

National Eating Disorders Association

3rd Party Event Guide



National Eating Disorders Association

National Eating Disorders Association
165 West 46th Street
Suite 402
New York, NY 10036
212-575-6200

walks@nationaleatingdisorders.org

[501\(c\)\(3\); Tax ID #: 13-344882](#)

Hosting A 3rd Party Event To Benefit NEDA

- A 3rd Party Event is any event initiated, organized, promoted, and executed by an outside individual or group (not NEDA) where funds raised are donated to the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA).
- 3rd Party Events are completed with limited help and supervision from NEDA Staff.
- Contact the National Walk Manager at NEDA and give notice that you would like to do a 3rd Party Event for NEDA.
- You will receive a 3rd Party Event Agreement Form after notifying the National Walk Manager of your intention to host a third party event. Please review, fill out, and return to the National Walk Manager as soon as possible, just so NEDA will be in the loop and so that we can send you promotional materials if you'd like them.
- As a general rule NEDA does not pay for any production costs of the event (guest speakers, venue rentals, etc.). Get someone to donate them or make sure you secure donations and sponsorships in advance to cover them.
- Many 3rd Party Events take place during NEDA Awareness Week (and a lot of materials in this packet refer to NEDA Awareness Week), but feel free to do a 3rd Party Event at any time throughout the year!
- And just remember – enjoy your event and have fun supporting a great cause!

Sending Money Raised To NEDA

- You can collect donations to NEDA via two ways.
 - The first is to ask everyone to make their checks payable to NEDA and send in all of the donation checks to NEDA all together at the end of your event.
 - The second is to have everyone make all of their checks out to you, deposit all checks and cash donations into your own checking account, and then send us one big check for the total amount collected for NEDA.



NEDA 3rd Party Event Agreement Form

3rd Party Event Agreement

_____ agrees to donate proceeds from an event to benefit the National Eating Disorders Association and requests the use of the NEDA name and 'To Benefit NEDA Logo' in educating and marketing of the event.

- NEDA's name or logo may not be imprinted upon or used in association with any products, goods, or services offered by the host without prior written approval from NEDA.
- NEDA must review and approve all promotional materials that use the name and/or logo of NEDA prior to production, printing, and publication, including, but not limited to print and electronic media advertisements, letters, news releases, and promotional packaging.
- The use of the NEDA logo must be consistent with NEDA's graphic standards:
 - There may be no modification of the NEDA logo, changes in size must be proportional and colors must not deviate from the PMS colors of NEDA.
 - Whenever possible, the full name "National Eating Disorders Association" should also appear next to or somewhere near the logo.
 - If appearing electronically (email or website), a link must be provided to NEDA's website.
- You agree to forward 100% of the donations to the National Eating Disorders Association within ten business days after the date of the event (or the date of the donations whichever is earlier).
- Acceptance of contributions or sponsorship will not imply an endorsement of the company, its products or its services.
- You agree to comply with all federal, state and local charitable solicitation statutes, regulations and ordinances that affect or apply to you and the fundraising activities that you are involved with.
- Funds will be sent to the following address: NEDA, 165 W 46th Street, Suite 402, New York, NY 10036.
 - Checks will be made payable to the National Eating Disorders Association.
- I agree individually or as a representative of the below named business or organization, agree to the above requirements and hereby fully release and agree to hold harmless the National Eating Disorders Association, its officers and directors, employees, representatives and successors, of and from any and all liability, claims, damages, expense or causes of action for any reason.

