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Purposeful Processes: Strategizing Resilience with Communication
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Keywords: resilience, communication, anorexia, well-being

Statement of Problem: Eating disorders have been described as an epidemic and the “modern psychopathology of our culture” (Granek, 2007). Between 2 and 4% of the US population is affected by eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. Eating disorders are a pervasive issue with only 10% of reported diagnoses coming from men (Granek, 2007). While there is a lack of research regarding the experiences of eating disorders in men, there is also a lack of research regarding the recovery process as well. The purpose of this study is to share lived-experiences of male anorexia as well as the recovery process.

Methodology & Theoretical Orientation: An autoethnographic approach was utilized to collect data during the authors recovery from anorexia. Using the communication processes of resilience (Buzzanell, 2010) the author designed a strategy of resilience to recover from anorexia and body dysmorphia. The process and results were recorded via autoethnography and then analyzed using a thematic analysis grounded by resilience theory.

Findings: The initial purpose of the study was to develop a strategy of resilience based on communication to recover from anorexia and the findings show that the strategy did work. The strategy of resilience not only helped the author recover from anorexia and body dysmorphia, it increased his overall well-being. The dynamic interaction of various communication processes facilitated the authors recovery from anorexia and develop healthier habits that extend beyond diet and physical health. Findings suggest that resilience is culturally situated, dependent on the adversity being experienced, and can be conceptualized strategically.