

# Healthy Living without Addictions

**HANDBOOK**

**Eastern Mediterranean University  
Psychological Counseling  
Guidance and Research Center  
EMU-PDRAM**

All rights reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or utilized in any form or any means, without written permission from the copyright owner, EMU-PDRAM.

**Publication No.: 20**



**Address:** EMU North Campus,  
Health Center Building Ground Floor,  
Famagusta, North Cyprus.

**Tel:** +90 (392) 630 2251

**Fax:** +90 (392) 630 2475/2254

**E-mail:** [counsel.pdram@emu.edu.tr](mailto:counsel.pdram@emu.edu.tr)

**Web:** <http://pdram.emu.edu.tr>

**Editorial Board:** EMU-PDRAM

**Print:** Eastern Mediterranean University Press

**Catalog Prepared by:** Funda Ortunç  
EMU-PDRAM Administrative Assistant

**Cover Designed by:** Deren Raman  
EMU-PDRAM Research Assistant

# Index

EMU Rules .....	03	Anorexia Nervosa .....	23
Preface .....	05	Bulimia Nervosa .....	25
An Overview .....	06	Binge Eating Disorder .....	26
Psychological Services .....	08	Self Harm-Self Injury .....	27
Universal Ethical Principles .....	09	Epilogue .....	30
First time at EMU-PDRAM .....	10	EMU-PDRAM'S Other Handbooks .....	31
What is Psychology? .....	11		
Subfields of Psychology .....	12		
A General Perspective On Addictions .....	13		
Addiction .....	14		
Gambling .....	16		
Healthy Internet use .....	20		
Eating Disorders .....	22		

# EMU Rules

## **EMU rules which should be obeyed in order to avoid sanctions**

- Behave in a way, that will not cause trouble/disturb the social order of the university.
- Be respectful to the Board of Trustees, the President, Faculty Members, and the university personnel.
- Avoid using offensive language towards other students, or deliberately threatening or disturbing them.
- Do not tear the announcements and documents of the university, or put graffiti on them.
- Do not organize any meeting, conference or panel without the permission of the Rector's Office.
- Do not boycott or occupy the university campus.
- Do not organize political propaganda or strikes on the university campus.
- Do not misuse the equipment, tools, materials and buildings of EMU.
- Do not commit criminal acts or steal other people's property.
- Do not miss classes and exams without an excuse.
- Do not try to get exam questions before the exam.
- Do not cheat or plagiarize.
- Do not attend an exam in place of somebody else or make somebody attend an exam in your place.

- Do not withhold necessary information from the disciplinary board when asked.
- Do not make false statements to the university authorities.
- Do not commit shameful crimes.
- Do not gamble on the campus.
- Do not use or sell harmful or illegal substances and alcohol on the campus.
- Do not use or carry sharp objects, guns or similar dangerous objects which may harm others.
- Obey the traffic rules within the campus area and pay attention to the warnings of security officers.
- After the termination of any kind of suspension period imposed by the University Disciplinary Board, do not repeat the same behavior or do similar actions, or maintain the same attitude, which caused the original suspension.
- Do not attempt or make unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conducts of sexual nature on or off campus.

**For more information please check EMU Rules & Regulations on EMU's website (<http://mevzuat.emu.edu.tr>).**

# Preface

**Dear Eastern Mediterranean University Students and Personnel,**

**The ever evolving psychological support and research center EMU-PDRAM welcomes you. EMU-PDRAM is guided by the ethical standards of the discipline of psychology. It is a diligent and dynamic research center interested in current issues of the community as well as psychological concerns related to the university campus. To raise awareness towards these issues, handbooks are prepared and distributed regularly.**

This handbook titled “Healthy Living without Addictions” is one of the many handbooks prepared by EMU-PDRAM, to reach out and inform our campus population and the population in general. This handbook, along with the others produced by EMU-PDRAM collectively, aims to support general health and psychological wellbeing of all concerned.

This and other similar EMU-PDRAM publications provide reliable and up to date self help information as well as serving to improve and maintain the psychological wellbeing of general public.

Best regards,

EMU-PDRAM Psychologists

# An Overview

**Eastern Mediterranean University Psychological Counseling Guidance and Research Center (EMU-PDRAM) was established and approved by the University Board on November 4<sup>th</sup> 1997 as a unit working in direct association with the Rector's office.**

EMU-PDRAM is a pioneer institution in North Cyprus that offers psychological services at the university level. EMU-PDRAM is located on the ground floor of the Health Center and psychological services have been actively offered since the Spring of 1998.

Presently, the EMU-PDRAM team consists of Prof. Dr. Biran Mertan who is the founder and Director of the center, one psychiatrist, six psychologists, one social worker, one administrative assistant, two research assistants and two student assistants.