Name and Date: _____

Business or Organization (if applicable): _____

Third Party Event Name: _____

Event Location (Full Address): _____

Event Date: _____

Event Start Time: _____ Event End Time: _____

Event Fundraising (\$) Goal: _____

Event Description:

Event Coordinator Contact Information

Name: _____ Signature: _____

Address: _____

Primary Phone Number: _____ Secondary Phone : _____

Email: _____

Fundraising Tips

- 3rd Party Events serve a dual purpose – to raise awareness about eating disorders and to raise funds to benefit NEDA – both of which are equally important.
- Fundraising can be very daunting, but it's quite simple when you get down to business!
- Establish a fundraising goal for your event. It's always better to aim higher than your realistic expectations! You never know, a potential sponsor or donor at your event may see that you're a ways off from your goal and write a big check.
- Get started early! The earlier you start raising money, the more time you will have to reach your goals and exceed them.
- The best way to get a donation is to ask for a donation! Please don't feel awkward or nervous about asking for money – realize that you are raising money to support a wonderful cause! People will see that and be all too happy to give!
- Be positive and upbeat when you ask.
- Don't get discouraged by someone saying no! Keep asking other people and businesses! You may hear no a hundred times before you hear one yes, but that one yes may be a \$1,000 yes!
- Use all forms of communication and social media to promote your event and fundraise (email, Facebook, Twitter, local media outlets).
- Ask anyone and everyone you know to come to your event or donate! You can ask family (mom, dad, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, cousin, grandparents), church members, your coach, teacher, banker, contractor, florist, vendors, dry cleaner, doctor, dentist, veterinarian, and the list goes on! Don't be afraid to ask!
- One way to raise money is to require people purchase tickets to attend your event. If you do want to sell tickets, the price is up to you! Consider your local market (New York City is very different from Washington, GA), type of event (cocktail reception is very different from a bowling fundraiser), and any other considerations specific to your event.

“In A Box” Events

Want to do a 3rd Party Event but have no idea what event to do to raise money for NEDA? Try one of our “In a Box” events. “In A Box” events are tried and true fundraising events that you can customize to suit your needs and raise money for NEDA.

Some examples include:

- Salon in a Box
- Yard Sale in a Box
- All Sizes Fashion Show in a Box
- House Party in a Box

Salon 'In A Box'



National Eating Disorders Association

165 W 46th Street, Suite 402
New York, NY 10036

TEL 212-575-6200

FAX 212-575-1650

WEB NationalEatingDisorders.org

We are thrilled that you are interested in learning more about how Hair Salons and Spas can help promote awareness and raise funds to fight eating disorders.

It's as easy as 1 -2 -3. It requires:

1. One day of generosity on your staff's part during National Eating Disorders Awareness Week.
2. Register your salon/spa on-line with a \$50 deposit for promotional materials that NEDA provides for you (can be deducted from later contribution)
3. NEDA will provide you with promotional flyers with name, date and location of your salon to distribute to your customers, brochures and a poster.

NEDA will list your salon or spa on the website as a participating NEDAwareness Week Partner.

Attachment – sample promo



Ten Steps to a Great NEDA yard sale!

Yard Sales are great ways to spread awareness and raise money for a great cause, the National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA). Check out these awesome tips from a NEDA Awareness Week volunteer on how to plan a fun and impactful yard sale for NEDA Awareness Week!

1) What do you have to sell?

Determine if you have enough items to make things interesting and worthwhile.

2) Choose a date and time.

Make sure to check out weather forecasts or look into an indoor space. For example: your garage, church, community center, etc.

3) Invite a friend to help you out.

The day of the sale, you will need another person to help answer questions or to “watch the store” while you are busy with other customers.

4) Organize and price your items ahead of time. Everything should have a price tag, no matter how small it is.

Price things a week in advance and color code items if possible. Make prices reasonable so that people do not turn their noses up. But, be prepared to bargain with people. If someone goes back and forth with you a lot on an item, remind them that this is for charity.

5) Plan the setup. How will you display the times so that they are visible? Prepare the display a day in advance.

Don't make people dig through boxes. Borrow tables or shelves, if necessary. Mark all items are used for display as “Not For Sale.”

6) Buy an ad in your local newspaper, put up signs in your neighborhood, use email and social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter to advertise the sale.

Check with local regulations. Some communities do not allow signage in certain areas.

7) One day or more in advance, go to the bank and get cash to make change.

Get \$1s, \$5s, \$10s, and quarters. Price things so that it is easy to make change.

