

SACRED

SPRING 2006

You are invited to attend

SACRED'S Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, May 31st at 7:00 pm

Providence Renewal Centre 3005-119 St. Edmonton

Come and celebrate our 10th Anniversary with us!

Did you know?

Thanks to the work of 61 volunteers and Coordinators, Joelle and Jason Arsenault, SACRED raised over \$13,000 in the Oilers 50/50 draw!

Welcome to our Executive Director!

We are delighted to announce the hiring of our first Executive Director, Michele Raynor. Michele brings to SACRED considerable management experience in the health care field and the nonprofit sector including: twelve years as Executive Director of the Friends of the University of Alberta Hospital, five years as Volunteer Program Manager for the Grey Nuns and Edmonton General Hospitals, and several years in leadership positions in other health care settings in Alberta.

Michele has been the recipient of a number of awards including the Global Woman of Vision Award, the Mayor's Award (Business Support of the Arts), the Laurel Award and the Alberta Centennial Medal.

In addition to her professional qualifications, Michele brings many admirable personal qualities, which are certain to benefit our organization and the wider community.

SACRED is immensely grateful to the Edmonton Community Foundation, the Alberta Lottery Fund Community Initiatives Program and Telus for providing the funds to make SACRED's long-standing dream of hiring an Executive Director a reality. We are very excited about this opportunity to move our organization forward, enabling us to better serve the large numbers of people in our community who are suffering from eating disorders.

Again this year Sacred will participate in the Roy Financial Mayor's Walk for Charity. The event will take place in Lion's Park in St. Albert on June 17. Bring your friends and family and have an enjoyable day while supporting Sacred.

There is no registration fee for participants and Sacred will receive 100% of all pledges raised. The first 250 walkers who raise pledges totaling \$50 or more will receive a free gift. It's easy!

Just complete the registration form and start collecting pledges today! The Grand Prize is a trip for two to Disneyland. Please call





A Participant's Story of Recovery

The thinking processes characteristic of my eating disorder have been with me for as long as I can remember. I believed that I didn't belong and that I was unworthy of love. To run from the immense pain this created, I fixated on food, my body weight and shape. As early as grade one I refused to wear tight pants, shorts or bathing suits out of fear that my peers would see how fat I was, although I was always a thin child.

By sixth grade, I had memorized the caloric and nutritional content of every food imaginable. Often, calories and fat grams would determine my choice of snacks, condiments and salad dressings. In junior high, I began dieting with the illusion that a thinner frame would generate happiness. I began walking, jogging and doing exercise videos as further attempts at weight control. In high school, I began dieting more seriously. I would obtain such a high when the scale registered the loss of another pound and would be consumed with self-hatred when I gained the weight back. Throwing up soon became a powerful means of control. Whenever I ate something that I didn't think belonged in my body I could 'simply' throw it up.

After high school I began attending University to study nursing. Through decreased physical activity, unhealthy eating patterns and alcohol, I gained fifteen pounds in my first year. I was consumed with self-hatred and convinced that I could only achieve happiness through weight loss and the acquirement of a perfect body.

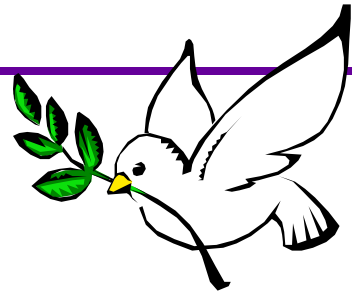
I attained such a high as I watched the number on the scale decrease and discarded pants that no longer fit. I would weigh myself numerous times a day and my mood would be determined by what my weight was each morning.

As the months progressed, so did my anorexia. Soon all I had time for was exercise and school work. I stopped hanging out with friends and would seldom venture home to visit my family or boyfriend. I was convinced that I had no time to spare and avoided situations where food was involved.

When I moved back home to work one summer all of my family and friends noticed how much weight I had lost. They would constantly offer me desserts and extra helpings. Soon I was overrun with fear that weight gain would occur because I was no longer dieting. Within a week, I was purging again to maintain my current weight. Over the course of four months I was vomiting from three to twenty times a day.

I returned to University in the fall and began dieting and exercising more diligently. I lost more weight and consequently my menstrual period ceased. I made time only for my schoolwork and my eating disorder. I didn't interact with the outside world, as all I needed was my disease. It became my best friend.

Never before, had I felt so alone. I became a lifeless shell carrying out all required tasks without feeling. I could think of nothing but my body, what I would eat, how I would avoid eating or how I could accommodate so I could eat with others. Life was nothing more than a complex math equation where my goal was to ensure my intake of calories never exceeded my daily limit. I could no longer reap joy or happiness out of life as all that mattered was the number on the bathroom scale. Toward the end, I didn't care if I lived or died. I exercised until I fainted and purged until I passed out. The last few times I practiced my bulimia, I was throwing up in garage cans at coffee shops, in the middle of parking lots and on the sidewalk of a busy city avenue.