## Staff Members

### **Prof. Dr. Biran E. Mertan**

*Director*

BA, MA, Universite François Rebelais, DEA & PhD, Universite Rene-Descartes, Sorbonne

### **Dr. Mehmet Yağlı**

*Psychiatrist*

Istanbul University, Cerrahpasa Medical Faculty

### **Uğur Maner**

*Psychologist*

BSc, Middle East Technical University, MA, Near East University

### **Hatice Tüfekçioğlu**

*Psychologist*

BSc, Middle East Technical University, MA, Lefke Avrupa University

### **Fatoş Özeylem**

*Psychologist*

BSc, Near East University, MSc, Lancaster University

### **Özlem Güler**

*Psychologist*

BSc, Eastern Mediterranean University, MSc, University of Sussex

### **Güler Ataş**

*Psychologist*

BSc, MSc, Eastern Mediterranean University

### **Haşim Haşimoğulları**

*Psychologist*

BSc, MSc, Eastern Mediterranean University

### **Halide Sarp**

*Social Worker*

BA, University of Central Lancashire

### **Funda Ortunç**

*Administrative Assistant*

## Objectives

**The objective of EMU-PDRAM is to provide psychological services to the individuals at EMU.**

It is aimed at helping EMU students to access psychological services suitable for their age and developmental stage without any discrimination in order to enable them to develop as healthy, successful and happy individuals. It is also aimed at providing support for the EMU staff so that they should live their lives as efficient, healthy and happy adults.

## Mission & Vision

**The vision of EMU-PDRAM is to pursue psychological research and applications according to the European Union (EU) standards. EMU-PDRAM's mission is to make services that improve performance, cognition and behavior available to all individuals at EMU.**

Additionally, EMU-PDRAM conducts and publishes psychological research in certain branches of psychology. The aim of these research projects is to prepare programs which enhance EMU students and staff's understanding and awareness of their social, emotional and cognitive potentials and which helps them to utilize resources available to them to become healthy, successful and happy individuals.



# Psychological Services

## Psychological Counseling

-

### Individual Counseling Services

- Psychometric Measurement and Assessment

### Group Counseling Services

- Psycho-educational programs for EMU students and staff
- Psycho-educational programs offered to community

### Group counseling topics;

- Developing effective communication skills
- Effective study skills
- Effective time management programs
- Coping with stress
- Exam anxiety and coping with exam anxiety
- Coping with sleep problems
- Anger Management
- Coping with interpersonal violence

## Guidance

-

### Awareness Raising Programs

- To enhance an individual's objective insight of his/her personality
- To help individuals better understand their personality and potential, through the use of various psychometric methods
- To guide the students to understand how to use their existing potential.

### Information and Guidance Services

- To support the students in coping with potential academic difficulties
- To inform the students about specialized fields of education which are suitable for them
- To guide the students in their future vocational and career fields.

## Research Activities

-

### Research Fields

- Attitudes toward getting psychological help among university students
- Attitudes toward domestic violence
- TENTS Project-European Network for Traumatic Stress
- Emotional literacy
- Concept development in childhood and adolescence
- Parenting school project
- Differently developing children
- Specific learning disorders
- Life satisfaction in old age
- Healthy divorce

# Universal Ethical Principles for Psychologists

## **Beneficence and Nonmaleficence**

Psychologists respect, seek to safeguard the rights and welfare of those whom they interact professionally.

## **Justice**

Psychologists recognize that fairness and justice entitle all persons to access to and benefit from the contributions of the discipline of psychology and psychological services.

## **Respect for People's Rights and Dignity**

Psychologists are aware of and respect cultural, individual, and role differences including those based on age, gender, gender identity, race, ethnicity, culture, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, disability, language, socio-economic status, etc.

## **Fidelity and Responsibility**

Psychologists are aware of their professional and scientific responsibilities to individuals/ societies in which they work.

## **Integrity**

Psychologists seek to promote accuracy, honesty and truthfulness in the science, teaching and practice of psychology

# First time at EMU-PDRAM



**Individuals, who would like to get psychological services from EMU-PDRAM, initially fill out an application form and then an appointment is made to meet with a psychologist.**

It is important to make an appointment to be provided with psychological services in order to avoid waiting. Individuals may make appointments either by coming to EMU-PDRAM in person or by calling extension 2251. The same number can be

used to inform the center about rescheduling or canceling an appointment.

If the person cannot attend his/her session, then he/she is required to cancel or reschedule for another day and time. It is important to inform the center about a cancellation in order to show respect to others who may need these services as well. Psychological services provided by EMU-PDRAM are free of charge.