8) Get a cash box or a secure place to store the money.

9) Place signs around your neighborhood the morning of the sale.

Be sure to include details like time and address!

10) Open the sale at the specified hour and have fun!



All Sizes Fashion Show In A Box

Organizing an all sizes fashion show is a great way to turn the table on stigmas surrounding eating disorders and body image. Fight against eating disorders, raise awareness, and shop all at the same time!

Instructions & Tips for a Successful Fashion Show in a Box

1. Pick a date & time.
2. Get sponsors to cover the expenses of the show. You can set sponsorship levels appropriate to your event and recognize sponsors on the event program. Also fundraise from individuals or companies in your local community.
3. Find a venue. Be creative and use your connections, as you'll want to minimize your costs and get the venue donated or at a reduced price. Also keep in mind if the venue you want is big enough for your desired runway and attendee list.
4. Try to get refreshments, drinks, and snacks/food donated to the show.
5. Decide what kind of runway you are going to have. Are you going to use a piece of carpet flat on the floor, or do you have a connection to a carpenter who would be willing to build you a raised runway on a platform? Again, use those connections!
6. Recruit models. Make sure they are diverse, with models of different sizes, weights, races, and gender. Make sure every model is proud of his or her appearance and weight especially.
7. If you are making this a ticketed event, start selling tickets early! Sell tickets in advance and at the door. NEDA suggests a ticket price of \$10 - \$50 dollars, depending on the community, target attendees, and fashion on display.
8. Decide what style you want to put on display. If you want to get specific, go out and talk with clothing stores and/or designers in your community to get them to participate and donate clothes to be modeled. A fashion show is a great marketing opportunity for designers and clothing stores, so many will jump at the opportunity of free publicity!
9. Put together a program – a schedule or flow for how the evening will run.
10. Rehearse! Rehearse! Rehearse! We don't want anyone tripping on the runway...



Good luck and have a successful fashion show!

House Party In A Box

Hosting a house party, such as a cocktail reception, is a great way to introduce new people to the cause, raise awareness, and raise funds!

Instructions & Tips for a Successful House Party Event

1. Pick a date and time.
2. Establish a check list of things that need to get done, like sending out invitations, getting a caterer, and arranging for there to be any tables, glasses, etc. that you may need. Try and get as much as you can donated.
3. House parties are intended to be private events hosted at a personal residence. NEDA expects you to invite your personal friends, as well as local NEDA contacts (such as prominent supporters) that live in your local area.
4. Try to get a guest speaker. This can be someone involved in the fight against eating disorders (such as a NEDA Staff Member, Board Member, celebrity, eating disorders spokesperson, or local person invested in the cause).
5. Decide on an agenda, whether it be formal or just for you to keep track of the night's events.
6. Send out invitations and RSVP reply cards to the guest list. These should:
 - a) Include an RSVP/Response Device (that asks for name, address, phone number, and email address, as well as an opportunity to donate in lieu of attending – send this info to NEDA).
 - b) Indicate a donation will be requested
 - c) Provide an opportunity to make a gift in lieu of attending.
7. Be sure to submit your invitation, flyers, and anything else that has NEDA's logo or information on it to be approved by NEDA at least one week in advance of your print date.
8. Make sure you have a guest list/sign in sheet on the night of the event.



Good luck and have and enjoy your party!

In A Box Sample Documents

- Sample In A Box Flyer
- Sample Invitation/RSVP Card
- Sample Agenda
- Sample Donation Form

Sample Event Flyer

blū salon

19 Edgewater Town Center
Edgewater, NJ 07020 (adjacent to whole foods)
(201) 941-5400

Recognizes National Eating Disorders Awareness Week

**Make your appointment today!
Join us Tuesday, February 26th**

**20% of proceeds will support the
National Eating Disorders Association**



For more information, to make a contribution, or to purchase designer jeans at a discount (to benefit NEDA), please visit www.NationalEatingDisorders.org

