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Introducing Alameda County's Everyone Counts Campaign



ALAMEDA COUNTY **EVERYONE COUNTS** CAMPAIGN

Exercise, Eating Disorders, and Mental Health



There is no "one size fits all" approach to wellness. While exercise in moderation is healthy and contributes to mental and physical wellness, it can be destructive if taken to excess, used as [exercise bulimia](#), or as a strategy to avoid feeling our emotions.

A [recent essay](#) in the *Independent* by Eleanor Taylor-Davis, a person living with mental health conditions and eating disorders, documents the complicated role that exercise has played in her life. She says:

"My relationship to running has become a huge paradox; on the one hand I do it to help myself, to boost my serotonin (concurrent to medication) and give myself a temporary feeling of value and capability. But on the other hand, it's become a benefactor to my eating disorder, another instrument for the illness to destroy me."

The path to wellness includes knowing our triggers around food and exercise, developing alternative coping skills, finding social and/or clinical support, and discovering a healthy relationship with our bodies and ourselves.

If you are living with an eating disorder, help is out there. Some things you can do are:

- [Find a therapist](#) who specializes in working with people with eating disorders
- Talk to a peer living in recovery from eating disorders

- Join a 12-step group like [Overeaters Anonymous of the East Bay](#) or [Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous](#)
- Educate yourself about eating disorders- here is an [article](#) in *Bustle* sharing common myths and misconceptions

Please remember, if you or someone you know, need support in a crisis you can call one of the numbers below at anytime:

24 Hour Crisis Line

Alameda County: 1 (800) 309-2131
Nation Wide: 1 (800) 273-TALK (8255)

Alameda County Crisis Support Youth Text Line

Text "safe" to 20121
4pm - 11pm 7days/ week
Fee: no charge for crisis support services

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