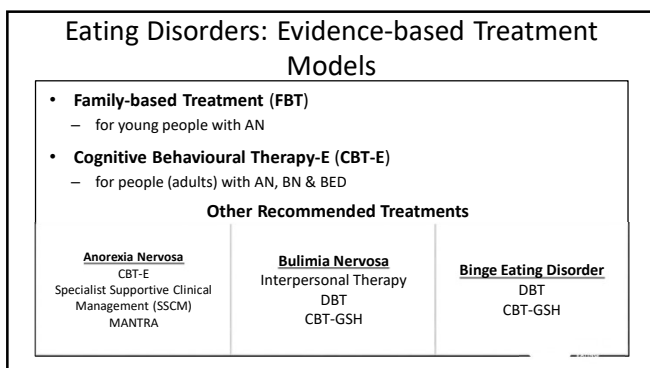
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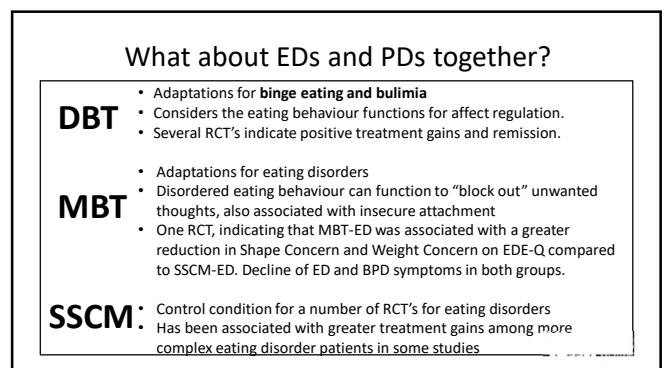
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### Other Contenders?

#### Schema

- Moderate research base for Borderline Personality Disorder
- Some preliminary protocols and trials for eating disorders.
- No research that targets combined EDs and PDs

#### RO-DBT

- Some RCT's indicate efficacy for OCPD, Avoidant PD and chronic depression
- Positive outcome trials for anorexia
- No research that targets combined EDs and PDs

#### ACT

- Some preliminary research with anorexia and bulimia compared to TAU among inpatients, no differences in treatment gains, ACT associated with lower remission rates.
- No research that targets combined EDs and PDs

### Resources

- **The Minnesota Starvation Experiment:**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8iH5htWlwo0>

- **The Victorian Centre for Excellence in Eating Disorders (CEED):**  
<http://ceed.org.au/>

<https://ceed.org.au/video/working-with-eating-disorders-and-personality-disorders/>

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