NEDA Information & Referral Helpline: 1-800-931-2237

Sample Invitation & RSVP Card

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED
TO A COCKTAIL RECEPTION TO BENEFIT THE
NATIONAL EATING DISORDERS ASSOCIATION



May 30th, 2012 at 6PM

At the Personal Residence of CJ Redfern
100 Main Street, New York, NY 10009
T: 123-456-7890; E: credfern@myneda.org

Please Return the Below RSVP Card

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

_____ Will Attend (Number of Attendees)

_____ Unable to Attend, but I would like to make a tax deductible contribution to NEDA:

Amount: \$ _____

Check Enclosed: (Payable to NEDA) _____ Credit Card Information: Visa/MC/Amex (circle one)

Credit Card Number: _____

Ex. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Cardholder Signature: _____

Sample Program/Agenda

3rd Party Events can be as formal or informal as you would like them to be. Below is a sample checklist for planning a house party and an agenda for the night of the party.

Pre-Event Checklist

Time Before Event	Activity	Notes
8 Weeks	Decide on date and time of event	Clear date and time with NEDA Staff if you want a NEDA Rep to attend.
8 Weeks	Recruit host and co-hosts (if not yourself)	
8 Weeks	Discuss responsibilities and tasks	
7 Weeks	Write and design invitations	Submit Invitations to NEDA Staff for approval
7 Weeks	Decide on guest list and invitations	Invite personal friends you would like to expose to the cause and ask NEDA to send suggested guest list of members who may also want to attend.
7 Weeks	Send invitations to printer	
6 Weeks	Hand address invitations and mail out	
5 Weeks	Finalize program/agenda for the night	
4 Weeks	Order catering, AV equipment, tables...	Try to get all of these items donated!
1 Week	Call everyone on the guest list for RSVP	If possible, the call should come from someone who knows the guest.
1 Week	Arrange for any catering, AV equipment, tables, etc. for the party to be delivered	

Cocktail Party Agenda

5:00 PM	Party Set Up – Set Out Snacks, Drinks, Set Up Any Equipment (if applicable)
7:00 PM	Guests Begin Arriving
7:30 PM	Welcome Speech By Host(s) – Explains why they are here, talks about NEDA, and introduce any NEDA Rep.
7:35 PM	NEDA Rep or Host discusses the important work of NEDA and why it's so important to support NEDA.
7:40 PM	Presentation (ex. PowerPoint or DVD if possible).
7:45 PM	NEDA Rep/Host Q & A
7:50 PM	Host Thanks NEDA Rep, Guests; Asks Guests To Fill Out Donation Form Before Leaving.
7:55 PM	Party Resumes (Mingle Time)
8:30 PM	Party Ends

Sample Event Donation Form



Yes, I want to join the fight against eating disorders!

- \$25
- \$50
- \$100
- \$250
- \$500
- \$1,000
- \$5,000
- \$10,000
- Other Amount: \$ ____

Event Name: _____

Hosted By: _____

Location: _____

Donor Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State & Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email: _____

Payment Information

- Check Enclosed
- Please Charge My Credit Card

Cardholder Name: _____

Card Number: _____

Expiration Date: _____ Sec Code: _____

- My Donation Is Anonymous
- My Donation is Eligible for a Matching Gift

Mail Donation To:

National Eating Disorders Association

165 W 46th Street, Suite 402

New York, NY 10036

T: 212-575-6200

www.nationaleatingdisorders.org

Our federal tax ID# 13-3444882. Your gift is tax-deductible to the full extent of the law.

Guidelines for Sharing Stories of Recovery

As someone with a personal connection to the field of eating disorders, be it through your own experience or that of a loved one, you are in unique position to offer hope, understanding and vital information to others. At the same time, it is important to carefully consider the potential impact of your message on the public, as well the effects of self-disclosure on your personal well-being. Research and anecdotal evidence show that even with the best intentions, personal testimonies can provide dangerous ideas that may contribute to disordered eating behaviors. Furthermore, an individual sharing their story may be left feeling exposed, vulnerable to judgment, and/or emotionally overwhelmed. Below are strategies to help you present your story in a useful way while protecting your personal well-being. An effective recovery story helps others toward the direction of health, hope, and understanding.