# What is Psychology?

**Psychology is the scientific study of behavior and related psychological, social and biological processes in both human and nonhuman animals. The discipline of Psychology has only been around for the past 136 years.**

Despite being a relatively new discipline, the subject matters of psychology are diverse, spanning from biology all the way to sociology. Biology studies the structures and functioning of living organisms. Sociology examines how groups function in society. Psychologists make their services available to individuals to improve their performance, cognition and behavior.

Psychologists study the intersection of two critical relationships: one between brain functions and behavior, and one between environment and behavior. Psychologists develop theories and test them through research and publish their findings to promote further research and implementation of the results. Furthermore, they develop new approaches from established knowledge to meaningful models to explain the adaptation of people

and societies to change. Psychology is a tremendously wide field. Psychologists conduct both basic and applied research, serve as consultants to communities and organizations, diagnose and treat people and advance in academic careers. They assess intelligence and personality through objective methods and tests. They study how human beings relate to each other and also to machines and technology. They work to improve these relationships and offer advice and help to improve psychological wellbeing.

Many psychologists work independently. They can also team up with other professionals such as doctors, lawyers, school personnel, computer experts, engineers, legislators, the police and army to contribute in every area of society. Psychologists work in laboratories, hospitals, courtrooms, schools, universities, community health centers, mass communication centers and prisons. For example they work with business executives, performers and athletes to reduce stress and improve performance. When requested, they give advice in court depending on their expertise and collaborate with educators on school curriculum, with

doctors at neurology and oncology clinics and with psychiatrists at psychiatry clinics. Immediately following a disaster, such as a plane crash or bombing, earthquakes or tsunami, psychologists help victims and bystanders to recover from the trauma or shock of the event. They team up with law enforcement and public health officials to improve the quality and extent of services provided after such events.

Career opportunities in psychology are expanding in number and scope, especially for those with postgraduate degrees. Indeed, many of the problems society faces today are behavioral problems, for example, drug addiction, poor personal relationships, violence at home and on the street, and the harm we do to our environment. It is important to develop preventative strategies as well as diagnose problems in the society. This approach leads to the development of programs that promote healthy behavioral patterns in everyday life.

# Subfields of Psychology

**Evolutionary**  
Psychology

**Developmental**  
Psychology

**Social**  
Psychology

**Media**  
Psychology

**Educational**  
Psychology

**School**  
Psychology

**Clinical**  
Psychology

**Experimental**  
Psychology

**Health**  
Psychology

**Family**  
Psychology

**Sport**  
Psychology

**Traffic**  
Psychology

**Art**  
Psychology

**Counseling**  
Psychology

**Rehabilitation**  
Psychology

**Consumer**  
Psychology

**Personality**  
Psychology

**Law** and  
Psychology

**Neuroscience**  
and Psychology

**For further information  
about Psychology:**

<http://www.psikolog.org.tr>

<http://www.apa.org>

<http://www.bps.org.uk>

<http://www.sfpys.org>

<http://www.cpa.ca>

<http://www.efpa.be>

# A General Perspective On Addictions

**Addiction is defined by a strong urge to use a substance or repeat a behavior that continues despite all the social, psychological and financial costs.**

Addiction in everyday terms, brings substance use to mind yet there are behavioral addictions that are pathological and that are clinically defined such as gambling. Empirical studies support that both substance addiction and gambling addiction are clinically defined and diagnosable mental states with treatment protocols. There are also behavioral addictions such as internet addiction that is covered in this handbook, waiting for more empirical studies to be done, yet showing a strong necessity for immediate action for raising awareness, support and treatment.

Available data (European Drug Report, 2013) gives us a clear perspective on patterns of drug use, both in the The European Union and specifically in Cyprus. It is clear that there is a requirement to increase the “awareness building efforts” on the issues.

Other topics in this handbook provides information regarding eating disorders and self harm behaviors. Both addictions and these topics are covered under the same heading since they all share some common characteristics. They all result in a loss of control over dealing with the issue, as well as continuing the issue at hand regardless of the costs. In addition to the above characteristics, all eating disorders signify dysfunctional coping with life in general.

University life provides an individual with opportunities and challenges to live independently, find solutions to new and unique situations, make everyday decisions and engage in new friendships. This is a novel journey to a student, with new set of cultural and environmental rules he/she is expected to settle into. This uncertainty may lead to feelings of loneliness and a sense of inability to cope. The mission of this and all the other EMU-PDRAM handbooks are to help the individuals to cope better in these transitional periods and how to find help and support towards psychological health and well being.

