

Nova Luna Center

Eating Disorder Programs

To parents and significant others:

Your loved one is about to embark on one of the most courageous endeavors of her life. Treatment for an eating disorder is challenging and difficult because although the symptoms are painful and frightening to you, the symptoms have been coping mechanisms to help her deal with deeply buried feelings, painful memories, and/or trauma.

We believe your loved one is very gifted, intelligent, highly sensitive, creative, intuitive - "the cream of the crop." These qualities and her highly sensitive nature made her more vulnerable to experiences that she may have perceived as threatening, unsafe or frightening. In her fear and dismay, she may have believed that she could control or change circumstances that she in fact had no control over. By taking responsibility for things in her world she felt she could control, she was able to feel safer internally as well as externally. Some of the ways she may have coped and "controlled" her world were through people pleasing, care-taking, perfectionism, denial and of course, her eating disorder. Some of these tendencies you may have noticed, others you may have been completely unaware of. Denial, a defense mechanism active in all addictions, often makes it hard for your loved one to see how frightening their symptoms may be to you. This is not uncommon and recovery will be a process of dispelling the denial and uncovering the truth about herself, her world, and her eating disorder.

The family is an integral and powerful part of the treatment process. You can facilitate your loved ones' treatment by partnering with the treatment team. Your participation in family and/or couples therapy and educational sessions with your loved one will facilitate her recovery and provide healing for the whole family.

Welcome aboard to an exciting and challenging process that will hopefully change all your lives for the better.

Sincerely,

Michelle A. Villanti, L.C.S.W.
Director, Nova Luna Center