How to Protect Your Personal Well-Being

Be committed to your own recovery. Before becoming an advocate for eating disorders awareness, be sure you are first and foremost an advocate for *you!* Sharing your story is a big responsibility. Understand that it may feel like a lot of pressure and will likely bring up a lot of emotions. It is imperative to stay focused on your own recovery before taking steps to help others. If you are currently working with a professional, or have worked with one in the past, please ask for their feedback regarding your decision to share your story.

Recognize your limits. While you are an expert of your own experience, remember that this experience is unique to you. It is important to not answer questions that you don't know the answer to or provide advice that suggests "this is what works for everyone." Remember, since you are not an expert or professional in the field, you are not responsible for being someone's therapist or for their recovery. You *can*, however, help to put individuals in contact with professionals specializing in eating disorders. You might even think about inviting a professional to participate in or be available for questions during your presentation if one is not already scheduled to be there.

Know what you are and are not willing to share. Just because you've taken this step to share your story does not mean you have to disclose every aspect of your experience. Keep a commitment to yourself not to disclose more than you are comfortable with. Be armed with phrases such as "That is more than I am willing to share" or "I believe you have enough understanding without talking about _____." This will help protect you should questions arise that you are not comfortable answering.

Be prepared for assumptions/questions. Remember that the extent of eating disorders knowledge varies widely among the audience. Be prepared to address common myths about eating disorders and keep in mind what a valuable opportunity this is to clear up those all-too-prevalent misunderstandings. Refer to NEDA's various handouts for more information (see next page for handout suggestions).

Always keep in mind 'why'. Before sharing your story, carefully consider your motivations for doing so. While it may be personally rewarding to be honest and open about your experience, remember that you have an important obligation to your audience members. Make sure you leave your audience with the message that there *is* hope, that recovery and freedom from food and weight concerns *is* possible, and professional help *is* available.



How to Share a Story Responsibly

Eating disorders are serious illnesses that must be covered in a careful and responsible manner. Try not to inadvertently glamorize them or promote copycats who may experiment with life-threatening behaviors. Whether you are sharing your story during an interview, in a written piece, or in front of an audience, here are some suggestions to guide you in your coverage of eating disorders:

Don't focus on graphic images or physical descriptions of the body at its unhealthiest point. Research strongly suggests that testimonies which dramatize dangerous thinness can provoke a "race to the bottom" among those struggling with or susceptible to an eating disorder (i.e. "She is thinner than I am and she's still alive. I should lose more weight."). A focus on the physical descriptions of the body is not only dangerous, but can also be misleading. Individuals with eating disorders come in all shapes and sizes – just like in life!

Don't provide 'tips' or play the numbers game. "I ate only XXX calories a day" or "He took as many as XX laxatives at a time" can turn a well-intentioned story into 'how-to instructions' for someone to follow. You might instead highlight that our self-worth cannot be measured by the numbers on a scale or the size of our clothes. Stories can also effectively – and responsibly – be illustrated by focusing on the mental and physical consequences of the eating disorder (e.g. disrupted friendships and isolation, fear and depression, fatigue, decreased ability to concentrate, medical complications, etc.) rather than the specific behaviors or number counting that perpetuated the eating disorder.

Watch out for 'anorexia chic'. Eating disorders and those who have them should not be glamorized or, worse yet, presented as people with "astounding will-power" or "incredible self-control." This threatens to not only inaccurately portray eating disorders as "desirable," but can also give the false impression that if one only had enough will-power or self-control, they could overcome an eating disorder too. Eating disorders are not just a 'fad' or a 'phase,' and one doesn't 'catch' an eating disorder for a period of time. Remind the audience that eating disorders are illnesses, not choices.

Be careful about providing testimony of how you "bravely fought this illness alone."

