



Lying in Weight: The Hidden Epidemic of Eating Disorders in Adult Women

Trisha, PhD Gura

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A girl with an eating disorder grows up. And then what?

In this groundbreaking new book, science journalist Trisha Gura, Ph.D., explodes the myth that those who suffer from eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa, are primarily teenage girls. In reality, these diseases linger from adolescence or emerge anew in the lives of adult women in ways that we are only starting to recognize.

Millions of American women twenty-five and older suffer from serious food issues, from obsessions with calorie counting to compulsions to starve then overeat. Because of the assumption that age provides eating-disordered immunity, the medical and mental health communities have long overlooked these women and minimized their dangerous habits. Yet the number of women in their thirties, forties, and older now seeking treatment is double and triple that of five years ago. The growing awareness of this understudied population is raising relevant questions: How does an adult woman's eating disorder affect her choice of a husband—or his choice of her? How does she cope with her expanding body during pregnancy? How does she feed her children when she cannot properly feed herself? And how does she weather aging in a culture that informs all women that they can never be too old to be too thin?

Drawing on her own experience with anorexia, the most up-to-date research, and extensive interviews with clinicians and sufferers, Gura addresses these concerns and concludes that eating disorders, at least some vestige of them, tend to lie dormant throughout a woman's life. Eating disorders in adults may not replicate those of adolescents and tend to emerge at the most vulnerable periods in a woman's life—marriage, the birth of a child, stress from child rearing, marital difficulties, depression, and menopause. Though the media may tell us that the girl with an eating disorder overcomes her demons with age and hard work, the reality is that she often doesn't. A girl with an eating disorder is a woman prone to relapse.

Lying in Weight is a startling, timely, and imperative investigation of eating disorders "all grown up." Women are suffering from a hidden, horrid, and life-threatening epidemic. This book is a shot across the bow to confront the problem and address the real issues. Isn't it time to end the suffering?

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