I tried to control my eating disorder countless times. I went to numerous doctors who were convinced that once I went on medication and controlled my depression my eating disorder would resolve itself. After four months of antidepressant therapy, my disease only progressed and my depression worsened.

I went to an eating disorder specialist and a dietician for four months as another attempt at getting well. The dietician tried several methods with me including slowly reintegrating carbohydrates into my diet, reserving one day a week for bingeing and purging, waiting an extra ten minutes before purging and minimizing my exercise to a half an hour a day. These attempts were also futile.

My counselor thought that once I resolved some of my core issues, my unhealthy eating practices would diminish. This endeavor was also unsuccessful.

As a last resort, I went to an Anorexics and Bulimics Anonymous meeting. Upon walking through the doors, my life was forever changed. My whole life I had worked meticulously to protect my disease and hide my secrets from those around me. Now here I was sitting among others who shared my experiences

Following my first meeting a doctor who specializes in eating disorders approached me, told me about SACRED and informed me, that there was a spot for me in the program. I was very resistant at first, as I was planning to return to university to complete my nursing degree in the fall. The doctor assured me that if I went back to school I would be dead in six months if my disease continued the way it had progressed. Only by the hands of God did I agree to quit school, leave my old life behind and enter treatment.

Since being in SACRED I have been "sober" for seven months. I am now at a healthy weight and my entire existence no longer revolves around my food, weight, and body shape. I can experience life with meaning, whether what I am feeling is good or bad. I have real, intimate relationships with those around me. I have found a Higher Power of my understanding, which fills the void my eating disorder once occupied. I am developing a healthy relationship with food and learning to feed my body what it needs.

SACRED is a safe place where I can uncover why I became an addict and where I am provided with the support and tools I need to recover. I am recovering with others suffering from the same disease and together we are able to heal in a way we could not do alone.



Although recovery has been one of the hardest things I have ever done, I don't regret any of the time I have spent in treatment. I now have a life to live, and that includes good days and bad days, happiness and joy and pain and sadness. SACRED has given me a second chance and the opportunity to live in freedom from the deadly clutches of anorexia and bulimia.

**Society for Assisted, Cooperative
Recovery from Eating Disorders**
www.sacredeatingdisorders.com

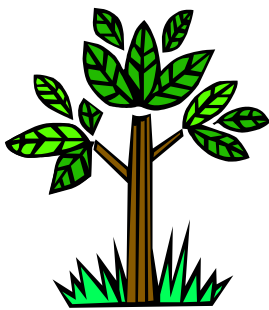
SACRED'S Recovery Day Program:
(780) 922-3300

SACRED's Office: (780) 438-3399
msacred@telus.net

Volunteers Needed!

Do you have expertise in finance, fundraising, or promotion? Are you interested in serving as a board or committee member? Or would you like to help on an as needed basis (fundraising events, moving furniture, clerical work)? For more information on these and other volunteer opportunities, please contact our Executive Director, Michele Raynor at 438-3399.

*Our good works are like stones
cast into the pool of time; though the
stones themselves may disappear their
ripples extend to eternity.*



Troubled Soul

My soul troubled,
My life a mess,
My body struggles,
I must take a rest.

Many roads to travel,
With obstacles in place,
I struggle to choose,
My Higher Power's way.

People and paths,
All lead me astray,
When I listen and follow,
Despite my Savior's sway.

Which way to turn,
How far to go,
Will this be right?
Or do I follow the foe?

A conflict here,
Someone's anger a fly,
I want to please,
But lose when I try.

So hopeless it seems,
To try to survive,
As doors are closed,
Opportunities slip by.

Struggling to survive,
Exercise and food sit by,
To soothe the fears,
I buried inside.

When I reach out,
To those of kind,
I find the support,
And comfort to confide.

Sanity the goal,
I get on my knees,
Turning to prayer,
To fill my needs.

*Written by Recovery
Program Participant*

Membership / Donation Form

Donations toward SACRED's Recovery Day Program are always greatly appreciated. Charitable tax receipts will be issued for membership fees and donations of \$20 or more (or on request).

Charitable registration number: 88816 8063 RR0001

Yes. I wish to purchase a \$20.00 SACRED membership for the 2006/2007 fiscal year.

I wish to make a donation in the amount of _____.

Name: _____

e-mail address (optional): _____

Please make cheques payable to SACRED and send to:
Society for Assisted, Cooperative Recovery from Eating Disorders

P.O. Box 82067 Yellowbird RPO

Edmonton, AB T6J 7E6

SACRED's fundraising goal for the Eating Disorders Recovery Day Program this year is \$92,000. 100% of donations received will go directly toward Program costs. For further information call Michele 438-3399.