Perhaps you did, but most do not – the vast majority of those who recover from their illness do it only with the ongoing help of trained professionals. Make sure you reinforce that it is courageous and necessary to ask for support and help during the recovery process.

Emphasize the seriousness of eating disorders without portraying them as hopeless.

Always encourage people to seek help for themselves or loved ones who are suffering. Recovery is often a long and expensive process – but it is achievable and there are many options available.

Always provide a resource list. Include contact numbers, addresses or web links to information and local and national treatment resources. Otherwise you risk raising fears and concerns without providing an outlet for support and vital help. The NEDA website, www.NationalEatingDisorders.org, and toll-free Information and Referral Helpline, **1-800-931-2237**, provide extensive resources nationwide.

If you need more information, ask! The National Eating Disorders Association has the latest recovery resources and can connect you to treatment professionals or educational outreach volunteers in your area. The NEDA website and informational handouts provide the most accurate and up-to-date information on eating disorders including statistics that can add relevance and importance to your stories. Some specific facts sheets that may assist in your coverage include "Statistics," "What is an Eating Disorder," "What Causes Eating Disorders," "kNOw Dieting," "Listen to Your Body," "Sharing with EEEase" and "Treatment of Eating Disorders."

Thank you for using your voice to highlight the seriousness of eating disorders and provide hope, understanding and resources to others!



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Stories of Recovery

A Guide for Planning Your Next NEDAwareness Week Event

Contributed by Kathleen Burns Kingsbury, LMHC

And

Jenni Schaefer, Author

Purpose:

A very effective way to provide outreach, education, and hope during NEDAwareness Week is to host an event featuring a recovered speaker(s). If done well, it is a great teaching tool for parents, professionals, individuals struggling with an eating disorder, and the community. A talk by someone who has been through an eating disorder can provide others with inspiration and stepping-stones for the road to recovery. For family members and loved ones, hearing a story of recovery can validate that eating disorders are complicated illnesses and are not caused by families or even one single factor.

Resources:

- *Stories of Recovery: Tips for the Speaker*, at the end of this guide
- *Guidelines for Sharing Stories of Recovery*, NEDA Website
- *Mastering Media Mysteries*, NEDAwareness Week Resource and Planning Guide CD-ROM
- *Tips for Responsible Media Coverage*, NEDA Website & NEDAwareness Week Resource and Planning Guide CD-ROM
- Full Lives: Women Who Have Freed Themselves from Food and Weight Obsession by Lindsey Hall (Gurze Books, 1993)
- Life Without Ed: How One Woman Declared Independence from Her Eating Disorder and How You Can Too by Jenni Schaefer with Thom Rutledge (McGraw-Hill, 2004)

Preparation:

It is best to plan the event at least three to six months in advance. The reason for the lead time is two-fold. First and foremost, it is vital that you work with the speaker(s) to fine tune their recovery talk to be as effective, helpful, and non-triggering as possible. This will take time and guidance from a professional in the field of eating disorders.* Secondly, you will need time to secure a venue, organize the event, set up the volunteers, and let your community know about the event through your marketing efforts. Having planned many NEDAwareness Week events, we know that careful planning is the key to success.

In addition, you may consider additional speakers, such as family or friends of a recovered individual. Don't forget other populations to reach out to, for example males or different ethnicities. Be sure to be inclusive of your community or potential audience. An eating disorders professional can also be included as part of a panel.

* To locate a professional who specializes in the field of eating disorders in your area, visit the "Treatment Referrals" section of NEDA's website (www.NationalEatingDisorders.org). If you live in a community that does not have access to specialized eating disorder treatment, we recommend that you work with a school counselor, nurse, dietitian, or other individual who is knowledgeable about food and body image issues.

I. The Personal Story

Writing the Story

Beth Mayer, LICSW, Executive Director of MEDA, Inc., a NEDA Network Member, successfully hosts stories of recovery monthly at her organization. She says, “It is critical for the speaker to be adequately prepared to share their story to a diverse audience. This process involves collaborating with the recovered individual in writing a story that clearly identifies the themes in their work that may help others learn about different paths to full recovery. When it works, it is truly inspirational!”

