

THE RECOVERY DECISION

ESTABLISHING A SOLID FOUNDATION FOR EATING DISORDER RECOVERY

"When treating eating disorders it is so easy to find ourselves in a position of trying to 'sell recovery' to our clients. The result is predictably power struggle. By applying my INTRApersonal method, we can completely step outside the power struggle, improving our effectiveness with clients exponentially. I love teaching this. It is the epitome of simple-but-not-easy." – Thom Rutledge

Thom Rutledge brings his 25 years of experience treating eating disorders to this eye-opening fresh look at what is often considered to be recovery's arch enemy: Denial.

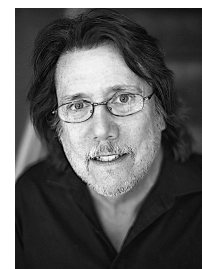
Denial is not an obstacle to eating disorder treatment; it is the object of the treatment. Specifically, denial is a clever and versatile inner-attorney whose job is to help the afflicted person retain the right to continue to drink or use. The bad news is that denial does not go quietly into the night. Instead it adapts and changes as treatment progresses. Once the bright light of awareness has revealed the eating disorder, the blatant denial of "I don't have a problem" is rendered useless. Denial then transitions smoothly into more subtle approaches: rationalization, distraction, excuse-making, minimization, etc. From there, evaluation and treatment can all too quickly devolve into power struggle between treating professionals and their clients.

The good news is that in order to recover from Ed's control, we don't need denial to go away or back off or be quiet. In fact, one very essential key to establishing successful recovery is that we understand that all attempts to be rid of denial will only waste valuable time and energy. As treating professionals, when we misunderstand this, we are destined to remain in power struggles with our clients, essentially acting as if it is our job to win the power struggles, to convince clients that we are right, basically to sell our clients recovery. This is introducing recovery from the outside in and, while it can be successful with some clients, it is not nearly as powerful as guiding clients to build recovery from the inside out.

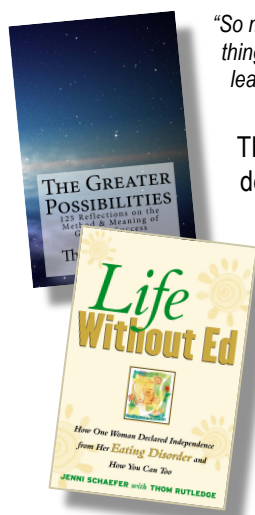
As eating disorder treatment professionals we have been taught to expect power struggle, even to characterize evaluation and early recovery by our doing battle with a client's resistance. That approach can produce positive results, but there is a better way. The down side of this old paradigm is that it begins with an understanding that the counselor knows the truth and the client does not, that the counselor is there to impart wisdom and the client's job is to overcome their resistance to receiving that wisdom. At times with only quite subtle changes, The Recovery Decision program challenges clients to accept responsibility from the very beginning of recovery, even during evaluation. And counselors are not there to impart wisdom, but to accompany clients in discovery of a wisdom that is specific to them as individuals. The implementation of Thom's INTRApersonal model establishes that while treatment professionals bring their expertise (from professional and personal experience) the choices about what to do with therapeutic discoveries are always the client's.

"So much can be accomplished inside the span of a few weeks in residential eating disorder treatment programs but ultimately the most important thing that can be established is that the client, and only the client, has the authority to make decisions about implementing what has been learned." – Thom Rutledge

THE WORKSHOP can be adapted to the needs of your organization, including time frame and decision about participants. This program can be presented to clients, to professionals as training or clients and counselors together. THOM's programs are always flexible and spontaneous, involving as much interaction as time allows. Much of the teaching is done with demonstration and there will be opportunities for all participants to practice some of the techniques.



Thom Rutledge is a psychotherapist and author in Nashville, TN. He has been featured on NBC's Today Show, CNN's Anderson Cooper, Australia's Channel 10 and has consulted with the Dr. Phil Show. He is internationally known for his clear, practical, innovative and entertaining keynotes, workshops and for professional training seminars. Thom is the author of several books, including *Embracing Fear*, *The Greater Possibilities* and *The Self-Forgiveness Handbook*.



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