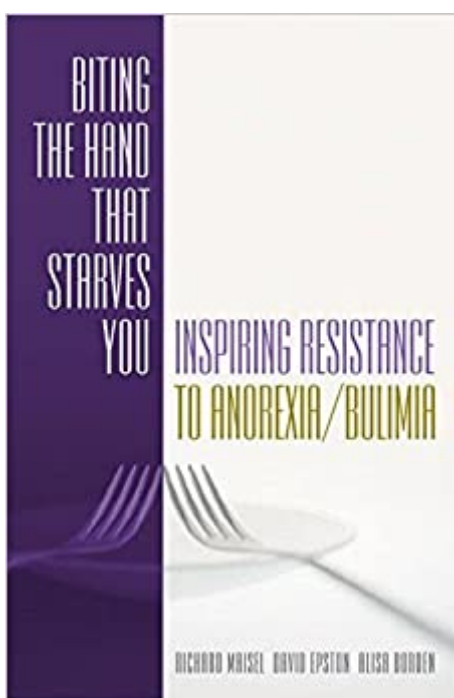


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# Biting The Hand That Starves You: Inspiring Resistance To Anorexia/Bulimia (Norton Professional Books)



## Synopsis

This important book immediately draws the reader into the world of those struggling with anorexia/bulimia (a/b), whose stories, poems, and first-person accounts expose the 'voice' of these deadly problems. The authors' decade-and-a-half collaboration with 'insiders' has yielded fresh answers to these life and death questions: How does a/b seduce and terrorize girls and women? Why is a/b successful in encouraging girls and women to unwittingly embrace their would-be murderer? How can such a murderer be exposed and thwarted? This book details a unique way of thinking and speaking about anorexia/bulimia. By having conversations with insiders in which the problem is viewed as an external influence rather than a part of the person, these therapists show how to bring the tactics of a/b into the open, expose its deceptions, break its spell, and encourage defiance of its tyrannical rule. These innovations enable insiders, professionals, and loved ones to unite against anorexia/bulimia rather than allowing a/b to pit a professional or loved one against an insider, and the insider against herself. Coercion is sidestepped in favor of practices that are collaborative, accountable and spirit-nurturing. The groundbreaking discoveries outlined in this book will provide new options, inspiration and hope, not only for those who suffer at anorexia's hands, but also for their loved ones and healthcare professionals.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

“[A] consequential book that changes the way in which a/b is traditionally viewed and thus

provides a framework for therapists which involves the use of narrative therapy. . . . The

“insider knowledge” provided, which includes journal entries and poems from clients, anecdotes, and therapy session transcripts, helps readers truly grasp the difficulties involved in dealing with a/b and also that recovery is indeed possible.

• - International Journal of Psychotherapy

“With unfailing respect for those suffering from anorexia, Maisel, Epston, and Borden offer a fresh analysis of the etiology of anorexia and bulimia and give us effective new therapeutic tools. . . . [G]ives psychiatrists and clinicians in every therapeutic setting the theoretical framework and practice options needed to treat anorexia and bulimia. This is the book we have been waiting for. . . . Patients and their families will find this book invaluable. . . . If you are interested in compassionate, respectful, and effective treatment of anorexia and bulimia, get this landmark book.

• - Psychiatric Services

“[O]ffers a promising way of conceptualizing eating disorders that allows therapist, client, and loved ones to maintain positivity and hope during those periods that seem the bleakest.

• - PsycCritiques

“It is organized and written so effectively, with insider narratives and therapy transcripts as driving forces, that the structure is almost invisible, and the reader is pretty much swept along by the content which is well worth engaging with. . . . [T]he book is a fresh and inspiring start for this new approach. Full of different voices and creativities, in practice as well as in therapy, it gives hope.

• - Counseling Resource

“Biting the Hand That Starves You is an inspiring book suitable for anyone touched by an eating disorder, whether they are professionals, carers or sufferers. Using techniques grounded in narrative therapy, the authors offer a fresh and empowering way of approaching anorexia/bulimia (a/b) from an anti-anorexic standpoint. . . . As a professional who works with eating disorders, I was left feeling highly motivated to employ techniques outlined in the text and share the ideas with colleagues. I could not recommend this book more.

• - Psychology and Psychotherapy: Theory Research and Practice

“This is a powerful book, written in extremely strong language reflecting the strong feelings of its authors. . . . [A]n absolute must-have for anyone working to help sufferers from these killing disorders.

• - Human Givens Journal (UK)

“[A]fter over 20 years of battling with anorexia/bulimia, I have found something that speaks my language. . . . I have been asked over the years (and have often asked myself) what is it going to take to get out of this torture. I never really attempted answering this question until we finally got the book.

• - Archives of Resistance

“This important work captures the nature of the violent, profoundly personal dialogue between anorexia/bulimia and the men and women who have to contend with it. Biting the Hand that Starves You will be of great interest to both the professional and the layperson, written as it is in a highly intelligent but clear fashion, free of the

stylistic murkiness that often clouds important works of research. By applying the highly effective methods of narrative therapy, the authors emphasize the very real potential for effective treatment of these devastating problems. This book offers not only welcome hope to those frustrated with the current state of eating disorder treatment but it also provides a lifeline of language to those who are trapped in the terrible silence of anorexia/bulimia.

