

The Truth through Treatment

Once upon a time there was a little girl named Jacquelyn Ruth. From the time she was born till the time she went into treatment, she learned a lot about herself from what other people said about her. From birth through middle school people described Jackie as a friendly, busy, happy girl who had admirable strength; allowing nothing to stop her or get in her way. High school and college a few more descriptive terms were added to the list. She was now identified as a successful, young, intelligent girl who was involved in a lot, determined, creative, and wanted to be perfect in all she did. College to the start of adulthood brought even more identifiers. Jackie was described as a hard worker, who was very thorough, complete, caring, and good at her job. She never let go of things, and pushed her self to her limits. Jackie was still driven, intelligent, and determined, however she didn't know how to take care for self. Jackie was always caught up in the moment to do better or be better. She had created a desire for perfectionism, that was impossible to reach.

The identity that Jackie had assembled over the years was hard to live up too. She never stopped to deal with life's hard comings, just pushed to succeed. Jackie ran from her problems, fears, scars, and a life of many unknown truths. She created a mask worn in the outside world, a mask that hid years of discomfort, fear, anger, and uncertainty. Not very many people knew there was troubles in her life, in fact Jackie didn't even realize it herself for quite some time. The things that arose came from others who had problems of their own. It is funny how people deal with issues in their life. The defense mechanisms that are created to live a life in more false security/safety. Defense mechanisms that end up harming the self and loved ones.

Jackie felt she had no control in her life. So, she looked for a way to gain control. The eating disorder was born to defend herself from a scary life that she didn't want to face, a life that was not as fulfilling. The eating disorder was her means to control something in her life. The control and coping mechanism Jackie had created was disguised as a way to protect her health, a false message Jackie even told herself. The eating disorder helped her survive through a torn family, chronic heart problems (that made life a little less free,) sexual harassment, school, a career, and a relationship that developed faster than she was aware.

The relationship that developed towards the end of college was beautiful. However, she soon found herself treating the relationship as that of her latter step-father and mother, even though the relationship was completely different. There is truth in the saying that you learn from how you're raised, and the environment in which you are raised. My perceptions of that time lead to misguided assumptions that created fear and the use of bad coping habits. The eating disorder helped her survive, but soon the eating disorder won. Jackie was losing total control; her whole life physical, emotional, and mental. Depression, a rail thin body, fatigue, and the fear of an on-coming death threw her into a frenzy to regain herself. Jackie wasn't ready to die, not emotionally, mentally, and surely not physically.

In treatment Jackie learned that in truth, she could be anyone she wanted to be. She didn't have to live up to expectations, follow in people's footsteps, and always please others. Jackie also learned the history behind her eating disorder, the influencing factor. Powerless feelings and the emotions that were stuffed from this feelings, lead to the eating disorder. The eating disorder allowed her to cope with the emotions, hide the turmoil. During the stages of treatment, Jackie was able to finally face emotions, feel the emotions that had been numbed out by the eating disorder. She slowly transformed back into the "old Jackie" everyone talked about and wanted back so badly.

Treatment wasn't easy. Jackie had to stop everything, which was probably the most difficult thing she had ever done. She was no longer able to run from emotions. Jackie had a history of stopping one thing while immediately going to something else, thinking that the next thing would be better or more comforting. Soon she learned that nothing would bring comfort until she accepted the past, sat with it, and dived into deep self acknowledgment. During treatment my body was transformed physically, emotionally, and mentally. Jackie regained life, energy, the ability to be in the moment, the ability to enjoy others and the environment, and most of all regained the momentum to love. She healed wounds with her family and also her husband. A relationship that Jackie thought was a mistake, again was the light it had been in the beginning. Jackie developed compassion for the relationships she felt she had ruined.

Jackie's recovery is not over. There is still much more rebuilding to come. Jackie is greatly looking forward to building her own family with a husband she deeply loves. Jackie wants to rebuild the most meaningful friendships (that could never be replaced). Jackie is ready to find stability in her career, indulge in her interests, try new things, and be passionate about life. The desire to restrict all parts of her life due to fear, is gone. Her family, her health, her dearest friends, and the desire to learn and grow are now the center of her life. These are things that are most important.