# Addiction

**Throughout the history of humanity, inquisitive human beings have tried different substances\* for various reasons. While some of these trials resulted in major scientific discoveries, others became part of religious ceremonies. The relationship of humankind with dependency producing drugs has continued to today.**

For some of us, this person-substance relationship is uneventful. For others, the relationship may turn into a vicious cycle, resulting in decline in quality of life, or even endangering one's life. It may become impossible to stay within the culturally defined limits of substance consumption. That is why it is important to develop awareness about the signs of substance abuse for early intervention.

There is no uniform cycle that can be applied to all substances. Every person shows different levels of susceptibility towards dependence. The following are the primary contributing factors to dependency:

**Psychological wellbeing:** People may take refuge in alcohol, tobacco and other substances to be able to deal with painful feelings caused by anxiety, depression, and loneliness. People with psychological problems such as depression, hyperactivity, attention deficit disorder, and post-traumatic stress disorder may have a higher frequency of substance dependence.

**Genetic factors:** Substance addiction may be seen more frequently in some families. There may be some genetic factors involved. The presence of an individual with drug dependence may increase other family members' risk of dependency.

**Social environment:** Peer pressure, which has a crucial role in shaping the life of young individuals, may be an important factor in starting substance use. Inconsistent parental attitudes towards obeying rules or total lack of rules in the life of a teenager are contributing factors.

**Personality:** Temperamental individuals, those who display hostility and who lack self-discipline, may form a risk group as well.

\*Substance: A chemical which, when taken, changes the structure and functioning of the body.

**There are different stages of substance use. In the beginning people, especially teens go through a trial period. Later on, some individuals may go through the stage of regular use.**

Some of these individuals who become DRUG ABUSERS use a chemical substance to alter the state of their body or mind for purposes other than those medically warranted. SUBSTANCE ADDICTION occurs when the individual develops tolerance towards the substance and exhibits physical and psychological symptoms of withdrawal (anxiety, depression, insomnia, sweating, heart palpitations, tremors, vomiting etc.). Some substances gradually lead to dependency; whereas, with others dependency occurs even after a single use.

Substance addicts may continue using, independent from people and events happening around them. Family and friends may be powerless faced with this situation.

If you or someone close to you has the below signs of addiction, please seek help:

1. Being frequently under the influence of a substance; “fun activities” revolving around buying and using a substance, sobering up after consumption of drugs,
2. Being a part of a group of people who glorifies substance use or alternatively isolating himself/herself from society, to be preoccupied with substance use,
3. Deliberately continuing to use despite of the harmful effects of the substance,
4. Drug use related problems at work/school,
5. A continuous cycle of a need to obtain and use substances,
6. Loss of faculties as a result of substance use,

7. Developing tolerance for the substance (the capacity of a drug to produce a gradually diminished physical or psychological effect upon repeated administrations of the drug at the same dose level),

8. Using a substance more frequently and in increasing amounts than planned,
9. Experiencing withdrawal symptoms in case of reduction or secession of substances

**Drug addiction does not have any boundaries. Any member of society can be susceptible to drug use. Our personal choices about life, and the decisions we make throughout different periods in life determines our relationship with drugs.**

**Making the wrong decisions about drug use does not mean that it is the end of the road. The information provided can be the necessary tool for the changes you would like to make in your life.**



# Gambling

**For many people in society, different forms of gambling (buying lottery tickets, going to a casino, playing a few rounds of poker with friends, betting) are seen as a harmless and entertaining pastime.**

However, gambling becomes a problem when people exhibit addictive behaviors which result in the deterioration of psychological and physical wellbeing, social and professional life. Consequently, without professional help, problem behavior may turn into compulsive behavior.

## Definition of Gambling Addiction

### **Problem Gambling Behavior:**

The gambling behavior of the individual is not totally out of control but rather is a cause of constant problems in his/her life, impeding their personal, social and professional development. The individual is more and more preoccupied with gambling behavior, spending time and money on the activity and continuing gambling even after negative consequences.

**Gambling Addiction:** Gambling Addiction is a type of impulse control disorder. Gambling addicts are aware of the harm gambling causes to their lives and the lives of their loved ones but despite this, they are unable to control the impulse to gamble. They want to play regardless of the consequences. Gambling becomes an activity done under any condition and any circumstance.



## The Vicious Cycle of Gambling Behavior

### The 1<sup>st</sup> phase: Winning

The individual enjoys some small and occasionally big winnings. His/her self image is positively influenced as a result of the new social connections he cultivates through gambling behavior. These occasional wins encourage the individual to gamble more frequently and in bigger amounts by taking risks and borrowing money.