It is most effective for the speaker to start the process of preparing the talk by writing down the personal story of recovery. The following outline, available at the end of this guide to give to the individual (*Stories of Recovery: Tips for the Speaker*), is a great place to start:

- How It Started
 - How did my eating disorder begin?
 - What were the precipitating factors that led to my eating disorder?
- How It Was
 - What did it feel like to have an eating disorder?
 - What was my eating disorder really about? (not about food and weight)
 - If my eating disorder could have talked, what would it have said?
 - What things did I miss out on due to my illness?
- How I Got Help
 - Why did I finally decide to reach out for help?
 - What steps did I take?
 - What method of treatment worked best for me?
 - What and how were professionals helpful in my recovery?
 - What did my family and friends do that was helpful?
- How It Is Now
 - How has recovery changed my life?
 - What role does food play in my life now?
 - How do I feel today?
 - What did I learn about myself in the process?

When helping speakers to write their stories, remember to focus on recovery and end with a clear message of hope. For examples of personal stories written with a message of hope and recovery, refer the speaker to books listed under the “Resources” section of this guide. Despite the incredible pain caused by an eating disorder, the speaker will discover that the personal story can be told in a way that is positive, hopeful, and uplifting.

Ask speakers what they would want the audience to take away from the experience. Work with the individual to relay who the audience will consist of (e.g., college students, nurses, parents, etc.) as it may help in tailoring their story.

Revising the Story

The next step in the preparation process is for an eating disorders professional to review the written first draft and then meet with the individual to coach them on how to best deliver the story at the event. In addition, this professional should assess the speaker’s emotional readiness to speak in public about his or her personal experience. Together, the professional and the recovered individual work to identify themes in the story that are relevant to the general audience

and how to present this information in a useful, informative way. Another draft is written and the process of meeting and rewriting continues until the professional and the individual agree it is time to write the final draft.

Rehearsing the Story

Once the final draft is written, the speaker will need to practice the talk. This can be done with the professional or at home in front of a mirror. Anyone who gives presentations knows the value of preparation and rehearsal. Jenni Schaefer, author of *Life Without Ed*, says, “I am grateful today to speak across the country about eating disorders. Learning to share my recovery story effectively took lots of practice. I wanted to share my journey, but I didn’t want to reveal information about myself that could be used by others in negative ways. So preparing my story took lots of patience and persistence – just like in recovery. And just like in recovery, the patience and persistence were worth it!”

Rehearsal will help the speaker feel more confident at the actual event and will also work to help bring his or her own personal sense of style into the presentation. Encourage the speaker to make the story unique and to possibly use visual aids such as props, artwork, poems, movement, or dance. Eating disorders keep a person trapped in a box, and the personal story should reveal that the speaker is now free to be his or her unique self!

II. The Audience

Whenever you are hosting an event it is vital to know your audience. Most recovery panels and personal stories draw a variety of individuals from those in treatment, to family members, to coaches, teachers and students, and healthcare professionals. Most likely there will be men and women who are currently battling eating disorders. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind the points made in the NEDA handout titled *Guidelines for Sharing Stories of Recovery* available on NEDA’s website in the Press Room.

III. The Format

We recommend that your event be approximately one hour in length if you have one speaker. Thirty minutes of the workshop consists of the personal recovery story told uninterrupted followed by a thirty-minute question and answer period facilitated by the Monitor (see description below). If you have a panel of recovered individuals as well as parents and loved ones speak, you may want to extend this time to make sure everyone has ample time to share their story and field questions. We have found it helpful to pass out blank index cards and encourage audience members to write down their questions and pass the cards up front to the Monitor. The Monitor can review the questions, identify common themes, and direct the questions to the appropriate speaker or panel member. Using index cards is a nice tool to help facilitate a useful discussion and also protects the confidentiality of those participants who may not want to self-identify as having a problem with food and/or weight.