— Marya Hornbacher, author of *Wasted: A Memoir of Anorexia and Bulimia*

— “Biting the Hand that Starves You breaks new ground by presenting in their own words, the hard-won knowledge of people who have taken their lives back from anorexia and bulimia. The authors invite us those struggling with anorexia and bulimia as well as the therapists working with them into a different way of thinking in which therapists and clients can join together against anorexia and bulimia. The therapy transcripts are inspiring and compelling. The chapter on how parents can become allies in the fight against anorexia and bulimia is one that I intend to rely on in my work not only to instill hope, but to offer pragmatic, effective possibilities. Thank you Rick Maisel, David Epston, and Ali Borden for this amazing labor of love.”

— Jill Freedman, MSW, co-director of the Evanston Family Therapy Center of Evanston, Illinois, and coauthor of *Narrative Therapy: The Social Construction of Preferred Realities*

Richard Maisel, Ph.D. is an adjunct professor at Alliant International University in San Francisco and maintains a private practice in Berkeley and Walnut Creek, California. He has published and presented extensively on narrative therapy and anorexia/bulimia. David Epston, M.A., C.Q.S.W. is coauthor of *Narrative Means to Therapeutic Ends* (1990) and *Playful Approaches to Serious Problems* (1997). He is a visiting professor at the School of Community Studies, UNITEC Institute of Technology in Auckland, and is the codirector of the Family Therapy Centre in Auckland. Ali Borden, M.A., M.F.T. is the Assistant Clinical Director at the Monte Nido Treatment Center, a residential facility in Los Angeles for women fighting Anorexia and Bulimia. Ali has successfully battled with anorexia/bulimia in her own life.

This is a brilliantly written book that incorporates a postmodern perspective with sound psychological practice to deal with a very difficult problem. I'm very grateful to have this as part of my library.

This book was recommended to me by my therapist. It is a great read for anyone struggling with an eating disorder.

The therapy transcripts are definitely inspiring and compelling, and provide hope that this illness can/will be defeated. The book offers many strategies to deal with the illness.

only now, after 10 years , I understand what's my daughter is trying to fight.I recommend it to all people who are close to people dealing with this enemy-anorexia

I only wish that Rick, David, and Ali had written this book years ago! Because *Biting the Hand that Starves You* would have been an incredible source of information, motivation, and hope when I was desperately struggling in the depths of my eating disorder.I was thrilled to see that the book vividly illustrates the vicious dialogue that occurs between the eating disorder and the individual who suffers with it. Throughout my recovery, psychotherapist and author Thom Rutledge encouraged me to practice this very dialogue between my true self (Jenni) and my eating disorder ('Ed') over and over again, which was crucial to my finding the amazing freedom I experience today.*Biting the Hand that Starves You* includes many uplifting, inspirational personal accounts that reveal people can and do beat anorexia/bulimia! Within the book, the authors compassionately share how you can really make practical steps to join the ranks of those who already walk that path of independence.Unlike many other books, *Biting the Hand that Starves You* goes a step beyond just focusing on how to recover from specific eating disordered behaviors. It also talks about moving on and reclaiming your life --- providing great insight on overcoming perfectionism, taking risks, and even pursuing dreams and passions.This is one book that I am glad I came across on the shelves of eating disorder literature. I just wish it would have appeared a little bit sooner!Jenni Schaefer, author of *Life Without Ed: How One Woman Declared Independence from her Eating Disorder and How You Can Too* (McGraw-Hill)

As someone who has struggled with anorexia for over half my life, I have often found myself reading anything on anorexia I could lay my hands on; desperately searching for the reassurance that comes from knowing one is not alone in one's experiences, as well as for some elusive insight that might assist me in resisting anorexia's stranglehold over my life. Yet frequently I have come away from such reading feeling dissatisfied and disheartened. Not so with '*Biting the Hand that Starves You*'; in this book I found so much of what I had been searching for and a whole lot more.While the authors are not the first professionals to draw on 'insider knowledges' (the knowledges of people with first-hand experiences of anorexia/bulimia), the prominence and the respect accorded to such

knowledge is unprecedented. The result is a book that speaks compellingly of anorexia/bulimia, and crucially, does so in a manner that is never patronising, pathologising or didactical. Providing exciting new ways of thinking and speaking about anorexia/bulimia, the book engenders a sense of hope - a 'commodity' that is often desperately lacking, yet so vital when it comes to resisting anorexia/bulimia. I highly recommend the book to all readers, from those struggling with anorexia/bulimia, to their family and friends, and health professionals.

This is just an awesome book. As a recovering anorexic, I have found this book not only hopeful and inspiring, but helpful and fascinating. It has made me think of my eating disorder in a whole new way. Instead of talking about afflicted people as "sick," it refers to "insiders" and discusses a way of thinking where one views their disorder as separate from themselves, rather than who they are. It's fascinating and I highly recommend it for people suffering from an eating disorder, those who are recovered, friends and family of sufferers, and just anyone who has an interest. Great!

*Biting the Hand that Starves You* is a very special book that is likely to change the way you view eating disorders. It contains many first-hand accounts of women's struggles to free themselves from the ways bulimia and anorexia control their lives. And it maps out the nature of this control, which is beyond the attempt to control food and weight--it's tied to societal messages about how women should behave (take care of others, be nice to everyone, perform well in many arenas, etc.). The book is primarily written for therapists but will be helpful to others affected by bulimia and anorexia.

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