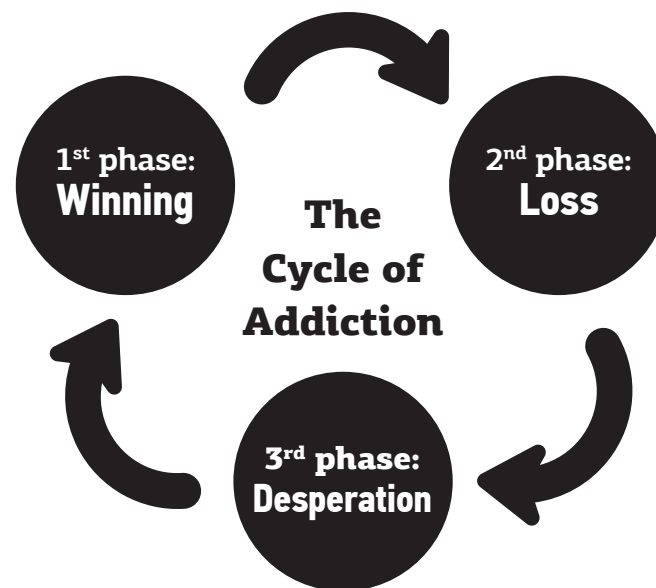
### The 2<sup>nd</sup> phase: Loss

During the beginning of this phase, some individuals take control of their losses. Yet some others develop an uncontrollable urge to get back the heavy losses that resulted from their risky behavior. Money lost gambling is borrowed

money and the individual tries even harder to find new resources to continue gambling. He/she becomes socially isolated and loses self confidence. As a result, what starts out as an enjoyable activity turns into a compulsion and a means of escape from problems and anxiety.

### The 3<sup>rd</sup> phase: Desperation

During this stage the individual experiences irritability, he/she is edgy and sleep deprived and is usually hyperactive. There is a loss of interest in food and in life in general. There is a feeling of helplessness and hopelessness.



## What are the signs of gambling addiction?

**Unlike drug addiction, gambling does not have observable physical signs. However, there are certain signs that may alert the individual and his/her close relatives or friends:**

- Giving priority to gambling and finding resource to gamble.
- An increase in the frequency of gambling.
- An urgency in the need to continue gambling, a gradual increase in the amount of bets and the risks taken.
- Spending less time with family and friends while spending more time on gambling.
- Continuing to gamble despite of the negative consequences (emotional distress, monetary losses, skipping school/work and family problems).
- Experiencing intense pleasure in gambling; losing oneself in greed and feelings of superiority during this game of chance.
- Plunging into declared or hidden debts, cashing in of the life insurance and taking cash advances on credit cards.
- Bragging about winnings while being secretive about losses.
- Mood swings (elation resulting from winnings, pensiveness resulting from losses)
- Hiding evidence of gambling debts. e.g.: Changing mailing address, renting a post office box.
- Using gambling as a means of dealing with loneliness, anger and stress.

**Below are some examples of beliefs and attitudes blocking the road to recovery:**

- The only reason I play is because I really enjoy gambling. I can quit anytime I want.
- The problem is I am broke; otherwise this would be harmless fun.
- I don't have to quit, I can control my gambling.
- I'm getting professional help to make my family/employer happy; otherwise I don't have a gambling problem.
- `Wow, I can't think of life without gambling`
- `There's no way I can quit`

**When you have an overwhelming urge to gamble:**

- Engage in another activity
- Delay gambling,
- Remember how much you have lost because of gambling.

Recovery from gambling addiction is an arduous process. Road to recovery and wellbeing is possible with strong determination and professional help!



# Healthy Internet Use

**With its vast and continuously updated sources of information, communication channels and opportunities for entertainment, the internet has become an important part of our lives.**

We are communicating, having fun, learning and studying via the internet. However, this functional environment can sometimes turn into a health problem for some people.

**For whom, when and how can something so positive like the Internet, become a source of addiction?**

Risk Factors which lead university students to misuse the internet and possibly cause internet addiction:

- A large amount of unsupervised/uncontrolled free time
- Free/cheap/unlimited internet access.
- Avoidance of problems related to studies, interpersonal relationships (family/teacher/friend), money issues, stress, anxiety etc.
- Lack of social skills, loneliness, identity crisis.
- Alcohol consumption, drug abuse and smoking.

The passage below, told by a university student, gives us an idea of how misuse of the internet can affect one's life.