IV. The Monitor

It is important to have a Monitor who is a professional in the field to help facilitate discussion and to respond to any clinical questions that arise. This person would ideally be the same professional that coached the speaker prior to the event, but at a minimum should be knowledgeable in eating disorder treatment and be able to comfortably set limits on audience questions that are inappropriate. Furthermore, the Monitor can aid in generalizing the discussion and reinforcing that there are many paths to recovery. If possible, it is helpful to also have a panel of professionals, including a physician, a psychiatrist, a psychologist, and a nutritionist. This panel can help further educate the audience regarding treatment options and community resources as well as answer specific questions pertaining to their specialty areas.

V. Support and Referrals

Ideally, you will have a treatment professional on hand at the event to help direct audience members to appropriate support and referral sources. At a minimum, it is important to have a written list of local counseling agencies, medical centers and treatment facilities that work with eating disorders and related mental health issues at the event. A local treatment referral list can be obtained from the NEDA website under the “Treatment Referrals” section.

NEDAwareness Week Participants receive a variety of handouts such as signs and symptoms of eating disorders, how to help a friend, and guidelines for friends and families that should be made available as well. Lastly, make sure everyone receives a NEDA brochure or Helpline card (template on the NEDAwareness Week Resource and Planning Guide CD-ROM) with the website address and helpline number so individuals and families can follow up after the talk if necessary.

VI. Speaking with the Media

Involving your local media (e.g., newspaper, television, and radio) is a great way to both raise eating disorders awareness and to promote your event. The media are frequently interested in interviewing the recovery speaker. If the speaker is interviewed prior to your event, people will often want to hear more about his or her story. In order to hear more, they will have to attend your event!

A speaker who makes the decision to be interviewed might find the following tips helpful (included in *Stories of Recovery: Tips for the Speaker* handout at the end of this guide):

- It is okay not to answer a question.
 - If a question makes you feel uncomfortable, respectfully decline to answer.
 - Do not feel the need to explain why a question makes you feel uncomfortable.
 - You alone decide what information to share about yourself.

- Do not speak in numbers.
 - Do not mention weights, calories, clothing sizes, etc.
 - If you are asked to reveal your weight at your unhealthiest point, it can be helpful to respond in the following way: “Thank you for asking that question. It brings up the very important point that eating disorders come in all shapes and sizes. During my recovery, I actually learned not to speak in ‘numbers,’ including calories, clothing sizes, and weights. By giving my weight at my worst point, many individuals struggling with eating disorders might believe that they need to reach this number before they qualify for getting help. Other people susceptible to eating disorders will use this number as a goal weight and sink deeper into the illness.”

- Do not focus on graphic images of what you looked like when you were unhealthy.
 - We recommend that you do not provide photographs of what you looked like at your unhealthiest point because these images can be very triggering to others.
 - You may choose to provide a photograph of yourself in recovery. This photograph might highlight what recovery has brought into your life (e.g., a photo of you pursuing a long last dream).

The media can be a key element in the fight against eating disorders. With the power of mass media, we can spread the message about these life-threatening illnesses to millions of people in just a few moments. We have found that people working in the media are very receptive to learning more about the best ways to educate about eating disorders and avoid sensationalizing them. For example, they are interested in knowing why it is important both not to talk about numbers and not to provide graphic images. Feel free to provide NEDA’s *Tips for Responsible Media Coverage*, which can be found in the Press Room on the NEDA website.

They know that you are the expert on your eating disorder. Do not be afraid to speak like that expert. You can learn from the media about the power of publicity, and they can learn a lot from you!

Closing:

If the speaker is not experienced in presenting, it might be helpful to provide feedback on the personal story. The audience could fill out simple evaluation forms about the event, including the speaker's presentation. Or the speaker might prefer to have a one-on-one discussion with you or the eating disorder professional about the personal story. Feedback can be very beneficial in boosting confidence for future speaking engagements.

Eating disorders outreach makes a difference in so many lives. ***Thank you and good luck!***

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