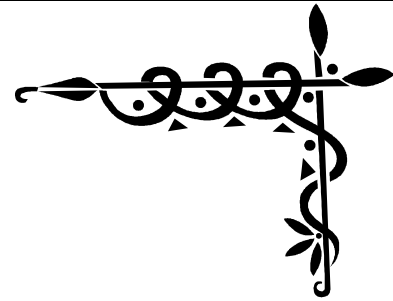


## When You Look At Me...



It's difficult for me to explain what the recovery process is like for me. It seems that no matter how hard I try, I don't feel that I'm getting very far. And I'm sure it's even harder to understand this process as someone from the outside looking in. This message conveys what I otherwise have difficulty putting into words.

When you look at me, please look beyond the surface. Please try to see that this eating disorder goes beyond what I do or do not eat, how much I weigh, or how I feel about my appearance. As important as it is for my health to change my food related behaviors, I need to work through underlying issues so those changes will last. It will take time for me to get my thoughts and feelings out, to heal, to make the connection between what's in my heart and my behaviors, and then to change.

Please believe me when I tell you that underneath, I long for healing in my heart and I look forward to learning new ways to cope. Underneath, I want to be healthy and recover from this eating disorder. Underneath, I want to smile again.