*My biggest wish was to become an engineer. I succeeded in getting into the department I wanted and started my education. Because my university was away from my home I was staying in university accomodation. My family had bought me a laptop so that it would help me in my studies. In my free time, I was playing online games, communicating with friends and surfing on the web just for fun. I had a very nice circle of friends and a girlfriend. My studies were also going fine.*

*I don't understand how things turned upside-down so quickly. I kept spending more and more of my time playing online games. After sleeping for a few hours at night, I continuously went back to my laptop wondering whatever had happened in my online games while I was asleep. I started*

“

*skipping classes, neglecting my girlfriend, friends and my self-care. My friends started complaining that I had been spending a lot of time on online games. So I began hiding the time I was playing.*

*During the rare occasions when I was unable to play, I felt unhappy, anxious and angry /frustrated. My studies were not going well anymore and I failed because of lack of attendance. I couldn't tell my family that I had failed. My girlfriend broke up with me and my friends turned away from me. As my unhappiness and stress increased, I played more and more games on the net. Right now I am unable to stop playing. My health isn't good either. I will have to drop out of school if things go on like this. My family has figured out that some things are not going well in my life.*

”

## **When do I need to get help?**

Indications for the Misuse of Internet:

- Feelings of happiness and guilt when online.
- Unsuccessfully trying to quit or limit internet usage.
- Unable to keep track of time while online.
- Neglecting family/friends and responsibilities in order to maximise internet use.
- Lying to friends/family about the duration of internet use.
- Feeling anxious, uneasy and frustrated when the internet use is limited.
- The inclination to use the internet more when under increased stress and anxiety.
- Emergence of problems (such as lack of sleep, tiredness, body aches, weight gain/loss, becoming indebted) due to the activities performed via internet (chatting, online shopping, gaming, porn) .
- Thinking about the internet when not using it.

**If internet use has started affecting you or someone else you know and this behavior has turned into an unhealthy behavior, you can get help. EMU-PDRAM can support you to take control of your behaviour regarding internet use.**



# Eating Disorders

**Have you ever thought that no matter how hard you tried, you would never attain the ideal body size? Have you checked your image in front of the mirror and cringed? Are you never thin enough? Do you remember a time period where you sat in front of the fridge and consumed everything in sight?**

Using food as a means of coping with loneliness, stress and adversity in one's life or abusing food in a way of harming one's body results in Eating Disorders.

All these behaviors pertaining to food exhibit themselves in various repetitive ways:

- A strong desire to control food intake combined with a desire to stay/become thin and all the time thinking about consuming food,
- Eating beyond the need for a healthy and balanced diet,
- A continuous and repetitive cycle of consuming food,
- Feelings of guilt that results in unhealthy ways of ridding oneself from food such as excessive dieting, vomiting or using diuretics.

**Other Common Attributes of Eating disorders are:**

- Even though it is seen mostly in women, it is not gender specific,
- Individuals become better in hiding their eating disorders. They may deny their problem behaviors by isolating themselves from their familiar surroundings,
- Certain personality characteristics and psychological attributes such as low self esteem,
- Feelings of helplessness,
- Dissatisfaction with one's physical appearance may result in predisposition to eating disorders.

There may also be certain situations that, along with a predisposition, may encourage unhealthy eating behaviors. These may include harsh remarks about weight or body image, body image/weight dependent sports activities that the individuals join in, sudden occurrence of traumatic events in an individual's life.

# Anorexia Nervosa

**Anorexia Nervosa is an eating disorder characterized by the activities revolving around being thin preceding everything else in an individual's life.**

This complicated eating disorder has three important components:

- Resistance to reaching a healthy body weight despite having a low body weight.
- A strong avoidance of and a fear from gaining weight.
- A very strong distortion related to one's body image.

An Individual goes through a cycle of strong stress related to gaining weight/body image/perceived imperfections and repetitive thoughts about what to eat, what to avoid and how much to eat all throughout the day.

**What are the differences between healthy dieting and Anorexia Nervosa?**

**An individual whose main concern is healthy dieting:**

- Aims to reduce his/her weight to a healthy level,
- Strives for health as well as improving physical appearance,
- Personal appearance and weight does not signify and is not limited to determining self worth,
- Main aim is healthy weight loss.

**An individual with Anorexia Nervosa:**

- Tries to control life and emotions through intense concentration on food,
- Presumes happiness to be conditional upon thinness and how much weight is lost,
- Relates self worth to physical appearance attained through weight loss,
- Stresses thinness regardless of health.



### **Indications of Anorexia Nervosa:**

- Disregarding thinness when continuing the efforts of losing weight,
- Obsessing over calorie count, level of fat and other characteristic of food items,
- Avoid eating in the presence of others, lying about when and how much food is consumed,
- Collecting recipes, cooking for others and all the while avoiding personal consumption of food,
- Following a ritualistic, solitary food consumption,
- Loss of weight that is unrelated to a physical illness,
- Perceiving self as fat despite of low body weight,
- Obsessing over body type as well as sensitivity towards weight changes, constantly weighing oneself throughout the day,
- Overemphasizing physical imperfections.

### **Risk factors in Anorexia Nervosa:**

- Inability to be content about one's body image,
- An extremely rigid intake of food,
- Low self esteem/self worth,
- Difficulty in showing emotions,
- Perfectionism,
- A disintegration in family relationships,
- Past history of physical or sexual harassment,
- Similar incidences of eating disorders in the family.

**Anorexia Nervosa is a life threatening eating disorder that may result in loss of life. If you or someone close to you show signs of Anorexia Nervosa, please consult a specialist to guide you towards a treatment consisting of medical help, education on healthy eating and psychotherapy.**

# Bulimia Nervosa

**Bulimia Nervosa consists of a ritualistic effort of binge eating followed by purging food and getting rid of calories.**

It is a complex eating disorder. Individuals may try to get rid of food by induced vomiting, taking laxatives, using an enemator, excessive exercising or excessive dieting. All these efforts may result in serious health hazards.

Risk factors and susceptibility to Bulimia Nervosa:

- Low self-esteem,
- Hightened sensitivity towards body weight,
- Difficulty in effective coping with emotions,
- A sudden or drastic change in life circumstances,
- Being involved in activities or occupations where high priority is attributed to physical appearance.

**Indicators of Bulimia Nervosa:**

- Obsessions over weight and physical appearance,
- Life revolving around food and dieting,
- Feeling threatened by the thought that once started, never being able to stop eating,
- Consuming food to the point of feeling ill,
- Experiencing feelings of intense sorrow, shame and guilt after consuming food,
- Using unhealthy methods to get rid of food such as induced vomiting, using enema or taking laxatives.

**Bulimia Nervosa is a life threathening eating disorder that may result in loss of life. If you or someone close to you show signs of Bulimia Nervosa, please consult a specialist to guide you towards a treatment consisting of medical help, education on healthy eating and psychotherapy.**

# Binge Eating Disorder

**Binge Eating Disorder has similar characteristics with Bulimia Nervosa.**

Binge Eating Disorder distinguishes from Bulimia in one aspect: The individual does not try in any way to get rid of consumed food after it is binge eaten. Food intake is out of control, resisting food is something the Individual is powerless over. It is a life threatening situation leading to obesity.

All eating disorders have a complex make up consisting of both emotional and physiological aspects. Treatment should take into account of all these factors. It should be noted that it can become life threatening.

**If you or someone you know are showing the signs of Feeding and Eating Disorders and are worried about these signs, please call or come to EMU-PDRAM for professional help and counseling.**



# Self Harm-Self Injury

**Self harm includes all the behaviors an individual does to knowingly and intentionally harming oneself. Individuals may not develop healthy coping skills or ability to express oneself effectively. The lack of effective coping skills may lead to self harm as a way of self expression.**

The main self harming behavior covered in the present section of this handbook is self injury even though alcohol and other psychoactive substance consumption, reckless driving, unprotected sexual activity are self harming behaviors.

The examples of self injury are:

- Cutting or scratching skin to the point of harming,
- Hitting oneself or banging head to the wall,
- Burning oneself,
- Hitting objects,
- Swallowing poisonous substances or objects that are not to be swallowed,
- Knowingly preventing wounds from healing,
- Pricking skin with objects.

Self harm is an expression of unhappiness and emotional pain. Some of the causes could be related to family issues, economical problems, sexually related issues, problems with friends, culture shock, academic failure, sexual harassment or maladjustment to the environment.

Harming self, which in itself is an unhealthy way of coping, provides a momentary feeling of wellbeing. The behavior, accompanied by feelings of unhappiness and guilt, continues in secrecy.

This leads to the following misconceptions about the self harming individual that he/she;

- is desperately seeking attention,
- is dangerous or sick,
- wants to die,
- having superficial wounds may not be life threatening.

One or more of the following signs maybe indications of self harming behavior:

- Unexplained wounds,
- Blood stained clothing and other items,

- Sharp objects in personal use of the individual,
- 'Accidents' that occur more frequently than expected,
- A prolonged and frequent need to be alone,
- Frequent displays of anger and hostility.

#### **Why would a person want to harm himself/herself?**

Self harm/self injury is a maladaptive way of coping with challenging situations which provides a temporary relief. Some of the challenging situations the individual unsuccessfully tries to cope with could be:

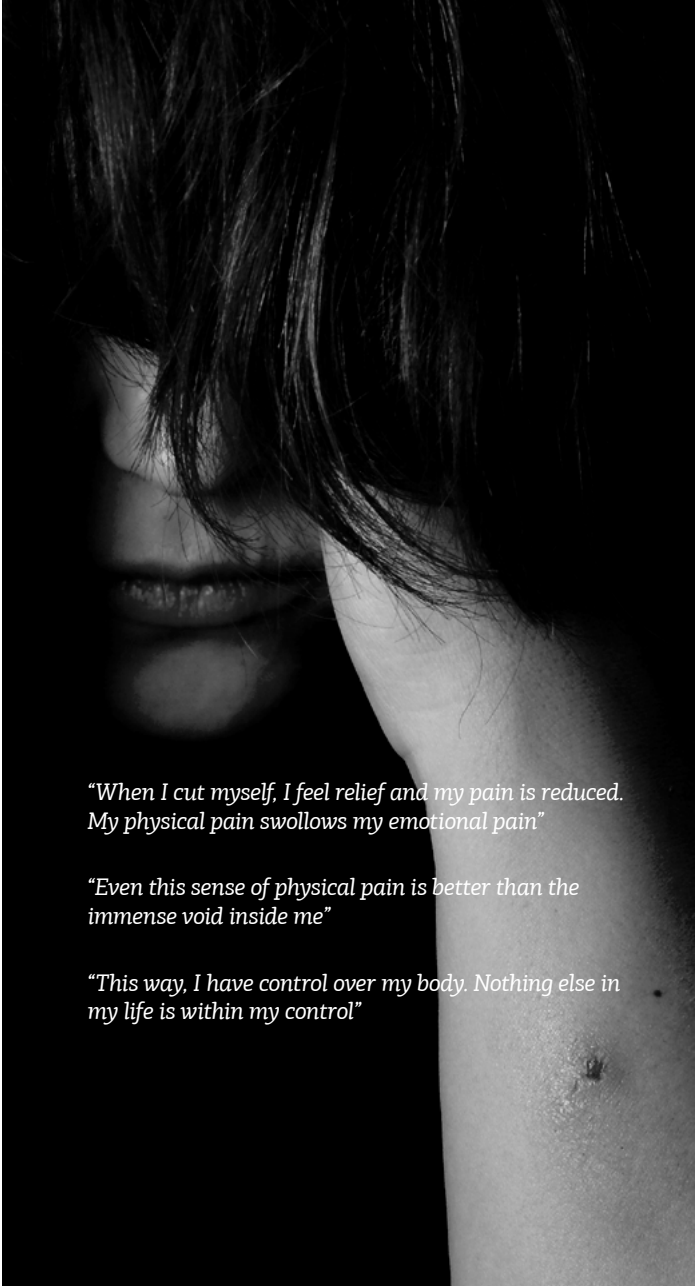
- Unexpressed feelings,
- Presence of pain and suffering,
- Arduous life conditions,
- Feelings of guilt,
- Emotional numbness,
- Overwhelming feelings.

### **How can help be extended to someone who is self harming?**

A self injuring person hides the acts of self injury with the worry of being misunderstood. Family members and friends of someone who is self injuring should take the following suggestions into consideration during the process of helping:

- The person should be assured that he/she will not be judged,
- Sufficient time should be allocated for listening to the person and he/she should be taken seriously,
- Display an open minded and attentive attitude without rushing to find solutions,
- Be respectful to the feelings and emotions of the person,
- Continue performing shared activities,
- Encourage getting professional help.

**Please contact EMU-PDRAM for further information or support.**



*"When I cut myself, I feel relief and my pain is reduced.  
My physical pain swallows my emotional pain"*

*"Even this sense of physical pain is better than the  
immense void inside me"*

*"This way, I have control over my body. Nothing else in  
my life is within my control"*

# Epilogue

**This handbook is prepared with certain issues in mind; such as providing information on both substance addictions and behavioral addictions, reducing the probability of alcohol and other drug consumption and developing skills to cope with different types of addictions.**

This and other EMU-PDRAM publications also serve as references on when and under what circumstances professional help is advisable.

Developing drug refusal skills as well as effective coping skills related to drugs and other dependencies leads to improvements in the quality of life in general. These interconnected concerns on the health and wellbeing of EMU-PDRAM students and personnel is pronounced throughout all EMU-PDRAM publications.

From time to time, everyone might need to consult a psychologist and get professional advice. As EMU-PDRAM professionals, we are ready to listen to you objectively, to understand your issues and to empower you in the process of finding an appropriate solution.

Best wishes,

EMU-PDRAM Team

## **EMU-PDRAM's Other Handbooks**

**Personal  
Development**

HANDBOOK

**Healthy  
Relationships**

HANDBOOK

**Healthy  
Sexuality**

HANDBOOK

**Psychological  
Wellbeing**

HANDBOOK

**Stop  
Violence**

HANDBOOK

**For guidance contact EMU-PDRAM**

**Tel:** 630 2251

**E-mail:** [counsel.pdram@emu.edu.tr](mailto:counsel.pdram@emu.edu.tr)

**Website:** <http://pdram.emu.edu.tr>